

# ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY

"See the Person Not the Disability"



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## ANNUAL REPORT 2018



# Ability Bhutan Society (ABS) Profile

## A. The History of ABS:

ABS is a Public Benefit Organization which was founded on the recognition that persons with moderate to severe diverse abilities, primarily children and their families have special needs. ABS was registered with the Civil Society Organization Authority of Bhutan (CSOA) under registration No. CSOA/PBO15 on the 10th of November 2011. The concept of ABS was inspired by the vision of a Just and Compassionate Society by His Majesty The Fifth DrukGyalpo Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. ABS was inaugurated by Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck, The Royal Patron of ABS, on April 6th, 2012 as a project under the Kidu Foundation which was established by Their Majesties as an endowment for Royal projects.

## B. The Vision of ABS:

Empowering individuals with diverse abilities to live independently and with dignity within Bhutanese Society.

## C. The Mission of ABS:

Enhancing the quality life of individuals living with moderate to severe diverse abilities by:

1. *Advocating* and creating awareness of the rights of people living with diverse abilities in Bhutanese society;
2. *Developing* core groups of dedicated, committed and trained social workers and care givers;
3. *Enhancing* family and caregiver skills to empower those living with diverse abilities in their care; and
4. *Providing* direct interventions to enhance the capabilities of people with differing abilities.

## D: Motto

"See The Person Not The Disability"





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*“See the Person Not the Disability”*

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# Report of the Outgoing Chairperson of ABS



## ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY

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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. Donors**

Most humbly, with due sense of reverence and gratitude, I beg to submit that I complete my second term of office as the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Ability Bhutan Society (ABS) I resign with a heavy heart from the post as it is required under the Article of Association of the ABS as members cannot serve beyond the two consecutive terms.

As the outgoing Chair, it has been honour to have had the opportunity of establishing the Ability Bhutan Society under His Majesty The King's visionary guidance and leadership.

I would also like to thank Ashi Khendum Dorji, Ms. Tamara Wangchuk and Dr. Kinzang Getshen for trusting me and bringing me to ABS, to serve as its founding chair of the Ability Bhutan Society for the first term, when it was applying for its registration with the Secretariat of the Civil Society Organisation of Bhutan.

On its being registered, it was a special privilege to welcome Her Majesty The Queen of Bhutan as its First Royal Patron and the opportunity and privileged serve under Her Majesty's Royal Patronage and Leadership.

It was not an easy and it will continue to be hard task for ABS which is responsible for catering to the various needs of the children with moderate to severe case of disabilities. Most of the activities ABS carries out are invisible yet very tedious. Imagine in a society that is yet to accept the challenge of disability. Dealing with a normal child or human being and more so it is when someone has to be trained or helped to carry out normal human activities such as eating or washing or going to toilet and where places are not friendly and accessible for these persons to socialise or access basic public services such as visiting medical services or attending a school.

Nevertheless as His Majesty The King and Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen has been continuous source of inspiration and guiding light to build hope for the organisation. Among many such Royal Gesture we had the greatest honour and privilege of receiving the precious Royal Command of the King of Bhutan through Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen at Lingkana Palace during the Royal Audience of Her Majesty granted to His Eminence Ryosei Oya San, the President of Bussi-En on Social Inclusion that His Majesty will personally present an Ability Society National Centre.

With a national centre and proper facilities in many places as possible including the five basic establishments that will be opened in five dzongkhag in 2019, we hope ABS will be able to carry out its Centre-based and home based Clinical Intervention programme and Family Empowerment Forum in many parts of the country.



# ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY

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The observations of international days that celebrate or highlight issues related to the disability such as the Observance of International Day for Persons with Disabilities, World Down Syndrome Day, World Autism Awareness Day, World Cerebral Palsy Day and International Days for Persons with Disabilities has been able to bring awareness and direct intervention that are focussed to individual needs which cannot be replaced.

I am hopeful that the support we are receiving from the GLRA India, a society registered in Tamil Nadu, India, The Rotary Club of Taichung Chung Shin, Taiwan, Save the Children, Bussi-En International Social Welfare Organization (Bussi-En), Shuchona foundation Bangladesh, Japan Overseas Cooperative Associations (JOCA), International Partners, National Partners, Donors and Volunteers from Bhutan and abroad will continue further.

We also shall hope the Ministries and Dzongkhags, while strengthening our existing centre at Thimphu, support ABS's future endeavours.

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 my working at ABS a purposeful one.

Above all also to those members of ABS who kindly elected me to serve the second term. Though in obedience to our laws I shall leave the ABS, it will be my honour to be of any assistance, should it be found useful.

Finally, as I wish the incoming Board of Trustees and ABS all my best wishes, ABS as the recipient of Award of the Order of Merit Gold from the Throne of Bhutan serves as the immense source of motivation for all at ABS and we may all ever remain gratefully indebted to His Majesty The King of Bhutan.

