



DISCOVERING NEW PATHS TO WELLBEING

Annual Report 2018-19

roundglass *foundation*

for a better Punjab

The foundation's work started out in 2018, seeking to bring about wellbeing in Punjab by enabling people of all ages and from all social sections to lead fulfilling lives within thriving, dynamic communities, in a clean, flourishing environment.

A year on, we have expanded the reach and depth of our efforts. Emboldened by our initial success, we are traversing new paths, innovating and expanding, making our journey of facilitating holistic wellbeing not to any one individual, but for an entire state.





From the Founder



Dear friends,

2015 was a landmark year in my life. I had decided to return home to India, specifically to my home state of Punjab. But the Punjab I came back to was very different from the one I grew up in. This once thriving state was in social and economic turmoil. The rich culture that identified Punjab was almost lost. That was not something I could accept and, resolving to do something about it, I launched RoundGlass Foundation.

Punjab stands at the crossroads of choices. One road leads towards degradation and despair. The other road leads to restoration and hope. RoundGlass Foundation was established to help us take Punjab on its way to rehabilitation and progress. The government alone cannot solve Punjab's issues; all Punjabis who have the means to help have to pitch in. I have to pitch in.

Our goal is simple yet ambitious: to create a vibrant wellbeing ecosystem by creating opportunity and harmony, for individuals, communities and the environment.

With many successfully-running initiatives in villages across the state, the foundation has become a force of positive transformation on the ground. But this is only the beginning. Impacting one individual and one community at a time, we will soon renew all 12,858 of Punjab's villages.

Our deep ties in communities across the state gives us a unique vantage point. Every day we engage with scores of Punjabis, and each encounter is a chance to avail of new opportunities to help facilitate evolution and growth.

We have the determination. We have the commitment. We have the passion. And we have a record of persistence and results. All we need is the all-important factor to ensure success: You. I urge you to become a partner in the movement to rebuild Punjab and rejuvenate Punjabiyat. Punjab has a glorious past, and now we must put our efforts towards building a future of holistic wellbeing and prosperity.

In gratitude,

Sunny Singh

Punjab needs hope. It is up to us to deliver it.

Once India's sunshine state, Punjab is mired in socio-economic crisis today, with a populace of desperate, despairing people.

Agriculture is no longer viable, job opportunities have dwindled, education is inadequate, and the natural ecosystem has become extremely fragile.

A state known for its agrarian strength is hitting the news for farmer suicides.

Collective frustration has built up and brought in a new ogre — narcotics. Young men and women are increasingly falling prey to this addiction, wasting away their lives, with many dying of drug overdoses. Poor nutrition, loss of hope and living in a chemical-infested eco-system has made this land the land of maladies – from mental illnesses to hypertension and cancer.

The need is urgent and pressing



Unemployment among Punjabi youth is 16.6%



1 in 3 youth reportedly addicted to drugs



Punjab's GDP growth is lower than the national average.



At 3.4%, Punjab's green cover is the second lowest in India.

The Year That Was

The year 2018 saw the implementation of many of our initiatives. Working towards creating Model Cities and Model Villages, we were able to deliver beneficial impact in various local areas of need. All initial interventions, based on the requirements expressed in communities, were focused on helping individuals to help themselves by building the skills and attitudes necessary for self-reliance.

Bringing wellbeing and prosperity to Punjab begins by ensuring the welfare of its rural community. Our programs enable the

foundational characteristics of a progressive society: children who are world-aware and motivated to learn, women who are equal and productive members of society, self-reliant and responsible youth, a community that are connected, compassionate and resilient, and an eco-sustainable, flourishing environment.

Our programs will continue to grow, bringing about material change, covering the needs according to our pillars of Wellbeing of self, Wellbeing of society, and Wellbeing of the planet.



Our Programs

People in rural Punjab are living a life of despair and insufficiency. Inadequate education, lack of opportunities for growth, and a steadily deteriorating culture and environment are challenges that village residents cannot overcome on their own. RoundGlass Foundation initiatives address these issues, helping villagers create

internalized, transformational solutions that engender holistic wellbeing and meaningful living in rural communities in Punjab. Our multi-pronged approach creates sustainable social change by equipping children with 21st century learning skills, empowering youth to build life skills, reviving pride in community, and helping replenish a dying ecosystem.

RGF Programs



9

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Children learn to think critically, ask questions and self-advocate.



11

ENVIRONMENT

People commit to the recovery of the natural ecosystem and address environmental challenges



13

COMMUNITY

People take collective positive action to generate solutions to their innate problems.



14

ANIMAL CARE

People learn to coexist, reducing human-animal conflict through animal welfare solutions.

