



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

“See the Person Not the Disability”

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Report of the Chairperson of ABS



ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY

To,

- 1. Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck,
The Queen of Bhutan,
The Royal Patron of Ability Bhutan Society,**
- 2. Honorable Members of the Ability Bhutan Society,**
- 3. Stakeholders &**
- 4. well-wishers**

I have the honour, as the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Ability Bhutan Society (ABS), to present herewith the Annual Report of Ability Bhutan Society for year 2017 to Your Majesty, Board of Trustees, Members of Ability Bhutan Society and stakeholders of ABS.

The year 2017 was one of continued transformation, pursuit of higher performance and better service delivery to our clients as we successfully introduced new projects and could reach out to more families and communities.

With the objective of creating a positive, inclusive society for all and changing the mindset of community, advocacy and awareness programmes were carried out in four Dzongkhags. We established family support groups in Paro and Wangdue Dzongkhags with the support from UNICEF Bhutan. A Toy Library as resource for intervention programmes was also opened in at these Dzongkhags.

ABS had the rare opportunity to partner with Shuchona Foundation of Bangladesh to host the International Conference on Autism in April 2017 that witnessed participation of several renowned international NGOs and civil society organizations working in the field of diverse abilities.

ABS formally welcomes Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk as its new Executive Director and Ms. Beda Giri as Technical Adviser. I would like to wish them a success in their endeavors. I would also like to seize the opportunity to place on record our gratitude for the invaluable service rendered by Ms. Beda Giri in her capacity as the Executive Director since its inception in 2012. She has been a source on inspiration to many and we have highest hope that she will continue in the same spirit in the new post.

Last but not the least, I offer my sincere gratitude to Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen, Hon'ble Board of Trustees, Staff of ABS, Parents, donors and well wishers for all your guidance and support that made the year 2017 a purposeful. We look forward to receive your continued commitment and goodwill for the ABS to further improve the quality of lives of children with diverse abilities in the coming years.

Kadrin chhe and Tashi Deleg!

Dasho Kunzang Wangdi

Farewell Note from Departing Executive Director

I have been working with children with special needs for 28 years. I was a parent of a child with Rett Syndrome, which is very rare. Every morning, I used to wake up and wonder how I can help my daughter, who died in 2012 at age 17, because what I could do for her was so limited. Every day at the hospital when I met the parents of children with disabilities, we encouraged each other. Through my work, I met with their parents, and I was able to identify with these parents. We all shared and identified with similar experiences and challenge those other parents with children, who do not have disabilities, cannot understand. As the years passed, we parents came together to build a support group and share our hearts as well as our problems. ABS was born, and registered ABS as CSO on Nov 11, 2011. This parent group which informally met from 2007 officially became Ability Bhutan Society in 2011. The hard work and dedication that each parent put forth - to dream of a Center where parents could come together to share their mutual problems and a Center to benefit their children - has come true. Moreover, our simple dream was graciously blessed by Their Majesties.

Ability Bhutan Society ("ABS") is an inspiration conceived through His Majesty's vision of a 'just and compassionate society.' I would like to express how grateful and humble I am to His Majesty, Her Majesty and The Gyalsey for giving ABS an opportunity to serve the Nation. From 2011 through 2017, ABS has had a blessed journey of supporting, caring for and loving every child with whom it has come into contact. We are blessed to have wonderful leaders in the Board of Trustee to guide us, I am very thankful for their contribution and dedication.

The short six year journey from being a young CSO of ABS has brought many challenges and accomplishments. ABS started with 7 children and then grew to 204 children. ABS was able to mainstream 27 of its children transitioned to public schools. During this time, ABS slowly started to develop its core programs: Centre Based Intervention, Home Based Intervention, Family Support Program, Advocacy and Sensitization Program and its School Outreach Program. ABS is fortunate to receive support from the CSO Authority in training ABS staff and being given a new beginning with CSO Fund Facilities. As we continue to serve our children, we are fortunate to receive further support from international and national developing partners which enable ABS to provide services to children living with disabilities and their families.

With my new position as Technical Advisor, the aim for ABS is to be an admired service provider for children with disabilities because of its dedicated staffs, vibrant volunteers and international and national support, all of whom I thank.



Beda Giri

Technical Advisor

1. Clinical Programs



A. Centre Based Intervention

Our Clinical Intervention programme benefited around 30 children aged 2-17 years in the year 2017. We have three sections of classrooms with different objectives and goals to provide quality early intervention. Early learners receive an emphasis on building basic interaction skills, fine and gross motor skills, and social and emotional development. The children's abilities to work independently and interpret instructions in a general environment are also developed and strengthened. Emphasis is also given to developing activities of daily living skills (ADLS). Parents are also encouraged to observe and take part in the intervention sessions so that they can provide similar sessions at home.

Accomplishments:

1. 30 children aged from 2 to 17 years have received our centre based intervention;
2. 4 children have transited to ECCD centres;
3. 3 children have been enrolled in Schools;
4. Our social workers are undergoing distance learning in the area of childhood care and development, special education and disability with our partners in Australia;
5. One of the social workers has completed a master course in the area of community inclusion and disability;
6. ABS successfully setup three classrooms with better quality of resources and therapy for the children;
7. Around 80 individuals including children and their families took part in the annual summer programme.

"We believe that all children can learn and excel if given the opportunity."