I beg to remain,  
Your Majesty's Most Obedient Servant

Kunzang Wangdi  
CHAIRPERSON

# Report of the Executive Director

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of Ability Bhutan Society (ABS), 2018. As an organization, we strive to put our best foot forward every day to serve the persons with disabilities primarily children. This year's Report highlights many of the organizations' activities that were carried out to advance our Vision of empowering individuals with disabilities to live independently and with dignity.

Ability Bhutan Society committed to the attainment of His Majesty's vision of a 'Just and compassionate society' under the the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen in the course the course of 7 years has developed its primary programs: Center Based Intervention; Home Based Intervention; Family Support Program; Advocacy and Sensitization Program and School Outreach Program.

ABS is fortunate to receive support from all our development partners for training our staff. We continue to receive support from international and national developing partners which enables ABS to provide better services to children with disabilities and their families.

We aim to become the professionalized service provider for children with disabilities, building a team of committed and dedicated staff and taking advantage of the services of volunteers both international and national for whose dedicated support we remain ever grateful.

In 2019, ABS will introduce our five regional centers viz.: in Chhukha, Dagana, Punakha, Sarpang, and Trashigang respectively with the financial support from Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Deutsche Lepra-und Tuberkulosehilfe e. V (DAHAW) and German Leprosy and Relief Association (GLRA).

We will introduce social inclusion activities in the ABS in particular a project modelled on Share Kanazawa of Bussi-En and under its funding support.

In the fulfilment of the above missions, we invite our partners and supporters to join us in serving the Bhutanese citizens with disabilities better.

On behalf of Ability Bhutan Society



Ugyen Wangchuk



## Introduction

The Year 2018 may be termed as a good year for the Ability Bhutan Bhutan Society by any means since its formal inauguration by Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen of Bhutan as a CSO responsible to take care of persons with moderate to severe disabilities.

We had the Royal Visit of Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen at the new office to launch the Handbook on Caregivers in attendance by the Regional Director of UNICEF.

ABS signed MOU with Bussi-En international Social Welfare Organization in Japan and Shuchona Foundation of Bangladesh committed to serve the cause of Autism and DAHW/ GLRA a German NGO based in India.

ABS has been in its modest way through its outreach programmes has been able to brighten the lives of many children and families above all reach out to the Bhutanese society to accept disability not as a stigmatised issue but an asset that can be channelled for an inclusive and enhance quality of membership of individuals with autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy and other learning disability to be given opportunity to grow and live as equal productive Bhutanese.

As we look forward to a greater 2019 to garner your goodwill and support during the year that we are ushering in with many common challenges and aspirations, ABS is proud to present this Annual Report 2018, an account of all our hard work together as ABS Family:



# 1. Clinical Intervention Programme

Clinical Intervention Programme is an important service that is being provided in ABS to assist children with disabilities to live independently with dignity. There are many stages to which children need special care and proper guidance to adjust with the surrounding based on their difficulty. Thus, an early identification of disability is vital for increasing the chance to improve their skills. In addition, parents are also provided trainings to implement therapies even at home to aid for further improvement.

## A. Early Intervention Services

Our Clinical Intervention programme benefited around 26 children aged 2-14 years in the year 2018 among which 17 children are old clients. 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 were also encouraged to observe and take part in the intervention sessions so that they can provide similar sessions at home.

### Accomplishments:

Following were the activities that were carried out during the year

1. Centre based intervention given to children aged from 2 to 14 years- 26;
2. Children transited to ECCD centres- 4;
3. Children ready for mainstream education- 9;
4. Children and their families attended the annual summer programme- 40;
5. Social workers attended behaviour modification training at National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, at Secunderabad, India with support from World Health Organization Bhutan- 2;



6. Social worker attended workshop on inclusive education conducted by Ministry of Education- ; and
7. Social worker with support from Bhutan Foundation attended the SEN(Special Education Need) study tour in Chennai, India- 1

## **B. Family Empowerment Forum**

A child's development depends immensely on the joint efforts of a 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 trainings and workshops. The general health and wellbeing of a 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 known as Family Empowerment Forum.

## **Accomplishments:**

Following were the activities that were carried out during the year:

- 1) Parents/caregivers attended a session on Experiencing and Understanding Disability- 12;
- 2) Parents/caregivers attended a session on how to engage their children during summer and winter vacations- 17;
- 3) All the parents/caregivers were involved in summer program;
- 4) All the parents/caregivers were equally involved in all the international day's observation;
- 5) Parents/caregivers attended Decentralized Hands- on Program Exhibition (D-HOPE)- 9; and
- 6) Parent participated in Haa Annual Mela to show case empowerment skills and also to encourage other families for advocacy- 1.



