

COUNTRY REPORT ON COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES (BHUTAN)

Introduction:

The country report on Community Learning Centre has been prepared by a team consisting of relevant personnel from different organizations such as DEOs, NFE instructors, programme officer from the Department of Human Resources and the NFE officials. The team has made an effort to include in the report comprehensive picture of CLCs in Bhutan, by reflecting upon the CLCs supported by UNESCO and other organizations such schools, Department of Road and communities.

While preparing the report, the team referred to various relevant documents such, Education Sector Strategy paper 2000, Vision 2020, Village Basic Education and Skill Development Programme (VBESDP), Education Strategy Paper and Evaluation Report under UNESCO Project. The team has also made reference to CLC Management Handbook and NFE Policy Directive Guideline books while preparing this report.

While preparing this report, the team met for the first time on 2nd March 2004 for two hours and discussed about the guideline considering each of the points included in the outline of the guideline. The team felt that they meet at least three times to finalize the country report. It was during the first meeting, the team brain stormed the various points to be reflected in the report within given outline. The officials nominated for the seminar were asked to elaborate and write the first draft report including all the points discussed during the first meeting and present to the team on 10th March 2004. As agreed, the team met for the second time to discuss the first draft report. Several comments were made by the teams for improvement of report such facts and figures included in the report to be from the latest source, to avoid inclusion of things that are not certain ourselves. It was suggested to make the report slightly brief rather than a lengthy one as demanded by the UNESCO. The team felt that country report of such nature should be brief and precise considering the number of sections, topics and time.

Following the suggestions of the team, the report has been further improved with brevity while at the same time ensuring that all the sections and topics are included in the report.

The report has also been presented to the 12th National Steering Committee Meeting on NFE on 14th March 2004 which has finally approved.

Section 1: Background and overview on CLCs

1. A brief overview on socio-economic and cultural situation in the country
Bhutan has very special geo-political context, as small country waged between the two giant nations –India and China. The situation causes it both to value and promote its distinct identity and to maintain peaceful and cooperative relation with the neighbour. A small country of 48000 square kilometres with a population of 600000 Bhutan provides a unique challenge for development. The country is completely landlocked with rugged mountains and terrains rising steeply 100 meters at the southern border to over 7000 metres in the north. This mountainous terrain conditions access, transport, communications and travel affecting all aspects of socio-economic activities.

Because of its geographical situation, Bhutan remained isolated from the rest of the world until the middle of the century. It was only in the early 1960s that Bhutan embarked on the path of modernisation with the launch of its First Five –Year Development Plan. Bhutan has come a long way in just more than four decades of developmental activities. It has seen a drastic change in socio economic development of the country while at the same time ensuring its sustainability of its services, conserving its rich biodiversity and natural resources and thus promoting quality of life of people. Bhutan has been very cautious in the course of its developmental activities that it has always ensured sovereignty and security of the nation in the first place.

For a small country like Bhutan, preservation of its cultural heritage is critical to its very survival as a nation state. In addition safeguarding a sense of identity in a rapidly globalizing world, the living cultural heritage is a source of human values and beliefs that are of eternal relevance and critical for sustainable development. The traditional beliefs and customs underpinned by a strong reverence to all sentient beings and the environment promotes tolerance, compassion, respect, and charity, which are fundamental values for harmonious co-existence between human an nature.

In addition to providing a strong identity and a sense of values to all Bhutanese, the preservation of the rich cultural heritage also provides a strong link and support between the individual and the society at large acting as an effective social security net. The pursuit of individual self interests during modernization often threatens the rich bonding of individuals as members of extended families and communities. It is necessary to preserve social bonds in which every one, whether children or elderly, are honoured and respected. The breath and the quality of social relations also lie at the root of happiness throughout a person's entire life cycle, from children to old age. Traditional social values and thoughts provide a benign and supportive role to social change and development.

Although Bhutan is a small country, it stands out uniquely because of its strong policy on preservation cultural heritage. It promotes feeling one nation and one people thus strengthening the unity among the people. It is one of the exemplary countries in the world which does not have regret for the loss of culture and invest on its revival. Bhutan is very proud of its traditional culture and efforts are made promote through schools and various media.

