

Impression of Distribution of Calendars-2024, Promotion of Products of the Month and E-Commerce.

The SHINE project, a team from GrAT, Thimphu, spent over a week reaching 208 offices, hotels, and restaurants to distribute the calendars and promotional leaflets for the products. In the course of distribution, the team has also been actively involved in marketing the products from the villages of the month, Merak and Sakteng, and also promoting and creating awareness of the SHINE e-commerce platform in the hotels and restaurants across Thimphu, Paro, and Punakha.

The team has made an effort to ensure that the calendars and promotional materials reach the appropriate individuals. This careful approach was intended to maximize outreach and engagement to get potential direct orders for the products of the month.

Given the current tourism scenario in Bhutan, as we visited places on our way to distribution, we perceived a good number of tourists visiting, though we encountered numbers of tour operators, hoteliers, and restaurants that were inactive,

either semi-operational or under renovation, despite the reopening of the country to tourists. The effects of the

prolonged closure are evident. However, we had an overall overwhelming impression and response, particularly from 5-star-rated hotels and stakeholders that we were able to reach regarding the whole concept and initiatives of the SHINE project.

"Our hotel management is already involved in an initiative called Sustainable Cooperatives with support from Head Office of Singapore, and Europe. We worked with Tsirang and Dagana districts in the past, and now we are working with Chukha district for the supply of local agricultural produce to our hotels in Aman Kora." Mr. Sonam Tshering, HRO Aman Kora, Thimphu.



■ A Cordial meeting at Aman Kora, Thimphu

In the process of marketing for products of the month, unfortunately, we couldn't gather any single direct order for dry yak meat, cheese, and textile products, and it also coincides with Auspicious Month (Chothrul Dawa), observed and regulated in Bhutan, where the sale of fresh meat and fish is strictly prohibited. Nevertheless, stakeholders were really looking forward to future orders through SHINE e-commerce to support our agri food and handicraft producers from the eastern and southern regions, enabling them to directly engage in the tourism value chain.



■ With enthusiastic managers at Como Uma, Paro

"We are looking for such platforms or suppliers for local organic agricultural products to serve our guests. I hope SHINE e-commerce will enable us to link 3 or 4 products' suppliers in the future so that we don't have to stroll in Thimphu Market." F & B Manager, Uma, Paro.

"Here in our restaurant, we don't serve Chinese cuisines, basically to avoid MSG and other preservative ingredients. We strive to serve only organic foods to our guests and have our own meat and vegetable dryer in our hotel. The moment I saw your calendar heading "fermented and dried foods," I sensed the concepts aligned with our goal. We have a Sustainable Manager in Thimphu who looks after and supports all these works." Mr. Tshering, Manager, Sixth Sense, Punakha.

Despite setbacks caused by the pandemic, there is a great sense of hope and enthusiasm among stakeholders, anticipating that e-commerce will be launched sooner with payment gateway services. The project has the potential to facilitate connections between regions, support local producers, and contribute to the industry.



■ Interacting with Sales Manager of DHENSA, Punakha