## 2. Observance of International Day for Persons with Disabilities



Disability awareness is very important when it comes to breaking stereotypes and overcoming preconceptions regarding disabilities. This is why observances of international disability days are one of the key programmes at ABS with an aim to create inclusive and equitable society. ABS in solidarity with the global initiatives and likeminded organizations observed following important international disability days:

### A. World Down Syndrome Day

The World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) is observed on 21st of March every year. On this day, people with Down syndrome and those who live and work with them throughout the world organize and participate in activities and events to raise public awareness and create a single global voice for advocating for the rights, inclusion

and well being of people with Down syndrome. The theme for 2018 was "What I bring to my Community." All people with Down syndrome must have opportunities to contribute to the community and live valued lives, included on a full and equal basis with others, in all aspects of society. People with Down syndrome can and do bring so much to the community, wherever they live around the world when given the opportunity, but many are prevented from making meaningful contributions. Lots of Socks campaign and the campaign aimed to create conversation about diversity, uniqueness, inclusion and acceptance was organized. The idea behind the Lots of Socks initiative is that all types, shapes, sizes of the same thing can be unique in their own way, and yet do the same thing. Children understand what socks are, how they look and what they are for, and children understand that no two socks are the same.

### B. World Autism Awareness Day

ABS observed the World Autism Awareness Day at the Royal Banquet Hall on 2nd of April. The theme focused on the importance of **empowering women and girls** with autism and involving them and their representative organizations in policy and decision making to address these challenges. The Honorable Chief Guest Mr. Gerald Daly, UN Resident Coordinator/ UNDP Resident Representative mentioned that, "**Ability Bhutan Society is a most practical example of Gross National Happiness**" and "How we should enhance our work on achieving gender equality and empowering our women and girls." He also said that it's a chance for us to work on





our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals which upholds the 2030 Agenda's core promise to **leave no one behind**. The programme also included message from Chairperson of ABS, cultural program by Changangkha Middle Secondary School and Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth. A child with autism, Master Siddharth, delivered a heart melting speech where he mentioned, "People with autism feel the same emotions anyone else does and that they communicate those feelings in different ways." Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth also had held a general health checkup camp on the World Autism Awareness Day for children and families of ABS and Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth.

ABS also joined the world in Light it up Blue campaign, by lighting up a prominent landmark in the city with its golden spires and bells, The National Memorial Chorten, Thimphu till 3rd of April, 2018 to raise awareness on autism. The initiative is generally associated with Autism Speaks. **Autism Speaks** is an autism advocacy organization in the United States that sponsors autism research and conducts awareness and outreach activities aimed at families, governments- and the public.

### C. World Cerebral Palsy Day

The Ability Bhutan Society and Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth observed the World Cerebral Palsy (CP) Day on the 6th of October with the aim to raise awareness on CP and issues that affect people with CP at local, national and international level and to create more inclusive society. The event started with offering of butter lamps by the children. Various videos on cerebral palsy were screened and Ms. Jaysree, volunteer and Special Educator and Ms. Beda Giri, Technical Advisor of ABS conducted open discussion on nutrition, positioning/seating,

adaptation on teaching and related/associated issues on cerebral palsy with the parents and caregivers of the children. ABS staff also did a role play highlighting the challenges and issues faced by children with disabilities. Around 70 participants including children and family members attended the event.

### D. International Days for Persons with Disabilities

The Ability Bhutan Society observed the International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) on 3rd of December with the theme **"Empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring inclusiveness and equality."** It focuses strongly on empowering persons with disabilities for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. Mr. Rudolf Schwenk, UNICEF Bhutan Representative graced the event as the Chief Guest and highlighted that the IDPD is a day to unite and promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize increased support for the dignity, rights and wellbeing of persons, and especially children, with disabilities. UNICEF Bhutan Representative also stressed that the observation of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities every year is a testimony of the Bhutan's commitment to **leave no one behind** – which is the essence of the 2030 Agenda. Additionally, the Public Health Engineering Division (PHED) and SNV Bhutan study report on "Understanding the impact of Disability on Access and Use of Sanitation and Hygiene Services in Rural Bhutan" was also launched to highlight the sanitation and hygiene needs of women/ men, girls/boys and nuns/monks in rural Bhutan. The study was conducted in collaboration with ABS and DPAB (Disabled Persons' Association of Bhutan). As the part of the event ABS launched a short film on importance of early intervention and its benefit. IDPD was observed with support from Save the Children Bhutan, SNV Bhutan, Australian Aid and PHED, Ministry of Health.