Everything in Bhutan is very unique from rest of the world just because of the preservation of culture under the wise leadership of our beloved His Majesty King.

2. Educational situation with particular reference to literacy and continuing education
Education in Bhutan is free of cost: free tuition, textbooks, sports items, meals and boarding facilities, where required are provided by government. The government also provides free stationery to its rural schools. The primary enrolment rate is estimated to 81%. Adult literacy is estimated to be about 54%.

Progress made within the Primary Education Programme over the last decade to meet the Jomtein and Dakar Education for All Goal has stretched the limited resources of teachers, facilities and finance and severely tested the capacity of the system to deliver commitment to quality education. The success to of expanding primary education is now placing enormous pressure on the secondary and post secondary levels with an ever-increasing number of students moving up the ladder.

At present there are 791 schools and institutes including 375 NFE centres across the Kingdom. The total number of students currently studying different schools and institutes is 145,249 of which 12,838 are non-formal learners. (Education General Statistics 2003)

Non-formal education programme in Bhutan has three levels of programme, namely, basic literacy for 12 months, post literacy for 9 months and self learning programme which is a part of continuing education programme. The demand for NFE programme has been increasing over the years mainly due to awareness created among the local leader and school head teachers.

National Literacy survey is being carried out with financial assistance from UNICEF. It will determine the situation of literacy district wise and gender wise. The target set by the royal government of Bhutan is achieve full literacy in the national language, Dzongkha by the year 2012, which is only eight years from now.

Regarding the continuing education, it was recently decided in the 12th National Steering Committee Meeting held in the National Institute of Education to review the policies and submit a proposal for CE for the NFE learners, while the CE for the school dropouts will be taken care by the Department of School Education.

3. Locations of Community Learning Centres supported by UNESCO and other organizations

There are 18 CLCs across the country catering both rural and urban areas. List of the CLCs are included in the table below with their locations in different districts:

Sl. No.	Name of CLC	District	Type of place	Established by	Funded by
1.	Chungphel	Bumthang	Rural	DoHR band NFCED	UNESCO
2.	Lobneykha	Chhukha	Rural	NFCED	UNESCO
3.	Domkhar	Lhuentse	Rural		UNESCO
4.	Lingmethang	Mongar	Semi Urban	do	do
5.	Dungmin	Pemagatshel	Rural	do	do
6.	Nemjo	Paro	Urban	do	do
7.	Mendagang	Punakha	Semi Urban	do	do
8.	Rangtse	Samtse	Rural	do	do
9.	Changzamtog LSS	thimphu	Urban	in the schools	
10	Moshi	Trashigang	Rural	do	do
11	Bartsham	do	do	Community	community
12	Pangtokha	Trashiyangtse	Rural	DNFCED	UNESCO
13	Samcholing	Trongsa	Rural	do	UNESCO

14	Refe	do	Rural	do	commujity
15	Rukubji	Wangdi	Rural	DoHR and NFCED	UNESCO
16	Nobding	do	Rural	DOR	WFP
17	Tshaidang	Zhemgang	Rural	do	UNESCO
18	Panbang	DO	Rural	NFCED	UNESCO

4. Other community based NFE programmes supported by the government and other organizations such as NGOs.

NFE programme such as Wang Water Shed Project, NRTI (Natural Resouce Training Institue) implemented NFE Programme, English class for monks, Green house training programme are being organised by different government organisations and Non-governmental organisation.

Wang Water shed Project is a joint venture of NFCED and RSPN (Royal Society for Protection of Nature). This project involves four districts- Wangdi, Punakha, Thimphu and Paro. The main aim of this project is to provide necessary knowledge and skills through NFE learners and formal students on conservation of clean water and to promote safe drinking water. The project provides training to both formal and non-formal students on the techniques of identifying impurities of water and how to make water safe.

Training package on management of water is being developed in both English and Dzongkha for the NFE instructors and school teachers. They are being trained in use of the training package and how to impart training to the learners.

Some of the monasteries have taken initiatives to conduct English classes for the monks. This arrangement has been made in collaboration with the school head-teachers and NFE instructors. Functional English is taught to improve their communication skills in their day to day life.

