Tradijong Community Primary School
Report on implementation of support program from Society Switzerland-Bhutan 2013
School Profile

1. **Name of School:** Tradijong Community Primary School
2. **Location:** Tradijong Village
3. **Gewog:** Phangkhar
4. **Dungkhag:** Panbang
5. **Dzongkhag:** Zhemgang
6. **Year of Establishment:** 1992 (old location at Dungdubi) and 2002 (new location at Tradijong)
7. **Distance from nearest road head:** 2 and half days officially and one day practical walk from Gomphu
8. **Distance from Dungkhag Headquarter:** Six days officially and 2 days practically

It is the remotest school under Panbang Dungkhag (sub-district) in particular and Zhemgang Dzongkhag (district) in general

9. **Name of the Principal:** Mr. Tashi Tshering from Sarpang Dzongkhag (2004-2013)

10. **Feeder Villages:**
    - Chapgon (3 hours)
    - Gojung (2 hours)
    - Pongchula (One and half hours)
    - Redijong (One Hour)
    - Tradijong (average half hour)

11. **Class Range:** PP- VI

12. **Students Details:**
    - Boys – 28
    - Girls – 24
    - Total students - 52

13. **Staff Detail:**
    - Regular Teachers – 02
    - Contract Teachers – 03
    - Support Staff - 02

14. **Basic Facilities:**
    - 2 meals (breakfast and lunch) provided by WFP
    - The School uniforms, computer items, solar lighting and other equipments provided by Society Switzerland-Bhutan
    - Mobile and Internet Facilities from 25th May, 2012.

15. **Major Challenges Faced by the school:**
    - Transportation problem due to absence of road, thereby hampering the developmental activities of the school.
    - Low enrolment of students due to less population which may lead to downgrading of the school to Extended Classroom (ECR) in future.
    - Poor quality play grounds for children.
School History

The command of His Royal Highness Prince Namgyal Wangchuck to establish a school for the people of Pongchula was received with excitement. In accordance with the command, a school was started in a small hut near the present Pongchula Lhakhang. Mr. Sonam Jambay was the first teacher of the school. He was the founding father of this school. The school was then known as Pongchula Community School. In 1993, Mr. Gopal Chhetri joined the school as the teacher In-charge. The school functioned with two teachers and 37 students. Soon, in view of lack of basic facilities for the school, the government allocated a budget for infrastructural development. Therefore, a new school building was constructed in Dungdubi which is about 20 minutes downhill walk. The school was hence renamed as Dungdubi Community Primary school in 1993. When the school was opened in its new location, Mr. Gopal Chhetri was replaced by Mr. Bal Krishna Bista and his wife Mrs. Geeta Subbha who worked hard to fulfill the needs of the children and the government’s expectations. The couple taught 40 students making up classes PP-III. In 1993, Mr. and Mrs. Bista left the school and Mr. Tshewang Dorji joined the school after them. He was helped by Mr. Sonam Jambay as the Dzongkha Language Teacher and they ran the school till 2002.

In 2002, the school was relocated to present day Tradijong. Hence, the name Tradijong Community School was given to the school (it is a corrupted form of Kradjong which means land of cane and bamboo). During the 2002 and 2003 academic sessions, there were 42 and 26 students respectively. During the course of the years, Mr. Tshewang Dorji was joined by apprentice and temporary teachers. Multigrade classes had to be conducted most of the time. On 19th May, 2003, Mr. Tshewang Dorji was replaced by Mr. Guman Dhoj Wakhley. Mr. Tashi Tshering, present head of the school, joined the school on 1st April, 2004. Today the school caters to the villages of Chapgon, Gojung, Pongchula, Redijong and Tradijong and the student enrolment rate is constantly increasing over the years. The school family looks forward to make a vast difference in the wholesome development of our students and instilling the values of ‘Gross National Happiness’.