### 3. Bhutan Foundation Project

Bhutan Foundation supported the project 'Early Intervention Program for Children with Visual Impairment in Bhutan' which aimed to provide children with multiple disabilities and visual impairment the support needed to prepare them for school. As a part of the project, three day workshop was conducted from 2nd to 4th of March 2018 for parents and caregivers of children ages zero to six with MDVI, ECCD (Early Childhood Care and Development) facilitators and social workers of ABS. The training focused on helping parents understand what they can do at home so that their child is better prepared to go to day care or a school, and understand the role day-care facilitators/educators can play to support child's development.

Ms. Gayatari Ghalley an ECCD facilitator said, "The workshop was an eye opener for her." "Through this programme, I learned how to care for children with special needs," she said.

"Before, we didn't give much importance to children with special needs. Also, I learned that teaching through fun activities can make them learn better and faster. As visually impaired, we

have to make them feel because the more they feel, the more they can learn." The workshop was conducted by technical experts from Perkins International. The social workers visited homes of children with visual impairment as a follow up program. They provided intervention services to children at their homes and also facilitated the parents to implement the learning.





## 4. Deutsche Lepra- und Tuberkulosehilfe e.V. (DAHW) and German Leprosy and TB Relief Association (GLRA) Project

The Ability Bhutan Society carried out sensitization workshop on strengthening inclusive communities in Khebisa and Lhamoyzingkha Gewogs in Dagana. The sensitization was mainly conducted for the local leaders, community workers and parents and caregivers of children with disabilities so that they take into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities while they plan community development activities. The workshop covered important issues like rights of persons with disabilities, importance of community inclusion, eliminating violence against persons with disabilities and importance of seeking early intervention services.

***131 participants including local leaders, community workers, civil servants and parents and caregivers attend the workshop on strengthening inclusive community"***

The project was supported by GLRA, India. GLRA India is a society registered in Tamil Nadu, India. Since 2012, GLRA broadened the scope of work by including and involvement in the rehabilitation of persons affected by all types of disabilities. GLRA strives to make India as a place where no one is deprived of his/her fundamental human rights due to leprosy, TB or disability. Considering the magnitude of needs and demands of people with disabilities and the limited resources, GLRA India looks forward to advocate for disability inclusive development.





## 5. Donation of Toyota High Roof Bus

The Rotary Club of Taichung Chung Shin, Taiwan, 3461 district, generously donated one unit of Toyota high roof bus to provide pick and drop services to the children, whereby ensuring that the child doesn't miss any intervention sessions at the center. It was difficult for some children and parents to reach out to ABS center as they couldn't afford the transportation cost. But now with the donated bus, children can have easy access to avail the services of ABS. ABS is overwhelmed with the care and empathy that we received from the Rotarians of Taiwan especially from Mr. David Chun-Ching Liao, President of Rotary Club of Taichung Chung Shin and Dr. Yen. ABS is grateful to Rotary club of Taichung Chung Shin, Taiwan, for embracing our cause. ABS will always treasure their gift with uttermost care and integrity.





## 6. Save The Children Project

### A. Capacity building program for families and caregivers of children with disabilities

With the support of Save the Children Bhutan, ABS conducted capacity building program for families and caregivers of children with disabilities in Bumthang, Mongar and Pemagatshel Dzongkhags respectively in the month of July. The participants were oriented on disability and types of disability, causes and prevention, importance of ADLS (Activities of daily living skills), early childhood developmental milestones, social communication, behavioural identification & intervention, child protection of children with disabilities and importance of community inclusion of persons with disabilities. Consequently, by building the capacity of the families and caregivers, they could provide basic intervention services to their children at homes, thus enhancing their children's lives.

One of the key areas that the Ability Bhutan Society focuses is on early identification and clinical intervention together with creating awareness. It is of utmost importance that disabilities in children, if any, are identified at earlier stages of life and appropriate intervention measures are provided to minimize the impact of disabilities. What is even more important is to impart/orient the families/caregivers of children

with disabilities the basic knowledge on clinical intervention strategies and early identification. This would not only help families/caregivers in providing appropriate and right support to their children at homes but also help them identify disability in children and seek required support from the concerned agencies.

***A total of 1605 participants consisting of parents/caregivers, Health Assistant, Local leaders, ECCD facilitators and Persons with Disabilities attended the program.***





## **B. Community inclusion of children with disabilities and their families.**

Many children with disabilities remain isolated at home due to the absence of any programs that can cater to their needs and include them meaningfully. They have either transitioned from the school setting or they cannot cope up with the vocational institutions. Therefore they remain idle at homes with their parents/caregivers where there is no learning and inclusion at community level. In order to ensure that these children are equally included in the community, they can have better idea about the things around them. ABS with support from Save the Children organized various outreach programs such as pottery sessions, park tour, visit to music and art schools and outdoor games. Each outreach program was designed and implemented in such way that it benefited children in improving their fine motor skills, social skills, problem-solving skills and communication skills.