NRTI organises NFE classes for the local people around the Institute to provide not only functional literacy but also to disseminate information, knowledge and skills related natural resource conservation, improvement of farming etc.

Agriculture extension officers organise kitchen gardening especially for the people dwelling in the high altitude. One of the most useful training related to kitchen gardening provided by the extension officers is the simple technique of making green house to sow cabbage seeds. This

kitchen gardening skill has been very effective and encouraging to the farmers in rural areas of high altitudes.

Section 2: Policy and legislation for CLCs

1. Policy statement and/or legislation concerning CLCs

Royal government of Bhutan is committed to provide community based continuing education skill training. To this extent, the government has recognized the need for establishment of community learning centres both within the existing schools and outside schools case by base. In its 12th National Steering Committee Meeting on NFE, it was decided to have at least one CLC in each Gewog (Block).

2. Inclusion of CLCs in the national education plans, in particular EFA national action plans and UN Literacy Decade:

Policy guidelines on CLC has been formulated by NFCED and approved by the Government. The national plan on CLC includes the strategies and procedure for expansion of CLCs and the role of communities in establishment of CLC. It also includes about the support that the government will provide for CLC.

One of major aspects of national plan on CLC is to improve the planning and management system and to ensure sustainability. Coordination and networking will be improved through establishment of regional CLC and appointment of permanent CLC managers. Efforts will be made in enhancing the planning and management skills of CLC managers and CLC committees.

CLCs will be expanded and facilities improved phase wise. CLCs will be one the most useful facilities at community level for continuing education and life long learning to improve the quality of life.

3. Budget allocation for CLCs by the government and financial and other assistance from external agencies

The royal government will continue its efforts in mobilizing external fund for establishment of CLC in different communities. A sum of Nu. 3 million or \$ 40,000 is kept for CLC projects. The fund is used for establishment of new CLCs, improvement of facilities in the existing CLCs, capacity building of the CLC managers and committees.

However, demand for support for in establishment of CLCs has been greatly challenged by the limited financial resources.

Section 3: Main activities of CLCs

Depending upon the need and demand from different communities, following activities are being carried out in the CLCs:

Literacy/NFE classes:

Beside conducting basic and post literacy classes, reading corners have been established with financial support from UNICEF. Reading corner is a small community library catering to the need of all people in the community in enhancing their knowledge and information. More than 10,000 people are benefited.

Although Bhutan has not reached to the stage where non-formal primary education or secondary education need to be provided outside formal system, CLCs are very much utilised by formal schools as classrooms and other purposes. The schools are very much benefited by CLCs in terms of space and other facilities library, distance learning equipment and many other activities.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

NFE is recognized by the Government as one of the main channels for dissemination of Early Childhood Care and Development programme. To this extent, CLCs are being planned to be utilised as Day care centres in future.

Income generation and poverty alleviation

A number of skill development training have been conducted in the CLCs as income generation and poverty alleviation activities. They are tailoring course, carpentry, furniture making, weaving, kitchen gardening, marketing and entrepreneur course etc.

Health and sanitation including HIV/AIDS prevention

Topics related to health including HIV/AIDS prevention are included regular curriculum of the literacy programme and are discussed both in basic and post literacy courses. Apart from this activity, health personnel are invited to the CLCs to talk and discuss about the topics.

Culture, sports and recreation

Cultural shows and other recreational activities such as games and sports are organised by CLCs. Some of the CLCs have managed games and sports articles from the parental school and organise games and sports such as archery, football, volleyball, traditional games like khuru for the learners and community people.

Local and traditional values:

Every 10th, 15th and 30th of each month in the lunar calendar is declared as free day for the farmers. Farmers refrain from doing farm works in these three days. Instead they go to the CLCs and perform prayers or they listen to episode of great people who taught them the way of life in the past. Sometimes they organise debate or invite guest speakers to talk about the local traditional values.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

Some of the CLCs are supplied with distance learning equipment such as video, TV, radio and tape-recorders for information and communication strategies. Plans are in the pipe line to provide computers to CLCs in future promote ICT.