Jigme's Story

Jigme Choden is an 8 year old girl with Down Syndrome who enjoys story time, picture matching and playing on the trampoline. She is a very sociable girl with excellent listening skills and an exquisite mind for creativity. She learns quickly and is brilliant at conveying her needs, telling stories and communicating using Bhutanese Sign Language

Prior to any intervention, Jigme faced issues controlling her tantrums. After attending daily therapy sessions with the social workers at ABS, Jigme showed many positive changes from the impact of consistent therapy session. Her non-verbal communication, listening and academic skills improved tremendously, and she has also learned to cope better with undesirable emotion. A typical day at ABS for Jigme incorporates group therapy which involves circle time, story time, academic/motor tasks, art and more. These sessions allow her and other children to learn while socializing and having fun, which creates a more effective and engaging therapy session.

As with all parents, Jigme Choden's parents hope that one day Jigme will go to school and live an independent life.





B. Family Empowerment Forum

A child's development depends immensely on the joint efforts of the child, parents and therapists. While therapists are a crucial part of therapy, parents also play an integral role as they inspire, motivate and incorporate functions taught in therapy with daily life. When raising children with disabilities, families must be empowered in several ways, including but not limited to promoting collaboration within the family, among several families, and between families and specialists or local government. But most importantly, their skills and knowledge are further developed through training and workshops. The general health and wellbeing of the family as a unit plays a vital role in the progress of the child with disabilities. With this in mind, ABS focuses on empowering parents through its trainings and workshops.

Accomplishments:

1. 12 caregivers attended classes on Bhutanese sign language;
2. 5 Caregivers attended professional development workshop on Hanen's Four Stages of Early Communication and OWL (Observe, Wait and Listen/look) strategies to motivate and encourage increased language development for children;
3. 18 caregivers attended a session on how parents can plan goals and develop advocacy skills to support their child's access and development;
4. 10 caregivers were trained on developing teaching aid materials through recycled and locally available materials; and
5. 10 caregivers attended a workshop on the importance of social inclusion and inclusive education.

2. Observance of International Disability Days

ABS observes various disability days with the aim to encourage a better understanding of people affected by disability, together with helping to make people aware of the rights, dignity and welfare of persons with disabilities, as well as raise awareness about the benefits of including persons with disability in every aspect of life from economic to political to social and cultural. ABS observed following 2017 disability days:

A. Observance of 21st of March as World Down Syndrome Day

The 2012 United Nations General Assembly decided to observe World Down Syndrome Day on 21st of March each year in order to raise public awareness of Down Syndrome. ABS joined Changangkha Middle Secondary School to observe World Down Syndrome Day. The theme for the year 2017 was "My Voice My Community," enabling people with Down Syndrome to speak up, be heard and influence government policy and action and to be fully included in the community. The "Lots of Socks Campaign" was also initiated coinciding with the World Down Syndrome. The "Lots of Socks Campaign" is an initiative encouraging participants to wear brightly colored and unique socks as a conversation piece, allowing the wearer to raise awareness about Down Syndrome. The reason for the different colored socks is to prove

that although they are different, the different colored socks serves the same purpose as the other socks; by example, although all people are different, we all deserve to be treated equally.

B. Observance of 2nd of April World Autism Awareness Day

On 2nd of April, ABS joined the rest of the world and the "Light It Up Blue Campaign" which was started by Autism Speaks to observe the World Autism Awareness Day by lighting up in blue two of the most iconic monuments in the country: the Buddha Dordenma at Kuenselphodrang and the National Memorial Chorten at Thimphu. The event aimed to increase an understanding and acceptance of, and a further support for, people with autism. Last year's theme was "Toward Autonomy and Self-Determination". The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities to independence of persons to individual autonomy and highlights the rights of persons with disabilities to "legal capacity on an equal basis with others and in all aspects of life." Individuals with autism and their families face many barriers to enjoying their full rights. Society needs to understand not only those barriers which prevent inclusion of persons with autism but also to identify how well a society can work together to overcome and remove them.





C. Observance of 5th of October World Cerebral Palsy Day

ABS observed World Cerebral Palsy (CP) Day with our children and families. World Cerebral Palsy Day is more than just an awareness day. It is an opportunity to celebrate and express pride in the lives and achievements of those with CP and the people and the organizations that support them. ABS focused on creating a fun yet informative day for the children, parents and caregivers. Volunteers

and social workers demonstrated some therapy activities that parents can do at home. This activity encourages children to practice their motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and ability to listen to instructions. The day raised awareness of CP and the issues that affect people with CP at the local, national and international level in order to create a more inclusive society and to ensure that children and adults have the same rights and access to opportunities as anyone else in our society. It is only together that we can make that happen.

D. Observance of 3rd of December International Day for Persons with Disabilities

The annual observance of the International Day of Persons living with Disabilities (IDPD), which is observed every year on 3rd of December, was proclaimed in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly. Observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and to mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase an awareness of the gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The theme for last year's IDPD was "Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Society for All." The observance of the day by ABS started with a short wheelchair race along the Norzin Lam in Thimphu by adult wheelchair users and which was coordinated by the Physiotherapy Department of the JDWNR Hospital. The race was organized to encourage and empower wheelchair users on their participation and inclusion in

regular social activities as persons with disabilities. Following the wheelchair race, members from the Ministry of Health, JDWNRH, ABS and the Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan (DPAB) gathered to commemorate the day. His Excellency Lyonpo Tandin Wangchuk, Health Minister of Bhutan, delivered the keynote address on the importance of the day. The Wheelchair race winners and participants were awarded cash prizes and certificates. The students of Changangkha Middle Secondary School and DPAB members presented cultural programme. Wangsel Institute students and teachers also performed a Bhutanese Sign Language demonstration on the names of twenty dzongkhags, fruits and animals.