***“Around 30 children and their families participated in the community inclusion program”***





## 7. UNICEF Project

### A. Formation and Strengthening of Family Support Group

With the support from UNICEF, ABS has been able to establish support group for families of children with disabilities in Dagana, Paro and Wangduephodrang Dzongkhags. Various trainings and workshops on disability (both theory and practical) were conducted. The family support group does not just consist of families/caregivers of children with disabilities but also relevant stakeholders who play a vital role in the lives of children with disabilities like staff from the physiotherapy unit, ECCD facilitators and primary school teachers. The workshop was facilitated by Ms. Subbalakshmi Kulthumani, Volunteer and Special Educator from India and Ms. Beda Giri, Technical Advisor, of ABS. The facilitators touched on the topics like sensory activities, early intervention and nutrition. In the course of the workshop there were different activities to engage the participants. All the activities were aimed at understanding the difficulties that people with disabilities go through and how we as a service provider and caregiver should support them with patience. Parent focal person was appointed in the respective Dzongkhags for further follow up and correspondence.

***In Wangdue, 43 participants including parents of both children with and without disabilities, teachers, SEN teachers, ECCD facilitators and health workers:-***

***In Dagana, there were 68 participants including parents of both children with and without***

***disabilities, teachers, SEN coordinators, ECCD facilitators, students and BHU clinicians; and***

***In Paro, 50 participants including parents of both children with and without disabilities, primary school teachers, ECCD facilitators and health workers (Physiotherapist & Nutritionist) attended the program.***

### B. Sensitization Program on Child Protection for Children with Disabilities

According to research children with disabilities often face a wide range of physical, social and environmental barriers to full participation in society, including reduced access to health care, education and other support services. They are also thought to be at significantly greater risk of violence than their peers without disabilities. Therefore it's of great necessity to prevent violence against children with disabilities by sensitizing the general public about child protection and rights of children with disabilities. With support from UNICEF Bhutan ABS conducted sensitization workshop on child protection in Gasa, Samdrupjongkhar and Samtse Dzongkhag. The workshop covers important components such as rights of children with disabilities, eliminating violence and reporting mechanism to report child abuse cases.

***A total of 37 participants in Gasa, 45 participants in Samdrupjongkhar and 49 participants in Samtse including Dzongdag, dzongkhag officers, teachers and Caregiver of children with disabilities attended the workshop.***





### C. Launching of Handbook for families and caregivers of children with and without disabilities

Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck launched the handbook for families and caregivers of children with and without disabilities, with a focus on children with disabilities, developed by ABS and UNICEF. The UNICEF Regional Director and UNICEF Resident Representative were present for the launch. The handbook was written by Ms. Jean Ho, a senior speech-language Therapist from Sound Ways, Singapore. The handbook is written in both English and Dzongkha. It first set out to put together information to assist families and caregivers of children with disabilities, but has since grown in scope in pursuit of creating a more inclusive Bhutan. Various sections of the handbook are applicable to all families and caregivers with children from 0-6 years old across all abilities. It includes an overview of the national agenda towards disability, rights for child, awareness of violence against children, as well as resources, services and organizations that are available in Bhutan. It also provides tips on basic nutrition, sleep duration, behaviour management, literacy and numeracy to help families and caregivers work with children. The book serves as an informative starting point for families and caregivers of children with disabilities.

### D. Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

#### A. Bussi - En International Social Welfare Organization

On the 16th of June 2018, DASHO KUNZANG WANGDI, Honourable Chairperson of Ability Bhutan Society (ABS), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with His Eminence Ryosei Oya san, the President of Bussi-En International Social Welfare Organization (Bussi-En).

The Bussi-En International Social Welfare Organization ("Bussi-En") was founded in 1960 in Japan as a holistic supporting facility for persons with disabilities. Bussi-En has been providing pioneer and comprehensive social inclusion services not only in the field of social welfare for persons with disabilities but also in the field of community revitalization through its concept of "Gochamaze" which refers to a holistic interaction among all walks of life and regardless of individual backgrounds and abilities.

His Eminence, The Bussi-En President HE Ryosei Oya san, remarked at the signing of the MoU with ABS, "Most countries divide society in vertical ways where persons with disabilities, senior citizens and people who are socially vulnerable are secluded from society by keeping them in facilities where



Photo courtesy: Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen's Facebook Page



there is no interaction with other citizens. Such countries may believe that secluding them helps to protect them from possible social harm. However, after realizing the importance and the sustainability of real social inclusion where socially vulnerable citizens also have equal rights, capacities and abilities to contribute to their society if given the right opportunities, responsibilities and support, many countries have been dedicating much effort to remove the vertical barriers in order to realize real and practical social inclusion.” His Eminence also said that “I have a strong faith in Bhutan where people are compassionate, and thus we can go beyond these vertical social divisions to realize real social inclusion through practical action. Bussi-En is pleased to be a part of the contribution for an inclusive society in Bhutan and looks forward to working collaboratively with Ability Bhutan Society.”