Environment

NFCED is working closely with the RSPN an NGO who is directly responsible for protection of natural environment. As mentioned earlier, NFCED and RSPN are in the process of providing training to the instructors on protection of natural resources, equip the CLCs with necessary equipment to be used for training the learners on environment conservation.

Section 4: Effective implementation of CLCs

1. Community participation e.g. planning of activities and day-to-day management
Every CLC has a CLC management committee and a co-ordinator or a manager with the following responsibilities:
 - Plan and manage CLC on a daily basis.
 - Undertake assessments in the community to determine learning needs, market opportunities and existing local expertise/knowledge, as a basis for planning.
 - Plan and schedule all kinds of non-formal learning and training.
 - Liaise with specialist trainers, dzongkhag officials and national bodies to provide training

- Supervise the delivery of training locally, including supervision of long term- and short term instructors.
- Deliver literacy and skill training
- Promote contact and exchange with learners/instructors of other CLCs
- Monitor and evaluate non-formal learning in CLC.

2. Resource mobilizations e.g. human, material and financial resources

Maximum use of locally available resources is encouraged in the CLCs. For instance, while constructing the CLC in any community, they have to mobilise resources such as land, skill labourers, labourers and CLC committee members who can guide and direct CLC activities. For implementation of CLC activities such as training on HIV/AIDS, life skills, culture, sports and recreation, local and traditional values, and environment, CLC managers and co-ordinators identify local expertise and mobilise refreshment fund from the community and organise the activities. Health Assistance, agriculture extension officers, monks and other local spiritual people are invited to CLCs to share their experiences and knowledge with the learners.

Another good example of financial mobilisation is that the CLCs encourage training cum production. Through this proceeds they generate CLC fund to meet recurring cost and ensure sustainability of CLC activities. This is also aimed to establish saving group this innovation.

3. Capacity building of CLC personnel e.g. training activities at the CLCs as well as district and national levels.

All the assistance DEOs have been trained by NFCED on procedure of establishing CLCs in different communities. Similarly the local leaders such as Village headman (Gup), national assembly members (*chimis*) and village co-ordinators (Mangaps) are also oriented on the policies and directives for establishment of CLCs. CLC committees and managers were trained in planning and management of CLC activities using the CLC Management Handbook.

4. Establishing linkages and networking e.g. at the community and national levels; educational organisations and other developmental organisations

Concept of CLC has been discussed at different levels and disseminated to various agencies. Now many agencies such as RSPN, DoHR, DoPH, MoA, RNR Centre, ORCs have developed network with CLCs and are closely working together. For instance the Department of Human Resources has recognised CLC as a very convenient venue for implementation of village

skill development programme, similarly Ministry of Agriculture is just too happy to conduct their training for farmers in the CLCs. The network with different district sectoral heads is being strengthened through meetings and awareness campaign conducted. Of course the network with formal schools is very strong. All the CLCs are attached to a parental school. The head teacher of the parental school provide necessary support in execution of CLC activities.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and documentation:

The following agencies are involved in monitoring and evaluating CLC activities:

- NFE officials from NFCED
- Education Monitoring officers
- District Education Officers (DEOs)
- Head teachers of Parental schools
- CLC committee
- CLC coordinators/managers

NFE officials go and visit NFE centres every year to monitor and provide necessary professional support to NFE instructors especially in the rural areas. Besides, Education Monitoring Officers from the HQ visit NFE centres where NFE officials have not reached. DEOs also visit NFE centres and provide necessary support whenever possible. In line with the decentralisation policy, monitoring system has also been very much decentralised to the local CLC committees and parental school at local level. CLC committee and the parental schools are supposed to visit and monitor the progress frequently.

For every CLC activity there are progress report form which the CLC manager has to fill in, get it verified by the parental school and send to the DEOs and NFCED. They also send separate report on CLC activities whenever necessary for support and information.

Besides this reporting system, the CLC committees meet at least three times a year to plan, review and evaluate the success and impact CLC activities.

5. Systematic documentations and dissemination

For every CLC activity there are progress report form which the CLC manager has to fill in, get it verified by the parental school and send to

the DEOs and NFCED. They also send separate report on CLC activities in detail at the end of the activity further support and information.