ABS had observed the Day in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, JDWNR Hospital, and Disabled Person's Association of Bhutan (DPAB), Bussi-En Group (Social Welfare Organization), World Health Organization (Bhutan) and other stakeholders. Persons with disabilities and their families also attended the event.



3. UNICEF Project

In the year 2017 under the programme titled "UN Support to Gender Equality, Improvement and Protection for Women and Children," ABS carried out two programmes: one to strengthen the family support groups in Wangdue and Paro Dzongkhags, and the other was to strengthen the programme on sensitization on child protection for children with disabilities in Dagana and Zhemgang Dzongkhags. The following are some of the Achievements from the support of UNICEF:

1. Established a family support group in Paro and Wangdue Dzongkhags in support with other service providers in areas such as ECCD, schools and hospitals;
2. Established a toy library in Paro and Wangdue for children with disabilities to have access to appropriate resources for their intervention program;
3. Trained a total of 170 participants including parents/caregivers, school teachers, ECCD facilitators, hospital staff and also individuals from the business sector on child protection, child rights, UNCRPD (United Nation Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities) and various topics on disability;
4. Sensitized 40 teachers in Zhemgang Lower Secondary School on child rights, child protection and UNCRPD;
5. Sensitized 71 participants (teachers and student counselors) in Gesarling Central School, Dagapela, on child rights, child protection and UNCRPD; and
6. 19 community leaders (Gups and Mangmis) from 11 gewogs in Dagana were sensitized on child rights, child protection and UNCRPD.



4. Save The Children Project

With the generous support from Save The Children, Bhutan Country office and Hongkong head office, ABS was able to set up three intervention rooms for our children. The clinical support project has directly benefited our children because they needed a place to go for their intervention and therapy sessions. ABS did not have the resources to build the intervention rooms. The clinical support project helped to set up the following intervention rooms and build teaching materials for each child according to their needs:

1. Set up three intervention rooms with fully equipped therapy tool and resources;
2. Procured teaching materials, resource and therapy toys; and
3. 60 participants including children and their families participated in outreach and recreational activities.



5. The Canada Fund for Local Initiative Project

With support from the Canada Fund for Local Initiative, ABS was able to conduct awareness and sensitization programmes on the importance of social inclusion of persons with disabilities in six gewogs of Chhukha Dzongkhag. About 442 people (200 men / boys and 242 women / girls) participated in the awareness programme. The programme included a discussion of: (1) the services that ABS provides; (2) the prevention of some disabilities; (3) the types of disabilities; (4) the rights of children with disabilities; (5) inclusion of persons with disabilities in society; and (6) the services available in Bhutan for Persons with Disabilities.

Accomplishments:

1. 442 people were sensitized about various disabilities issues including empowering them about equal opportunity;
2. Community leaders were sensitized about including persons with disabilities in every aspect of the decision making process at the community level;
3. Parents and caregivers were given tips and methods to provide better care for their family members with disabilities;
4. 2 children were referred to the School with SEN (Special Education Needs) programme in their dzongkhags; and
5. 1 child was referred to the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital.



6. International Conference on Autism and Neuro-Developmental Disorders

ABS participated in the International Conference on Autism and Neuro-Developmental Disorders from 19th to 21st April. Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen, Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of The People's Republic of Bangladesh and His Excellency Dasho Tshering Tobgay, the Prime Minister of Bhutan, graced the inaugural session. The Conference was attended by about 423 participants from around the world and locally (211 international participants from no less than 28 countries and 212 national participants), including senior government leaders, policymakers, experts and activists. The theme of the Conference was to develop effective and sustainable multi-sector programmes for individuals, families and communities living with ASD and other neuro-

developmental disorders. The Conference was hosted jointly by the Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh with the technical support of Shuchona Foundation, Ability Bhutan Society (ABS), and the World Health Organization South-East Asia Regional Office.

The Conference provided a platform for policy-makers to engage with all stakeholders; share and learn best practices for a national-level development and deployment of programme; and promote cooperation and partnerships for the development of effective and sustainable programme.



Photo Courtesy: Her Majesty Gyaltsuen's Facebook Page

7. ABS Institutional Partners and Donors

ABS would like to thank all of our institutional partners and donors from Bhutan and abroad for embracing our causes in empowering children with disabilities in Bhutan.

A. International Partners

1. Bhutan Foundation
2. Bussi-En Group, Social Welfare Organization
3. Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
4. GLRA India
5. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)
6. Save The Children Bhutan
7. Shama Foundation
8. Sound Ways, Singapore
9. Sunchona Foundation
10. UNICEF Bhutan
11. World Health Organization

B. National Partners

1. Civil Society Organization Authority of Bhutan
2. Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan
3. Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth
4. Gross National Happiness Commission
5. Kidu Foundation
6. Ministry of Health
7. Ministry of Education
8. Wangsel Institute

C. Donors

Institutional Donor

1. Bhutan Observer
2. Blue Lotus Construction
3. Dharma Adventures
4. Druk Holding and Investment
5. Embassy of Bangladesh
6. Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
7. Jamgon Resort
8. Kuenphen Medical
9. National Graduate Orientation Program