Introduction

Phangkhar gewog in lower Kheng in which this school (Tradijong CPS) is located is considered as one of the poorest gewogs (blocks) among eight gewogs of Zhemgang Dzongkhag. In particular, Phangkhar gewog consist of three schools namely Pantang PS, Tashibi PS and Tradijong CPS. Before 2011, this school had a difficult time in enrolling students as parents were not able to support their children with food and clothing and therefore retention of students was not easy.

So beginning of the 2011 academic year, the school was blessed with support from Society Switzerland-Bhutan and implemented by Bhutan-Switzerland Society under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Namgyel Tshering (Secretary General). This year (2013) is the third and final year of the support program. The support program included the following materials:

1. School Uniform set including slippers (2011-2013)
2. Blankets and mattress for informal boarders (2011)
3. CGI Sheet for Informal Boarders (2011)
5. Water Filters for Safe Drinking Water (2012)
7. Printer and cartridges (DELL)
9. HP Scanner for official purposes (2013)
10. Digital camera for record keeping (2011)

The reason for mentioning above materials is to reflect how much support we received from the society from beginning till the end of the support program.

1. School Uniform:

The school has been receiving school uniform sets from the society since the 2011 academic year. As reflected in our earlier reports, the school uniform is in place and has helped to create an identity of the school as an institution of learning which clearly differentiated the school from the community. The school could achieve cent percent enrolment as parents no longer have to struggle to buy uniform for their children. Before the support program, the school faced challenges in student retention. Children love to put on their uniform and attend their favorite place (School). Parents have expressed their profound gratitude to the Society during the uniform distribution through the head of the school. Accordingly the school had submitted a video clip to the Secretary General.
2. School Health:

The health and hygiene of the students has been greatly improved with the provision of water filters in 2012. Although the school’s water source is quite clean, it becomes muddy during monsoon. So the school initiated the program of safe and clean drinking water by keeping water filters in designated areas in the school both during teaching and non-teaching hours. This has prevented water borne diseases such as typhoid and cholera. In fact, the school would like to report that we have no case of water borne disease after the provision of filters. Water filters are cleaned once in a week under the supervision of the school head.

![Water Filters in School](image1.png)

3. School Agriculture Program:

The school could promote organic vegetable cultivation with the provision of vegetable seeds provided by the society since the 2011 academic year. With this, children are fed with nutritious vegetables. This has helped to a great extent as WFP program provides only rice, dhal, oil and chick peas. Therefore, growing of vegetables has supplemented the WFP supplies. Since then, this school would like to report that we did not have any cases of vitamin deficiency among the students.

![Vegetable Garden](image2.png)
4. Performance of Students in Academic and Co-Curricular activities

a. Academic Performance:
The academic performance of the students has been improving ever since the advent of support program from the Society. In the past, academic standard of this school was below the Dzongkhag standard. So with supply of solar panel and batteries, the school has instituted morning, evening and night studies like that of boarding schools. These studies are carried out under the guidance of teachers sacrificing their free time after the instructional hours. Students started to perform better in the examination and we have only five students failing this mid-term examination for instance. Prior to 2011, students had to study under the candle light or wick lamp.

b. Co-curricular activities:
Apart from academic studies, students also started to perform well in co-curricular activities such as games and sports, literary activities and cultural activities. This is because students are morally enhanced and are made free of worries. When children are free of worries or problems, they become emotionally active. The support program helped in maintaining the personal wellbeing of the students.
5. Informal Boarding Facilities:

Since this school is not a boarding school, students attend the school from distant villages as mentioned in the profile above. So it is a very tiresome journey for them. Although it is said that the seed of the education is bitter but the fruit is sweet, the walking distance for the students is too much for the students of this school. Therefore, from the 2011 academic year, this school is very lucky to receive CGI Sheets for their huts that were earlier made with bamboo and banana roofing. This has provided safe home within the school area for the children especially during summer season. The school ensures that health and hygiene are strictly maintained in these informal boarding huts with regular monitoring by the head of the school and teachers. A neat and clean toilet is also provided to them in coordination with the parents so that the place they live is free of diseases. These are all because of the support from the society.