Besides this reporting system, the local CLC committees meet at least three times a year to plan, review and evaluate the success and impact of CLC activities

Section 5: Strengths and future Challenges

1. Impact of the CLCs at the grassroots and national levels
 - One of the most important impacts of CLC is that it has encouraged the learners to join literacy programme as it has reduced the distance to NFE centres which are normally conducted in the school.
 - It has also reduced the dropout rate in the NFE classes as the learning conditions have been improved and made convenient to them.
 - Sense of ownership and cooperation among the community people has been improved.
 - Other developmental agencies are now finding it very easy to organize skill training for the farmers where there are CLCs.
 - It has improved/established the linkage and network with other agencies to work for the same goal.

2. Main challenges encountered by the CLCs at the grassroots and national levels

Some of the major challenges faced at the grassroots level are:

- Lack of manpower and skill labour for construction of CLC.
- Lack of skill instructors for skill training.
- Lack of funds for implementation of skill training.
- Lack of marketing for product in CLCs
- Lack of planning and management skills

Some of the challenges faced at national levels are:

- Lack of fund for establishment of CLCs
- Lengthy administrative procedures and formalities for construction of CLCs.

Any concrete plans to strengthen CLCs as part of national EFA strategies

Every year 5 new CLCs will be established in different districts and communities. In the long run every community or block of village of villages must have a CLC.

3. Possible solutions to overcome the challenges

- Mobilize human resources from other ministries and agencies to provide training in the CLCs.
- Encourage communities to think of innovative ways to generate CLC rolling budget.
- Provide training on planning and management of CLC activities.
- Conduct study tour for the CLC managers and committees to visit other CLC activities in the country.
- Develop audio visual materials for exchange ideas on CLC activities in other countries.

4. Suggestions for UNESCO, other UN agencies, NGOs and bilateral agencies to support CLCs:

UNESCO's support is normally ad-hoc and very small amount. It would be helpful if UNESCO has a long term plan for each of the countries so that they can incorporate in their plan and carry out the CLC project more effectively.

5. Key lessons learnt

- CLCs are definitely very useful institute outside formal education system. But planning and management of CLC activities at local level remains to be a big challenge.
- Sustainability of CLC activities is yet another concern in future. So expansion of CLC must be done very cautiously.

Annexes

1. List of country report team members

- i) Mr. Singye Namgyel, Joint Director, Non-formal & Continuing Education Division, Department of Adult and Higher Education, Ministry of Education
- ii) Mr. Dorji Wangchuk, Programme Officer, Non-formal & Continuing Education Division, Department of Adult and Higher Education, Ministry of Education
- iii) Mr. Tandin Dorji, Programme Officer, department of Human Resources, Ministry of Labour and Human Resources.
- iv) Mr. Treko, Rukubji CLC, Wangdi District.
- v) Mr. Leki Wangdi, ADEO, Dzongkhag Administration, Trashigang

2. Work schedule of the report preparation

Sl.No	Activities	Time frame	Responsible Person
1.	First round of meeting of the team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the country report guideline;• Brain storm the points using the guideline;• Identify reference materials to be used for preparation of report.	2 nd March 04	Dorji Wangchuk, PO, NFCED, MOE Leki Wangdi, ADEO Trashigang
2.	Second round meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the first draft report;• Suggestion and comments for improvements.	10 th March 04	Do
3	Present the 2 nd Draft to the 12 th National Steering Committee Meeting for approval and comments	14 th March 04	Do
4	Incorporate the decision of the 12 th National Steering Committee's decision and comments in the report.	15 th March 04	Do
5	Finalize the report and submit to UNESCO Bangkok	16 th March 04	Do

3. List of reference materials

- a) Education Strategy Paper 2002-07
- b) Education General Statistics 2003
- c) Vision 2020
- d) 9th Five year Plan Book
- e) Village Education & Basic Skills Development Project Documents
- f) Evaluation Report on Village Education & Basic Skills Development Project Documents
- g) CLC Management Handbook (Bhutan)

GUIDELINE

I. Introduction

Purpose of the report

Each participating countries of the CLC Regional Seminar to be held in March 2004 is requested to prepare a comprehensive report on CLCs in the country. The main purpose of the report is to document and disseminate the innovative experiences of CLCs at the grassroots and support mechanisms established at the district and national levels as well as policy and legislation of CLCs within the framework of EFA and UN Literacy Decade.