10. Perfect Enterprise

11. SABAH Bhutan
12. T Bank Limited
13. Welfare Research Maharo

Individual Donors

1. Anim Paden
2. Ashi Khendum Dorji
3. Ashi Savitri Dorji
4. Ashi Tesla Dorji
5. Aum Sangay Zam
6. Aum Tshering Rabgye
7. Aum Tshering Wangmo
8. Mr. Brian Mc Donough
9. Mr. B.L Gurung
10. Mr. Chencho Thinley
11. Ms. Choni Lham
12. Dasho Penjore
13. Dasho Peljore Dorji
14. Dasho Sangay Khandu
15. Ms. Deki Penjor
16. Mr. Deki Rabgye
17. Ms. Esha Chabra
18. Mr. Hemant Sharma
19. H.E Dokhampa Jigme Pema Nyinjadh
20. Mr. Jigme Dorji
21. Dr. Kinzang P. Tshering
22. Mr. Long Nyuyon & Mrs. Phong Linh Le
23. Ms. Marijke Van Klinkan (Procedd from Australian Street Dog Calander)
24. Ms. Nuanif Boonnorn & Ms. Tanaporn Thongkajai
25. Mr. Pravesh Thapa
26. Ms. Tila Rupa Adhikari
27. Ms. Tseyring N. Namgyel
28. Ms. Zenden Dorji

8. 2017 YEAR REVIEW

12th January:

24th board meeting was held at Hotel Tashi Yoedling.

23rd March:

A group of teachers and students from SEISA University, Japan visited ABS centre and donated stationery and therapy toys for the children.

31st March:

Ms. Rachel Brindal, an Australian volunteer, conducted a professional development workshop on Hanen's Four Stages of Early Communication and OWL (Observe, Wait and Listen/look) strategies to motivate and encourage increased language development for children.

14th April:

25th board meeting was held at ABS centre. The Second Annual General Meeting was held at Hotel Phuntsho Pelri. The Meeting was attended by the Board of Trustees, Parents Representatives to Board, Parents and Staff of ABS. ABS presented the milestones achieved in the year 2016, the audited financial statement of the fiscal year 2016 and proposed a work plan for the year 2017.

25th April:

26th board meeting was held at Hotel Phuntsho Pelri.

12th to 14th May:

Two parents participated in the 5th Parents Advocate for Visually Impaired Children (PAVIC) Congress in the Philippines. The programme was sponsored by Bhutan Foundation in collaboration with Perkins International.

16th May:

27th board meeting was held at ABS Center.

17th to 22nd May:

On the invitation of the President of Bussi-En International Organization, the Board of Trustees of the Ability Bhutan comprised of Chairperson Dasho Kunzang Wangdi, Dr. Mahrukh Getshen, Vice Chairperson and Dr. Kinzang P. Tshering, Board Member visited Japan to familiarize, learn and experience the Japanese way of social inclusion implemented by Bussi-En and exchange ideas, concepts and discuss on collaborative work and activities on social inclusion for drawing a way forward for the implementation of projects in Bhutan

6th June:

Ms. Namgay Om, Social Worker of ABS and Ms. Melam, volunteer of DPAB, conducted one day training for in-

house staff and parents on Inclusion, Child to Child Approach, Medical and Social Model of Disability and Ladder of Participation. The training was a part of their learning from three months of training in community Initiatives of Inclusion from Mumbai, India.

12th June:

28th board meeting was held at ABS Center.

26th -27th June:

Mr. Shibu V. George, Project Manager of German Leprosy and Relief Association (GLRA) India and Mr. Shubhankar Pal, Senior Accountant of GLRA East Region, came to ABS for two days visit from 26th June- 27th June for an assessment, meeting and discussion for future collaboration between GLRA India and ABS.

28th June:

29th board meeting was held at ABS centre.

29th-30th June:

ABS Executive Director Ms. Beda Giri attended a two day conference in Kolkata, sponsored by the Indian National Action Coordination Group (NACG) which advocates for the elimination of violence against children.

1st to 30th June:

ABS in collaboration with International IDEA developed and submitted a country strategy document to improve electoral access and increase political participation of persons with disabilities in Bhutan to the Election Commission of Bhutan.

7th July:

Ms. Namgay Om and Ms. Melam Zangmo conducted an awareness programme on the importance of inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Tshento Gewog under Paro Dzongkhag.

12th July:

His Eminence Gyalwa Dokhampa visited ABS Center to meet with children and their families. His Eminence shared insightful wisdoms and provided moral support to children, parents/caregivers and children received gifts from His Eminence.

12th to 14th July:

Annual Summer outreach programme was conducted for ABS children and families.

17th July:

30th board meeting was held at ABS Centre.

11th-14th August:

ABS Executive Director Ms. Beda Giri attended a four day conference in Bangkok, Thailand, sponsored by the National Action Coordination Group (NACG)

which advocates for the elimination of violence against children.

14th August:

Ms. Namgay Om and Ms. Melam Zangmo provided a half day informative workshop on "Medical Model, Social Model, Inclusion and Appropriate Terminology to Approach Persons with Disabilities" to the staffs of the Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan (DPAB) and Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Youth and Children and ABS.

15th August:

ABS joined the Bangladesh Embassy to pay tribute to His Excellency the late President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangladesh Embassy, Bhutan. August 15th is the National Mourning Day in Bangladesh, a day designated to remember and mourn the brutal murder of the nation's first President, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led the independence movement against Pakistan.

7th September:

Ms. Bishnu Gurung and Ms. Namgay Om presented a program on "Inclusion, Inclusive ECCD and ABS" at the National ECCD Week organized by the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF.