6. Office Set up:

With the materials received from the Society, this school is in a good position to set up a standard office for the school with laptop computers, printers and scanner supported by panel, batteries and inverter as power system. Before the support program, this school had a tough time managing with old type writers and duplicating machine for both official and academic purposes. Therefore, with
the supply of modern IT facilities, it has really changed the working system of this school by increasing the efficiency of our working method. Time required for communications with other institutions has been made easier and faster. We don’t have to wait for the mail in hard copy as in the past, we just need to log on the mail address and get the mail within the flash of a light. So these are the amazing changes brought in by the support program by Society.

7. Use of IT in Teaching Learning Process :

The use of ICT in the classroom teaching enhances the teaching learning process and children are made clearer on the lesson they are learning. Teacher makes use of ICT whenever the topic is relevant. For example, teachers use these facilities while teaching rotation and revolution of earth in class five social studies and to teach process of photosynthesis in classes four to six science curriculum.

Teachers have also introduced the children to various relevant web sites such as websites of the Ministry of Education, Royal Civil Service Commission, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan Broadcasting Services and Kuenselonline. Teachers also screen movies related to classroom learning and shows the movies on rhymes and children learn/sing together with the movies shown. This helps in making the children learn better and also exposes them to different activities.

8. Coronation Day of His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo and Annual School Sports Day :

This school celebrated the Coronation Day of His Majesty the king on 6th November, 2013 with financial support from Dungkhag Education Office in Panbang. School annual sports day was also held simultaneously. The celebration is held in collaboration with the community as reflected above. During the celebration the school was fortunate to invite Mr. Rinchen Lungten, Gup of Phangkhar Gewog Administration as Chief Guest for the first time in the history of school. During the opening address I on behalf of the school and community expressed immense gratitude to the Society Switzerland-Bhutan and Bhutan-Switzerland Society for their support program and highlighted the benefits and outcomes of the support. The Chief Guest also expressed his gratitude to the Society for the generous support to the backward community and school on behalf of Phangkhar gewog in general and villages of Pongchula Chiwog in particular.
9. Conclusion:

As mentioned above, the benefits of generous support from the two Societies under the coordination of Mr. Namgyel Tshering, Secretary General in Thimphu, has been immense. I once again would like to express my immense gratitude on behalf of the school, students and community to the generous donors of the society in Switzerland. Thanks for your sacrifice done for the education of poor and innocent children of Pongchula community here in central part of Bhutan. It is the tireless effort of our Secretary General who always works for the successful implementation of the support program. So in one way I feel that children of this community were privileged to be unprivileged as they received generous support from the society which otherwise many children of same category in the other parts of the country would be longing for. The support program has uplifted the educational status of this school at par with other schools in the country. The program also helped the children in bringing them to the mainstream of the education system. So thanks to the Society for your generous contribution. The members of the Society back in Switzerland may think that they have done little, but what they did is like lighting torch in the darkness and they have done great dharma by helping the poor children in far flung areas of Bhutan. May I take this opportunity in expressing my profound gratitude to the President, Mrs. Marianne Frei of the Society Switzerland-Bhutan in Switzerland and her team of able members for kindly providing the support fund and making the dream come true for the children of this school community. I can assure that in future these children who received help from the society can be able to make generous contribution to the kingdom of Bhutan. The support from the community has promoted the Gross National Happiness (GNH) in the school. Starting from 2014, this school is going to be downgraded to Extended Classroom (ECR) due to low enrolment of children. The classes from 2014 academic session will be from Preprimary till class three. Students of classes’ four to six will be sent to Gomphu Lower Secondary School, the parent school of this school. The expected students’ enrolment in this school next year would be about 25-30 or even lower than this. Although the support program is for three years but I on behalf of the school community would like to request the society to kindly continue the support as it would cost minimal budget in procuring only uniform and other IT accessories from 2014.

Report Submitted by: Tashi Tshering (Principal): Tradijong CPS -ZHEMGANG: BHUTAN