The Honorable Chairperson of ABS, Dasho Kunzang Wangdi, said: “with the signing of the MoU today, we are glad that soon Bhutan and its persons with disabilities will be able to accrue benefits from the many years of valuable experience of Bussi-En.” Dasho further remarked: “we look forward to creating many replicas of Bussi-En’s ‘Share Kanazawa’ concept model in Bhutan starting with one in the Thimphu Dzongkhag”. These will be communities that promote social inclusion in line with our philosophy of governance and development that intends to carry everyone along and include everyone, irrespective of physical, mental and cognitive conditions. Societies and organizations that are sensitive to the needs and potentials of every member of their community are in line with the shared vision and mission of Bussi-En, ABS and their founders. As well as sharing expertise, both organizations will work together on the promotion of social inclusion, the organization of workshops, conferences and training, seminars, the development of projects, and the dissemination of activities through publications.

## B. Shuchona Foundation

The Ability Bhutan Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Shuchona Foundation on 12th of May 2018. A number of Executive Committee members of Shuchona Foundation were present during the MoU signing. The MoU anticipates facilitating a collaborative joint research program, which will include training & workshop sessions, translation and sharing of resources. The collaboration intends to benefit both the organizations by developing low-cost, high-impact programs, resource materials about neurodevelopmental disorders and the coping mechanisms for the individuals and their family members, establishing a strong awareness around the notion. The scope of the MoU also includes:

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.

Shuchona Foundation is a registered non-profit organization in Bangladesh with an intends to enable innovative ideas and approaches in the area of neurodevelopment disabilities, mental health issues, and other vulnerable groups, enabling inclusion in social, economic, political and cultural progress, and mitigating challenges individuals experience as a consequence of their disability or due to discrimination and prejudice.





## 8. 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) GLRA India;
- 4) Japan Overseas Cooperation Association (JOCA);
- 5) Save The Children Bhutan;
- 6) Shama Foundation;
- 7) SNV Bhutan;
- 8) Sound Ways, Singapore;
- 9) Shuchona Foundation;
- 10) UNICEF Bhutan;
- 11) Wheelchair of Hope ; and
- 12) 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; and
- 7) Ministry of Education.

### C. Donors

- 1) Ashi Khendum Dorji
- 2) Ashi Tessa Dorji
- 3) Aspiring Fine Arts Group (Singapore); (Khamtrurinpoche's guests)
- 4) Aum Deki Rabgye
- 5) Bhutan Homestay
- 6) Bank of Bhutan
- 7) Dr. Patanjali Dev Nayar
- 8) H.E. Phakchok Rinpoche and Sangha
- 9) Mr. Anand Acharya
- 10) Mr. Brian McDonough
- 11) Ms. Dekyi Penjor
- 12) Ms. Elisabeth Khor
- 13) Ms. Esha Chabra
- 14) Mr. Karma Penjor
- 15) Mr. Pem Tshering
- 16) M/s Rinson Construction
- 17) SABAH Bhutan
- 18) Sound Pictures
- 19) T. Bank Limited
- 20) Tseyring Namgyel

## 9. 2018 Year Review

### 10th of March:

ABS and Bussi-en Group in collaboration with Japan Overseas Cooperative Associations (JOCA) has conducted one day TOT workshop on "SPORT FOR TOMORROW" (SFT) for Professional working in the field of Disability. SPORT FOR TOMORROW (SFT) is an international contribution through sport Initiative led by Japanese government, which promotes sports to more than 10 million people in over 100 nations until 2020, the year when Tokyo is to host the Summer Olympic and Paralympics Games. It aims to deliver values of sports and promote the Olympic and Paralympics movements to people of all generation worldwide. Around 26 participants from Schools with SEN (Special Education Need) program, Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth, Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan (DPAB) and ABS participated in the training program.

### 16th of March:

32th Board Meeting was held at Hotel Phuntshopelri, Thimphu.

### 28th to 30th of March:

Mr. Ugyen Wangchuck, Executive Director attended annual civil society organization meeting at Phuntshogling.

### 2nd of April:

Ability Bhutan Society, Changangkha Middle Secondary School and Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth observed World Autism Awareness Day. ABS also joined the World in Light it up Blue Campaign, by lighting up the National Memorial Chorten.

### 13th of April to 27th of April:

Ms. Bishnu Gurung, Social Worker attended workshop on Frontiers of Psychology in China supported by Chinese Academy of Science.