EMPOWERING CHILDREN. BUILDING A STRONGER TOMORROW.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Children rediscover learning with Learn Labs

Modern education demands learning at a pace that matches the technological innovation of our world. Unfortunately, our rural schools are yet to implement applicable education that can develop the needed skills.

Learning happens best when a child is immersed independently and voluntarily in the learning process. RoundGlass Foundation established its Learn Labs initiative to allow students access

to knowledge and quench their natural curiosities. Learn Lab – SOLE (Self Organized Learning Environment) encourages research, collaboration, debate and critical thinking while fostering English comprehension abilities.

Learn Labs are equipped with computers and internet, facilitated by a coordinator, and driven by children who find answer to one “Big Question” in each session. Their learning is supported by Learn Pal volunteers, who video-chat with them from across the world. Exposed to other cultures, lifestyles, foods, and interests, children have overcome diffidence and are communicating confidently, even taking on leadership roles.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WE HAVE ACTIVATED 58 LEARN LABS – SOLE IN VILLAGES ACROSS PATIALA DISTRICT.



3000
Children impacted



58
Teachers trained

KEY SKILLS –

- critical thinking
- self – learning
- English comprehension



Young adults tinker at **Learn Labs - Nook** to build fulfilling careers

By allowing people to experiment with new ideas and build new products, we allow them to trust themselves with their decisions. And when the demography shifts to rural settings, such environments give youth the opportunity to discover their innate skills and gain confidence.

Learn Labs – Nook are community-operated makerspaces, where people of various ages and educational backgrounds come together to learn and build things. With the help of the internet and basic tools, the community can safely experiment, experience different domains of knowledge, and innovate through a hands-on approach. Learn Lab – Nook equips people with the know-how to solve their everyday problems, boosts their employability and

builds an entrepreneurial mindset that spurs innovation at the grassroots.

THIS YEAR WE SUCCESSFULLY SETUP 1 LEARN LAB – NOOK IN KHERA JATTAN, PATIALA.

Youth of the area visit the lab regularly and have created innovative products like a motion-activated trash bin, miniature security alarms, and hand-cranked torches.



1
Labs opened



30
Youth impacted

KEY SKILLS –

- entrepreneurship
- innovation
- life-skills



CLEAN, GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

ENVIRONMENT

Waste Management that converts waste to wealth

Clean surroundings are essential for the wellness of individual and community.

For decades villages of Punjab have had no proper waste management systems. As a result, waste has piled up in heaps all across the villages. Through its waste management program, RoundGlass Foundation establishes a scalable, sustainable waste management system in villages across Punjab. Before we begin our waste management program, we build a complete strategy for its effective implementation. Existing heaps of waste strewn across the village are removed to give the village a 'clean start'. Villagers are made aware of the importance of waste management and taught to segregate and wet and dry waste. A door-to-door garbage collector is hired to pick segregated waste and dispose of it properly. Village panchayats (government bodies) are made cognizant of importance of segregating waste and digging pits for converting wet waste into compost. We encourage the village to pay the garbage collector's salary and any differential is paid by us.

The pride and peace that every villager feels once a village is cleaned is enough to ensure that the village continues to run the program effectively.

WE SET UP OUR FIRST RURAL WASTE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE IN SIDHUWAL VILLAGE, PATIALA DISTRICT.



1
Villages covered



4k
People impacted

BENEFITS –

- systematic waste management
- cleanliness
- livelihood

Plant for Punjab – because a million trees are not enough

Every tree planted today will not just replenish environment for us but for generations to come.

Over the last few decades, forested land in Punjab has been sacrificed for extensive agriculture or infrastructure development. While this paradigm shift brought about a prosperous economy in the short run, the state is now paying a heavy price for that growth. The air and soil quality is very poor, the water table has depleted to critical levels, and health of people and animals has been badly affected.

Plant For Punjab is RoundGlass Foundation's initiative to restore the green cover in the villages and cities of Punjab over a 25-year

period. Under the program, we will conduct strategic afforestation drives across Punjab to increase green cover, revive depleted ecosystems and promote biodiversity. Using only indigenous saplings that are resilient and acclimatized to local conditions, the program allows for sustainability and support of local flora and fauna.

We began our Plant For Punjab initiative by planting 2000 trees in Alooona Tola village of Ludhiana district, and in Thapar University, Patiala.



1 Villages covered



2000 Trees planted

BENEFITS –

- increased green cover
- germplasm conservation



(RE)BUILDING THE COMMUNITY FIBER TO BRING PARADIGM SOCIAL SHIFT

COMMUNITY

Reviving rural communities through Paint for Punjab

Villages need a fresh perspective to survive and thrive, to be able to instil hope and pride in their young residents. Along with providing a sustainable future for its people, rural society also needs to build a connection across generations within the community, to inspire people to care for and support each other.