8th-9th September:

ABS Executive Director Ms. Beda Giri attended a two day Annual General Meeting of the Asia Pacific Down Syndrome Federation as the Representative from Bhutan in Delhi, India.

15th September:

Ms. Namgay Om and Ms. Melam Zangmo provided a programme on inclusive teaching methods and using cost effective teaching aids to the staff and parents of ABS. Low cost / no cost materials are teaching aids that require no cost or are cheaply available and developed by locally available resources which expedite the process of learning in the classroom.

18th -24th September:

ABS took part in International Deaf Week organized by Wangsel Institute which has pioneered International Deaf Week in Bhutan which promotes the rights of deaf people and highlight specific human rights topics that merit attention.

29th September:

Ms. Rachel Brindal delivered a talk to parents and caregivers on how parents can plan goals and develop advocacy skills to support their child's access and development.

26th October:

31st board meeting was held at the ABS Center.

7th November:

Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk, the new ABS Executive Director, joined the ABS office. He holds a Masters in Special Education from Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University, India. With his experiences and leadership, ABS hopes to reach greater heights.

7th November

Ms. Beda Giri, former Executive Director joined ABS as the Technical Advisor.

8th November:

Team Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth and ABS won the first Inter Civil Society Organization Futsal tournament.

13th - 16th November:

Mr. Vivek Srivastaya, GLRA Regional Representative Asia, and Mr. Shibu George, Rehabilitation Expert of GLRA India, visited Bhutan to finalize a project which was submitted jointly by GLRA, India and ABS to the government of Germany. During their stay, the officials met with several stakeholders to discuss and look for possible collaborations towards achieving the common goal of providing the best of services to individuals with disabilities and their families/caregivers.

14th -15th November:

ABS took part in the National Inclusive Education Conference held at Paro. The conference was organized by the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF. The conference discussed the role of leadership in enabling inclusive education in the schools and presented various aspects of inclusive education.

19th November: Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk, the new ABS Executive Director, delivered a talk on the services rendered by ABS to the parents of premature babies to celebrate World Prematurity Day, which was observed on November 17.

12th to 16th December:

Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk, Executive Director, attended the Asia-Pacific Conference on Resilience of Democracy with the theme "21st Century Challenges to Democracy" at Colombo Sri Lanka.

7th to 21st December:

ABS staff attended Bhutanese sign language classes organized by Wangsel Institute with support from the Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan.

9. Audited ABS Financial Report

The financial report for the fiscal year 2017 comprises of overall financial standing of ABS, calculated from its income receipt in the form of aids/donations by individual donors and organizations both within the country and from other countries in the form of pledge, membership, donation, projects in support of various programme. The previous year surplus income has been deposited in our fixed accounts maintained with TBank. Subsequently, the auditing for ABS finance and procurement, for the fiscal year July 1st 2016 to June 30th 2017 was conducted based on the applied rules and regulations of Royal Bhutan Audit Authority, prescribe particularly for Civil Society Organization of Kingdom of Bhutan. Thus, the audit report passed by qualified team of auditor, nominated by Royal Audit Authority, revealed that the financial statement of ABS is in accordance with the set accounting standards.



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ROYAL AUDIT AUTHORITY
Bhutan Integrity House

Reporting on Economy, Efficiency & Effectiveness in the use of Public Resources



RAA/GGD (OA-01) CSO/ABS/2018/ 159

Date: 24 January 2018

The Executive Director
Ability Bhutan Society
Thimphu

Subject: Audit Report on the Accounts and Operations of the Ability Bhutan Society (ABS), Thimphu for the period 01/07/2016 to 30/06/2017.

Madam,

Enclosed herewith please find the audited *financial statements and auditor's report thereon* in respect of the Ability Bhutan Society, Thimphu for the year ended 30 June 2017. The audit was conducted as required under the Audit Act of Bhutan 2006 and as per the RAA's Policy on Outsourcing Audits.

Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements

As may be noted from the auditors' report, the Ability Bhutan Society, Thimphu had generally maintained proper books of accounts, and financial statements were in agreement with accounting records. Accordingly, we have issued unmodified (unqualified) report.

The Royal Audit Authority acknowledges the kind co-operation and assistance extended to the audit team by the officials of the Ability Bhutan Society, Thimphu which facilitated the completion of the audit.

Yours sincerely,

(Dechen Pelden)
Assistant Auditor General
General Governance Division

Copy to:

1. The Member Secretary, Civil Society Organization Authority, Thimphu for kind information
2. The Assistant Auditor General, PP&AARD, Thimphu
3. The Assistant Auditor General, FUCD, RAA, Thimphu
4. Office Copy

"Every individual must strive to be principled. And individuals in position of responsibility must even more so."
His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck

PA: Box: 191, Kowajangsa, Thimphu, Bhutan. Tel: 322111 / 322833, Fax: 323491
Website: www.bhutanaudit.gov.bt or email: info@bhutanaudit.gov.bt

AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY, THIMPHU FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 2017

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Ability Bhutan Society, Thimphu, which comprise Receipts and Payments Account as at 30th June, 2017 and schedules forming part of the financial statements and a list of Fixed Assets at purchase prices, as required under the Audit Act of Bhutan 2006 and as per Terms of Reference issued by the RAA vide letter Ref. No. RAA (OSA-02)/AC/2017/2700 dated 28th September 2017.

Management's responsibility for the Financial Statements

The management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. This responsibility includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies, and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted the audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with the ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatements.