### 13th of April:

Third Annual General Meeting was held at Hotel TashiYoedling. The Annual Report of 2017, Clinical

Report and Audited Financial statement were presented during the AGM. The AGM approved the annual work plan for 2018 and budget proposal for the year 2018/2019. Board Members, parent representatives, parents and development partners attended the meeting.

### 10th of May:

Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck, The Royal patron of ABS paid Her Royal Visit to Ability Bhutan Society and launched the handbook for families and caregivers of children with and without disabilities.

### 12th of May:

Ability Bhutan Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Shuchona Foundation, Bangladesh.

### 16th of June:

Ability Bhutan Society signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bussi-En International Social Welfare Organisation, Japan.

### 25th to 27th of June:

Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk, Executive Director attended C4D workshop at Gasa organized by Ministry of Education.

### 29th of June:

Ms. Jaysree, Volunteer and Special Educator, conducted brief session on how to engage children with therapeutic activities during summer break. The activity includes fine motor skills, gross-motor skills and sensory integration. Parents were divided into groups whereby they will carry out play activities for children.

### 6th of July:

33rd Board Meeting was held at ABS center.

### 18th of August:

Annual high tea fundraising event was held at YDF centre with the musical performance presented

by Misty Terrace who had been so passionate with serving the cause of persons with disability and improvement of their lives.. The programme was organised by Aum Deki Yangzom, Hon'ble Chairperson of the Fundi Raising Committee of ABS. The fund was raised through sale of tickets, sponsorships and donations, donation box and card sale. Net income was Nu. 4,58,350/-.

### **21st of September:**

Wheelchairs of Hope and The Embassy of Israel, Kathmandu, Nepal generously donated 3 wheelchairs of Hope to our causes.

### **24th of September to 28th of September:**

Ms. Namgay Om and Ms. Pema Yuden attended training on Behavior Modification at National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Secunderabad, India supported by World Health Organization (WHO).

### **6th of October:**

Ability Bhutan Society and Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth observed World Cerebral Palsy Day.

### **11th to 12th of October:**

Mr. Ugyen Wangchuck, Executive Director and Ms. Bishnu Maya Gurung attended Education Strategy planning for SEN (Special Education Need) program conducted by Ministry of Education.

### **25th of October to 6th of November:**

Mr. Chajay Rinzin attended training on Capacity Building Program to "Make the Right Real", in Korea.

### **3rd of December:**

Ability Bhutan Society observed the International Day of Persons with Disabilities at Youth Development Fund (YDF) hall.

### **2nd to 11th of December:**

With support from Bhutan Foundation Mr. Ugyen Wangchuck, Executive Director and Ms. Bishnu Maya Gurung, Social Worker attended the SEN study tour in Chennai, India.

### **12th of December:**

Mr. Karma Wangchuk has donated Ngultrum Two Lakhs Twenty Six Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty Eight (Nu. 226,668/-) to the Ability Bhutan Society (ABS) on 12th of December 2018. He with the support of the Bhutanese community living at Perth, Australia has taken the initiative to organise the fundraising event.

### **15th of December:**

Ms. Sonam Choetsho, new Program / Communication Officer joined Ability Bhutan Society.

## **10. Audited Financial Statement**

The audited account of ABS for the fiscal year July 1st 2017 to June 30th 2018. The financial report shows the overall financial standing of ABS, for the fiscal year 2018.

It has an income of Nu. 11,355,696.90 and expenditure of Nu. 8,483,613.99 and with a fund balance in the Bank Nu. 2,870,963.63 and in cash Nu. 1,119.28.

The income was mainly in the form of aids/donations by individual donors and organizations

both within and outside the country in the form of pledge, membership, donation, projects and fundraising events in support of various programmes.

The previous year surplus income of Nu. 3,500,000 have been deposited as fixed accounts with T. Bank.

The audit report affirmed that the financial statement of ABS conforms and is in accordance with the set accounting standards as can be seen hereunder:





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ROYAL AUDIT AUTHORITY

Bhutan Integrity House

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



RAA/GGD(CSO-02)/AR/ABS/2018/ 320

Date: 08/11/2018

The Executive Director  
Ability Bhutan Society  
Thimphu: Bhutan

**Subject: Audit Report on the Accounts and Operations of the “Ability Bhutan Society”, Thimphu for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

Sir,

Enclosed herewith please find the audited financial statements and auditors’ report thereon in respect of the **“Ability Bhutan Society”, Thimphu** for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018. 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 Auditor’s Report, the financial statements are prepared by management of **“Ability Bhutan Society”, Thimphu** in all material respects, in accordance with the financial Rules and Regulations 2001 & 2016. Accordingly, the RAA has expressed unmodified (Clean) opinion on the financial statements.

#### Audit Findings & Recommendations

The auditors’ review of the accounting records, internal controls and operations of the **ABS** revealed no deficiencies and lapses.

