



Top: Geetanjali facilitating peer education.
Below: Geetanjali being honoured by her Principal.



Youth is the vivacious, energetic and creative part of our society that hold the power to shape our future. ACF understands the potential of our young generation. For us, the endeavour is on tapping this energy and channelizing it to help the youth achieve their dreams. ACF nurtures young minds and empowers them to become self-dependent and contribute towards strengthening the community.

On 12th August, as the world celebrates the International Youth Day (designated by United Nations), ACF would like to take this opportunity to share inspiring stories of youth empowerment.

Growing together

Gitanjali is a calm and composed 13-year old teenager girl from Darlaghat – a small town in Himachal Pradesh. Like many other young girls of her age, Gitanjali, too, struggled with her curiosities and questions about her health, physical changes and societal norms.

She found the right platform when selected as a peer educator for ACF's Life Skills Education and Management Programme. This peer educators' programme comprised a three-day training for the twenty adolescent girls and boys selected

from different state and private schools in and around Darlaghat. The training programme was designed to educate these youngsters in dealing with the common challenges of adolescence. For Gitanjali, this was an effective way to overcome her fears and gain confidence. Importantly, she understood the importance of hygiene and its impact on her health.

After the training, Gitanjali took on the role of a peer educator to reach out to her friends on similar topics. Now she discusses the issue of health and hygiene with adolescents and also changes in the physical and



Top: Zuber at work.
Below: Zuber's business set up.



mental levels which takes place during this age. She regularly discusses the problems of her friends with the village health worker or sakhi who is like a mentor for her.

Today, as a peer educator, Gitanjali has become a link between the ACF's sakhi and other adolescents. They meet regularly to discuss their problems and offer solutions in a group. "My understanding of these issues has improved considerably. I hope I can spread this information to others for their benefit," says Gitanjali.

A dream come true

Zuber is a 20-year old young and zealous boy from village Shamli in Haridwar district (Uttarakhand). After completing his higher secondary education, Zuber wanted to financially assist his father who was the only earning member of his

family.

However, Zuber could not fulfil his dreams due to lack of financial support to pursue any professional training and start his career.

Zuber was almost prepared to start working as a daily wage labourer but, on his mother's insistence, he joined the computer hardware course at ACF's Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Institute (SEDI). The vocational training gave Zuber an excellent platform to learn related technical and functional skills.

Zuber started his own business with borrowed money from his uncle. Zuber's hard work and first mover advantage in the business helped him to quickly gain good reputation. Now he earns about Rs. 10000 every month. His success has given hope to many other young people in his village to follow their dreams.