Scope of Audit

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and the disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment including the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on effectiveness of the entity's internal control system. An audit also includes evaluation of the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness and accounting estimates made by the management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

We believe that the evidence obtained by us is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects the financial position of the Ability Bhutan Society, Thimphu as at 30th June, 2017 and its financial performance for the year in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

For Business Accounting Services Enterprise


 Bishnula Gbuang
 (Proprietor)

 Dated : 23/01/18
 Place : Thimphu


ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY
RECEIPT AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30.06.2017

Amount in Ngultrum

	Schedule	2017	2016
Cash in hand		84.63	62,462.13
Cash at Bank	1	1,563,503.94	4,688,930.51
Opening Balances		1,563,588.57	4,751,392.64
RECEIPTS:			
Receipt of funds from various sources	2	5,948,213.32	3,331,742.43
Salary Tax & Health Contributions		-	52,373.00
Other Recoveries	3	62,694.62	166,074.00
Personal Advance (Recoveries)	4	54,175.20	109,000.00
Receipt of Matured Fixed Deposits		2,000,000.00	-
Tax Deducted at Source (TDS)		34,718.00	39,462.00
PW Advance (Recoveries)	5	650,000.00	243,000.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS		8,749,801.14	3,941,651.43
TOTAL FUND AVAILABLE		10,313,389.71	8,693,044.07
PAYMENTS:			
Current Expenditure	6	3,979,406.47	3,678,113.50
Capital Expenditure	7	246,900.00	853,096.00
Salary Tax & Health Contributions (Remittance)		-	47,473.00
Other Remittance	8	339,058.92	153,614.00
Personal Advance	9	54,175.20	113,000.00
Tax Deducted at Source (TDS)		-	41,159.00
PW Advance	10	650,000.00	243,000.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS		5,269,540.59	5,129,455.50
Closing Balance		5,043,849.12	3,563,588.57
Cash in Hand		84.63	84.63
Cash at Bank	11	2,043,764.49	1,563,503.94
Fixed Deposit with Tashi Bank		3,000,000.00	2,000,000.00

Prepared by:

Approved by:


 Finance Officer


 Treasurer

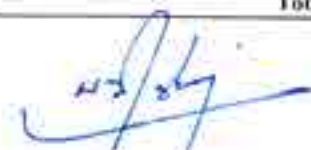

 Executive Director



ABILITIES BHUTAN SOCIETY, THIMPHU BHUTAN
Schedules forming part accounts for the Year Ended 30/06/2017

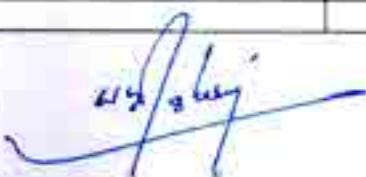
	Amount in Nu.	
Schedule 1	2017	2016
Cash at Bank (Opening Balances)		
Tashi Bank Ltd. 77711005865002 (CD Account)	7,848.56	4,248,751.62
BOB. 207002206878300170100021109	358,589.00	247,532.00
BNBL (0000067934014)	160,970.89	185,396.89
Druk PNBL (110210009621)	34,775.00	7,250.00
Tashi Bank, 77711005865003 (Savings)	1,001,329.49	-
Total	1,563,503.94	4,688,930.51
Schedule 2		
Receipt of funds from various sources		
Membership, Donation	3,254,235.48	1,837,738.94
CSOFF (Grant)	-	601,301.00
CFLI (Canadian Fund for Local Initiative)	1,207,047.00	-
Save the Children (Grant)	860,000.00	169,500.00
UNICEF (Grant)	240,055.10	519,500.00
Others (sale of greeting cards, paintings)	5,000.00	14,120.00
Interest earned from saving account	79,565.19	1,320.40
Interest on Fixed Deposits	84,308.55	-
Standing Instruction:		
a. BOBL	194,252.00	114,512.00
b. BNBL	18,400.00	65,700.00
c. Druk PNBL	2,650.00	4,650.00
d. T Bank Ltd.	2,700.00	1,400.00
Total	5,948,213.32	3,331,742.43
Schedule 3		
Other Recoveries		
Security Deposit for Office Rent (Refund received)	60,000.00	-
TDS for Suppliers	2,694.62	-
GPF: Employees Contribution	-	112,674.00
Govt. Insurance Scheme	-	53,400.00
Total	62,694.62	166,074.00
Schedule 4		
Personal Advance (Recoveries)		
Pema Yuden	29,175.20	-
Chajey Rinzin	3,000.00	-
Tshering Lhamu	-	4,000.00
Chajey Rinzin	-	28,000.00
Beda Gini	-	45,000.00
Dichen Lham	-	10,000.00
Pema Yuden	-	11,000.00
Thuji	-	11,000.00
Ugyen Wangchuk	20,000.00	-
Total	54,175.20	109,000.00
Schedule 5		
PW Advance (Recoveries)		
Tshering Lhamu	150,000.00	11,000.00
Kuenga Wangmo	250,000.00	200,000.00
Chajey Rinzin	-	10,000.00
Chey Chey	210,000.00	-
Total	650,000.00	243,000.00