Report preparation

It is suggested that the report be prepared by a team of experts in cooperation with the responsible staff of CLCs at the grassroots and national levels and the member institutions ARTC in the country through document studies and field work including interviews and discussions with stakeholders. The outline of the process of the report preparation should be documented in the Introduction of the report.

Use of the reports for the Seminar

The country reports will be synthesized and presented by UNESCO at the Seminar, while participants will be invited to make presentations to highlight specific topics during the Plenary and/or Roundtable sessions. Arrangements for the country presentations will be informed after receiving and acceptance of the reports by UNESCO. Please note the importance of submitting country reports in time to allow UNESCO to prepare a draft synthesis in time for the Seminar.

Deadlines

Please submit the following documents before the deadlines, preferably by e-mail attachments to APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok:

1. A plan for the report preparations **before 20 January 2003**, covering the items in 'Introduction' of the II. Suggested Outline in this guideline.
2. A full country report of 10 – 20 pages **before 22 February 2004**.

For further queries

APPEAL, UNESCO Bangkok
920 Sukhumvit Rd. Bangkok 10110, Thailand
(tel. 66-2-391-0577, fax. 66-2-391-0866, e-mail. APPEAL@unesco Bangkok.org).

II. Suggested Outline for the Report

The report of 10 – 20 pages is suggested comprising the following sections:

Introduction: Arrangements for the report preparation (details can be annexed)

1. The composition of the country report preparation team.
2. The coverage of CLCs reported in this report (preferably both UNESCO-supported CLCs and those supported by other organizations)
3. Main information sources and methods of collecting information, e.g. existing documents, field visits, questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions
4. Process of information analysis, e.g. expert meeting, national seminar/workshop

Section 1: Background and overview on CLCs

6. A brief overview on socio-economic and cultural situation in the country
7. Educational situation with particular reference to literacy and continuing education
8. Locations of Community Learning Centres supported by UNESCO and other organizations
9. Other community based NFE programmes supported by the government and other organizations such as NGOs.

Section 2: Policy and legislation for CLCs

4. Policy statement and/or legislation concerning CLCs
5. Inclusion of CLCs in the national education plans, in particular EFA national action plans and UN Literacy Decade
6. Budget allocation for CLCs by the government and financial and other assistance from external agencies

Section 3: Main activities of CLCs

Contents, target groups (esp. disadvantaged groups) and number of participants of activities carried out in the CLCs covered by the report content may include:

- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Literacy
- Non-formal primary and secondary education
- Income generation and poverty alleviation
- Health and sanitation including HIV/AIDS prevention
- Culture, sports and recreation
- Local and traditional values
- Gender equality
- Human right and democracy
- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Ethnic and linguistic minorities
- Environment

Section 4: Effective implementation of CLCs

10. Community participation e.g. planning of activities and day-to-day management

11. Resource mobilizations e.g. human, material and financial resources
12. Capacity building of CLC personnel e.g. training activities at the CLCs as well as district and national levels.
13. Establishing linkages and networking e.g. at the community and national levels; educational organizations and other developmental organizations
14. Monitoring and evaluation e.g. internal and external mechanisms
15. Systematic documentations and dissemination

Section 5: Strengths and future Challenges

6. Impact of the CLCs at the grassroots and national levels
7. Main challenges encountered by the CLCs at the grassroots and national levels
8. Possible solutions to overcome the challenges
9. Any concrete plans to strengthen CLCs as part of national EFA strategies
10. Suggestions for UNESCO, other UN agencies, INGOs and bilateral agencies to support CLCs
11. Key lessons learnt

Annexes

1. List of country report team members
2. Work schedule of the report preparation
3. List of reference materials
4. Photos and resource materials (can be posted to APPEAL)
5. Others