



**Community youth representatives of My Gakidh Village**

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"A better today, a brighter tomorrow for the youth of Bhutan"

Changing the world through Education

**My Gakidh Village**  
Empowerment of Rural Youth Through Livelihood Skills

"Gakidh" literally means happiness in Bhutan. With an aim to assure the repository values of Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH), even in the remote villages, Bhutan Youth Development Fund (YDF) and Aide et Action International (AEAI) conceptualized the vision of "My Gakidh Village" (MGV). Accomplishing happiness in the villages can be achieved through empowering youth and the communities by promoting socio-economic wellbeing, ensuring ethics of conservation and encouraging various youth led entrepreneur business.

While YDF work with the vision "A better today, a brighter tomorrow for the youth of Bhutan" AEAI with a similar vision has been working with YDF on several fronts of youth development needs identified in MGV. AEAI works with its noble vision "A world, where dignity is ensured for all men and women through Education" and recognizes potential of youth to transform a community from poverty to that of a thriving society. AEAI partnered with YDF to assess the assets and needs of Bhutan in order to live the dream together.

### My Gakidh Village

My Gakidh Village (MGV) is a joint initiative of Bhutan Youth Development Fund (BYDF) and Aide et Action International, with a common goal to curb rural urban youth migration in about 21 villages spread across Toepisa in Punakha, Bhutan, by providing livelihood skills and opportunities to unemployed youth within the community. Several issues concerning the youth of Bhutan such as youth unemployment, rural-urban youth migration, youth and age old cultures are the main area of focus by encouraging youth to play important role in protecting the pristine environment and take the ownership of the project.

### Our objective:

- Curbing rural urban youth migration by enabling youth to stay in the village.
- Enhance rural livelihood opportunities through skill development of youth.
- Reviving traditional art and culture within the community.
- Promoting community based eco tourism.
- Empowering youth leaders.
- Fostering community development



### Capacity Building Initiatives for:

- Promotion of heritage trail through community based eco tourism.
- Reviving and promoting local art and crafts
- Empowering the youth with digital literacy skills
- Engaging youth in tea production.
- Providing employment opportunities to youth by training them to become local guides, managing home stays etc.

**21**  
Villages Covered

**100+**  
Youth Empowered



### The Divine Madman's Trail:

The ancient trail of Lam Drukpa Kunley, which was identified with the launch of MGV in 2014, is now being revived to tell the story of Toepisa Gewog, Punakha to tourists and travellers who hike on this trail. The 21 kms trail starts from the Dochula pass (Elevation: 3100 meters) and descends downhill till Chimi Lhakhang (Elevation: 1350 meters). The age old history claim that this trail was once traversed by a famous Saint the "Lam Drukpa Kunley". Evidences, available even today, depict that "Lam Drukpa Kunley's" Journey to central Bhutan had been made through this very path. Recognizing the "Lams" spiritual power, there remains a strong communal affinity towards this trail. In addition to this significant disclosure, the rich aesthetic value followed by lush green forest along the entire trail, makes this trail incredibly suitable to be used as Eco-trail for tourists. The income generated through local tourism along this trail connecting 21 villages helps the youth in "My Gakidh Village".