Schedule 6		
Current Expenditure		
Personal Emoluments	1,178,453.40	1,167,630.00
Other Personal Emoluments (Transfer TA of Ugyen Wangchuk)	46,436.00	250,000.00
Travel - In Country	276,254.00	383,157.00
Travel - Outside Country	58,680.00	39,000.00
Utilities - Telephone, Fax, Email	93,046.00	66,299.00
Utilities - Postages	-	4,790.00
Utilities - Electricity, Water, Sewerage	13,232.00	9,122.00
Rent of Office Building	636,785.00	333,300.00
Printing & Stationary	500,930.42	331,228.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	12,600.00	-
Maintenance of Properties - Building	12,020.00	-
Maintenance of Properties - Vehicle	7,840.00	85,421.00
Operating Expense - Meeting & workshop	127,892.00	-
Operating Expense - Advertisement	8,481.00	55,000.00
Operating Expense - Bank charges	775.00	3,450.00
Operating Expense - Transportation	120,548.50	28,699.00
Operating Expense - Others	4,271.00	770,880.50
Operating Expense - Taxes, Duties & Royalties	14,377.00	-
Equipment Rental charges	98,784.00	-
Operating Expenses on celebration	50,000.00	-
Expense on fund raising activities	19,190.00	-
Expenses on UNICEF Project	250,000.00	-
Expenses on CFLI Project	350,000.00	-
Hospitality & Entertainment	98,811.15	46,971.00
GPF Contribution	-	103,166.00
Total	3,979,406.47	3,678,113.50
Schedule 7		
Capital Expenditure		
Training: Others	31,500.00	565,096.00
Professional Services	213,400.00	288,000.00
Total	246,900.00	853,096.00
Schedule 8		
Other Remittance		
Deposit of TDS to RRCD	57,017.30	-
Health Contribution	12,444.02	-
GPF Remittances	241,097.60	103,214.00
General Insurance Scheme	28,500.00	50,400.00
Total	339,058.92	153,614.00
Schedule 9		
Personal Advance		
Beda Girl	-	45,000.00
Chagay Rinchen	5,000.00	31,000.00
Dichen Lham	-	10,000.00
Pema Yuden	29,175.20	16,000.00
Thuji	-	11,000.00
Ugyen Wangchuk	20,000.00	-
Total	54,175.20	113,000.00







Schedule 10		
PW Advance		
Security Deposit for Office Rent to M Lhamo	50,000.00	-
Tshering Lhabu	190,000.00	33,000.00
Kuenga Wangmo	250,000.00	200,000.00
Chajay Rinzin	-	10,000.00
Chey Chey	210,000.00	-
Total	650,000.00	243,000.00
Schedule 11		
Closing Bank Balance		
Tashi Bank Ltd. 77711005865002 (CD Account)	143,320.95	7,848.56
Tashi Bank, 77711005865003 (Savings)	1,710,180.32	1,001,320.49
BoBL 20700220687830017/0100921109	123,617.33	358,589.00
BNBL(0000067934014)	29,370.89	160,970.89
Druk PNBL(110210009621)	37,275.00	34,775.00
Total	2,043,764.49	1,563,503.94

Dangay

Dzin

Uz / shy



Bank Reconciliation as at 30 June, 2017**Tashi Bank, '77711005865003 (Savings)**

Balance per Quick book

Amount (in Nu)

1,710,180.32

Add cheques issues but not cashed:

Cheque 33111, dated 27/06/2017

2,499.00

Cheque 33110, dated 27/06/2017

13,230.00

Cheque 33107, dated 27/06/2017

2,500.00

Cheque 33001, dated 27/06/2017

1,149.80

Cheque 33108, dated 27/06/2017

11,000.00

30,378.80

Balance per Bank Statement**1,740,559.12**

Prepared by:

Approved by:


Finance Officer
Executive Director
Treasurer

10. Way Forward

As we step into 2018, we plan to extend our reach in other Dzongkhags while strengthening our existing centre at Thimphu. ABS's future endeavours are:

1. The construction of National Resource Center for ABS



Children with disabilities have the same rights as children without disabilities, yet in Bhutan they are excluded from social life and are unable to enjoy full participation in society. 21% of children aged from 2 to 9 years in Bhutan were found to have an impairment/disability in the two stage study. Children with disabilities in Bhutan are often socially isolated due to geographical setting, poverty, lack of access to mainstream and special services and assistive devices, and negative attitudes towards disabilities. Currently, most children with disabilities are not receiving prompt, timely and regular services in the health and education. Children with disabilities face many challenges compared to their peers without disabilities. These children are less likely to attend school, utilize health services and thus experiences limited opportunities for emotional, social and intellectual growth.

In order to ensure that a child with disabilities receives timely and quality services, ABS envisions building a National Resource Center at Thimphu which will have all the relevant universal designs features in order to be physically accessible to persons with disabilities. Proposal for the lease of land has been submitted to National Land Commission of Bhutan. Seed money of Nu.5, 50,000/- has been set aside by ABS well-wisher



to begin the development of the Center. The Center will have facilities to provide quality early intervention, vocational training and a residential and in-house facility to manage any issues that individuals with diverse abilities would need. The construction of the clinical intervention service Center would benefit the children living with disabilities and their family. Some of the benefits that would derive are:

- Better quality services;
- Inclusive Centre for all;
- Break the barrier of excluding those with disabilities;
- Have a better quality of life and opportunities to be mainstreamed and become independent; and

- Empower parents and families of children with disabilities

2. SHUCHONA FOUNDATION:

About the Organization

Shuchona Foundation is a not-for-profit organization founded by Saima Wazed Hossain, the daughter of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Shuchona Foundation is specialized in advocacy, research, capacity building and implementing targeted programs to address issues pertaining to neurodevelopment disorders (NNDs) and mental health, among its objectives being to provide a new beginning for people whose disabilities.