Through an extraordinary art project, we engaged volunteer artists from all over the world to transform Alooona Tola village in Ludhiana district. Using village facades as their canvas, they turned the village into an outdoor art gallery.

A simple art project in theory, Paint For Punjab also ensured interaction between communities as they came together to brainstorm, clean,

and paint the murals. Working with artists and volunteers from around the world, residents opened conversations as they shared folklore and aspirations, and picked up new ideas from the visitors.

Bringing positive change through art, our Paint For Punjab initiative enlivens community spaces, strengthens community bonds and instills a sense of pride among residents.



1 Village Initiative



500 Murals Painted

BENEFITS –

- Cultural exchange, Sense of community and pride

FOSTERING COMPASSIONATE COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND ANIMALS.

ANIMAL CARE

Establishing co-existence through **Animal Care**

Animal Care is RoundGlass Foundation's initiative for creating an eco-system where all species live and thrive in harmony. Our solutions promote awareness, reduce human-animal conflict, and work towards prevention of cruelty to animals by focusing on empathy and coexistence. We deploy programs that improve the health and welfare of both animals and communities and create a sustainable blueprint for a humane society.

Along with educational campaigns, the Animal Care Initiative has run adoption drives for street dogs. Other programs provide for reducing canine population on the streets through spaying/neutering, and vaccinating strays to control disease. Awareness-building sessions in schools help children understand how to interact safely with stray animals, and counselling workshops have enhanced bite management and rabies management. The initiative encourages students to volunteer in raising funds for the animal shelter, visit the shelter and work with the rescue animals.

Ensuring a healthy, well-managed animal population in cities creates a safe environment for people, facilitating

compassionate coexistence and wellbeing for all those living together in urban areas.



What's Ahead

Over the past year, we expanded and evolved to meet the needs of the communities we serve. We dug our heels a little deeper to tackle the most difficult barriers to development: educational inadequacy, drug addiction, lack of skills and jobs, gender disparity, ecological distress, and the general lack of wellbeing. With the lessons we have learned thus far, we will continue to look for smarter ways to further integrate our services in a seamless, intentional, and impactful way.

IN THE NEXT 3 YEARS, WE WILL SERVE MORE THAN 2000 VILLAGES THROUGH MULTIPLE INITIATIVES, WITH THE LONG-TERM GOAL OF ENGENDERING WELLBEING IN ALL OF PUNJAB.

- Harness the power of collaborating communities, we plan to plant OneBillionTrees over 25 years to

restore Punjab's ecological balance and biodiversity.

- Promote OrganicFarming, counseling and encouraging farmers to switch to sustainable and responsible farming.
- Increase the reach of our WasteManagement program so that villages of Punjab breathe clean again
- Revive Punjab's sports culture by seeding GrassrootsSportsCenters in villages. The goal is to nurture rural talent, help children make healthy and positive life choices, and mitigate the risk of drug abuse.
- Scale Learn Labs initiative to reach 200 villages, ensuring that children in these villages are prepared for the 21st century.
- Initiate #WomensWellbeing programs in villages, with emphasis on menstrual health and livelihood generation.

How **curiosity** changed the direction for this girl

Today, this 15-year-old girl is full of enthusiasm and hope. A regular at our Learn Lab in Aloona Tola, usually the first one to come to the lab and the last one to leave, she dreams of being a doctor. A dream that she knows she can make a reality.

Being the oldest of four siblings, Gurjeet started her day at 4 AM with household chores to help her mother – a daily-wage NREGA worker struggling to feed her four kids and alcoholic husband. Gurjeet hurried with her routine chores to carve out time to study during the day.

Despite all her efforts, Gurjeet was struggling in school. Studying was not easy with limited access to books, and the limited knowledge of her teachers. She could sense her dream of higher education and a better life slipping

away. But her resilient heart would not give up.

From answering questions related to her course subjects to searching for 'how to become a doctor', Gurjeet utilizes the facilities of the Learn Lab regularly. Now a senior secondary student in a school 10 km away, she comes to the Learn Labs center every day, even requesting that the lab open on non-working days! From the lost, struggling girl a year ago, Gurjeet has come a long way. She has developed a sense of purpose, self-confidence, and found a direction to her life.

Among the highest performing students in her class today, and student with the most questions in the lab, Gurjeet is on the path of fulfilling her dream of being a doctor.

LEARN LABS IS THE BEST THING THAT HAS HAPPENED TO US. EARLIER WE HAD MANY UNANSWERED QUESTIONS. THROUGH THE INTERNET IN THE LEARN LAB WE CAN KNOW EVERYTHING WE HAVE WANTED TO KNOW. I DREAM OF BECOMING A DOCTOR. WITH LEARN LABS, I KNOW I CAN FIND A WAY.





**BUILDING
A BETTER
PUNJAB**



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for a better Punjab