ABS will be signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Shuchona Foundation. The scope of the MoU is:

1. Guide and assist ABS in developing resource materials that explain the life course needs of individuals with neurodevelopment disorders and their families;
2. Provide technical guidance, support and training to ABS;
3. Share with ABS any resource materials that Shuchona has developed;
4. Guide and assist ABS in developing strategies and GO-NGO partnerships to promote awareness and advocate for NND sensitive policies and programs; and
5. Identifying appropriate experts and institutions for collaboration with ABS.

ABS looks forward to a fruitful partnership.

3. BUSSI-EN SOCIAL WELFARE ORGANIZATION

About the Organization

Bussi-En International Social Welfare Organization has provided a refuge for orphans mainly with disabilities who were victims of World War II at Myorinzan Gyozenji temple of the Nichiren Sect of Buddhism (since 1418) located in Hakusan City under the Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan. Bussi-En was formally founded in 1960 as a holistic supporting facility for children with disabilities. Since then, Bussi-En has been providing various services as a pioneer, not only in the field of social welfare for persons with disabilities, but also in the field of community revitalization through Gochamaze, which refers

to holistic interaction among all walks of life regardless of an individual's background and abilities.

ABS will be signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bussi-En International Social Welfare Organization to:

1. Create a sustainable "Bhutanese Social Welfare Model" in Bhutan where the Social Welfare system is still in a developing stage;
2. Promote Social Inclusion in Bhutan where awareness of disabilities and persons with disabilities is urgently required;
3. Create employment for persons with disabilities;
4. Improve the quality of Social Welfare services;
5. Promote and establish sustainable business outlets for the welfare of persons with disabilities.
6. Provide need-based vocational skills and training for persons with disabilities and service providers as part of capacity development programmes; and
7. Empower and provide care giving training to the immediate caregivers and the family members of persons with disabilities.

4. GLRA (German Leprosy Relief Association)

About the Organization

GLRA, India was founded in 1966 by Mr. Hermann Kober and Mr. William Gershon and has been working in India with the core objective of care and support to people affected by Leprosy, Tuberculosis and Disabilities through medical treatment and social rehabilitation. In collaboration with NGO partners, GLRA has been implementing quality health care, disability prevention and rehabilitation oriented projects. They are also implementing innovative and need-based projects including research through co-funding support. Over the last 5 decades, GLRA has touched the lives of millions of affected people and their family members. GLRA, India is registered under the Trust Act with its central office in Chennai and regional offices in Delhi and Kolkata. GLRA's vision is a world in which no one suffers from Leprosy, TB and poverty-related diseases and the consequences of physical disability and social exclusion.

ABS in partnership with German Leprosy Relief Association (GLRA), India will implement the "Social Inclusion Development for Persons with Disabilities in Bhutan" Project in five dzongkhags towards the end of this year. The Objective of the project are to:

1. Access to disability data including children with disabilities by partnering with various stakeholders;
2. Capacity building of professionals (primary health care staff, ECCD facilitators, social workers, teachers) working on the grass root level;
3. Advocacy in terms of getting the Government's disability policy in place with different stakeholders, especially with government departments;
4. Making of public places accessible in 5 Dzongkhags; and
5. Conduct vocational trainings for individuals with disabilities as well as families of children with disability with a special focus on women.
5. Continue our work with UNICEF Bhutan in strengthening child protection for children with disabilities and fostering the family support groups in Paro and Wangdue Dzongkhags respectively;
6. Network and collaborate with relevant stakeholders including government agencies, international development organizations, private/corporate sectors and civil society organizations; and
7. Promote the early identification of children with disabilities and initiate early intervention.

11. Acknowledgement

Ability Bhutan Society (ABS) would like to offer our heartfelt gratitude to all our individual donors both national and international, stakeholders, Civil Society Organization Authority, volunteers and all our supporters for your continued support to ABS. Your generous support goes a long way in helping us to achieve our goals.

ABS would like offer our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Kunzang Getshen, who has been a great ambassador of ABS and has been actively involved in building network and mobilizing resource for ABS.

ABS Needs Your Love and Support

ABS provides much needed services to children with disabilities and their families with the invaluable support from the community and individuals. This assistance is vital in empowering children with disabilities to reach their highest potential. Your support and generosity helps us achieve our mission.

National Supporter

Cash/Cheque may be handed over directly at the ABS office in Thimphu (or) Cash/Cheque may be wired into the ABS bank account with the T Bank Ltd., Account No. 77777005865003

International Supporter

Bank Name: State Bank of India, New York
Swift Code: SBINUS33XXX
Routing No. 122060001

Beneficiary Bank Name: T Bank Limited
Swift Code: TBBTBTBTXXX
Account with SBI, New York: 77608355520001

Ultimate beneficiary Name: Ability Bhutan Society

Beneficiary address: Thimphu Bhutan

Beneficiary account No: 77777005865003



Artist: Suraj Rai, Photo courtesy: Srijana Giri

He chooses to express his views through art, dance and music. Always smiling, happy go lucky, meet Suraj, a 16 year old boy who has Down Syndrome from Tendruk Central School, Samtse Dzongkhag.

ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY

Near DHI Office, Upper Mothithang

Post Box # 1715, Thimphu, Bhutan

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Email: absbhuman@gmail.com | Facebook: Ability Bhutan Society

www.absbhuman.org