The RAA acknowledges the kind co-operation and assistance extended to the audit team by the officials of the **“Ability Bhutan Society”, Thimphu** which facilitated the timely 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.
5. Guard file.

*“Every individual must strive to be principled. And individuals in positions of responsibility must even strive harder.”*  
-His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck

P.O. Box: 191, Kawajangsa, Thimphu: Bhutan. Tel: 322111 / 322833, Fax: 323491

Website: [www.bhutanaudit.gov.bt](http://www.bhutanaudit.gov.bt), Email: [info@bhutanaudit.gov.bt](mailto:info@bhutanaudit.gov.bt) and [tkejang@bhutanaudit.gov.bt](mailto:tkejang@bhutanaudit.gov.bt)



We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Ability Bhutan Society, Bhutan which comprise the Receipts & Payments Statement and Schedules forming part of the financial statements for the financial year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018, as required under the Audit Act of the Bhutan 2018 and as per the Terms of Reference issued by the RAA vide letter No. RAA(OSA-07)/AC/2018/2682 dated 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2018.

Management is responsible for preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the Financial Rules & Regulations 2016. This responsibility includes; designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

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

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosure in the financial statements. The procedures selected depends on auditor's judgments, 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 controls relevant to the entity's presentation 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. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

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

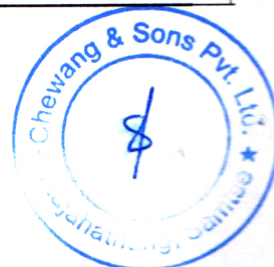
In our opinion, the financial statements are prepared in all material respects, in accordance with the Financial Rules & Regulations 2016.



**Place:** Thimphu



Ability Bhutan Society					
Receipt and Payment Statement					
For The Year Ended 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2018					
RECEIPTS	SCHEDULES	AMOUNT(NU)	PAYMENTS	SCHEDULES	AMOUNT(NU)
Opening Balance:			Expenditure		
Cash		84.63	Program Expenses		53,000.00
Bank		2,043,764.49	Auditing Fees		1,198,374.20
Fund Received during the year			Personal Emoluments		570,000.00
Donation(Individuals)	1A	2,663,860.42	Rent of Office Building		1,133,817.98
Donation(Organization)	1B	20,000.00	Supplies and Materials		3,600.00
Program Base Income	2		Op. EX-Transportation		11,376.00
Save The Children	2 A	140,000.00	TDS-Salary		260,517.60
Bhutan Foundation	2 B	129,600.00	Provident Fund		21,500.00
JOCA	2 C	512,400.00	GIS		13,880.40
Bussi-en	2 D	23,800.00	Health Contribution		30,000.00
GLRA Germany	2 E	230,403.36	TDS-Rental		27,039.82
UNICEFF	2 F	808,465.00	TDS-Suppliers		98,117.60
SABAH Bhutan	2 G	17,970.00	Printing and Stationaries		121,546.00
Proceed from Sales	3	18,800.00	Utilities- Telephone, Fax, Email		7,500.00
Standing Instruction(SI)	4	270,180.00	Op. EX- Taxes & Duties		175,200.00
Interest From Fixed Deposit	5A	225,541.10	Consultancy and Prof. Services		361,988.00
Interest From Saving Accounts	5B	85,397.44	Travel- In Country		21,789.81
Other types of Income	6	165,430.46	Hospitality and Entertainment		69,770.00
Received from Matured Deposit	7	4,000,000.00	Miscellaneous Expenses		10,909.00
			Utilities- Electricity, Water		66,560.00
			Travel Outside Bhutan		137,726.45
Sub Total		9,311,847.78	Advertisement/Felicitation		12,000.00
			Maintenance of Propt-vehicles		






				Maintenance of Propt-Building Bank Charges, Taes Duties Meetings and Celebration Other Recoveries Other Type of Expenses Postage Mailing Services O.B VOUCHER		2,850.00 9,057.00 378,009.13 130,600.00 50,855.00 3,030.00 3,000.00
				Re-Invest in Fixed Deposit		3,500,000.00
				<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>8,483,613.99</b>
				<b>Closing Balances:</b>		
				Cash		1,119.28
				Bank		2,870,963.63
<b>Total</b>			<b>11,355,696.90</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>11,355,696.90</b>

Prepared By:

  
Sangay Rinchen  
Accounts Officer

Approved By:

  
Namgay Dorji  
Officiating Executive Director



## 11. Way Forward

As we step into the 2019, we plan to extend our reach in other Dzongkhags while strengthening our existing centre at Thimphu. ABS's future endeavours are to:

- 1) Build an ABS National Resource Centre at Thimphu and five regional centres located at five Dzongkhags towards expanding our services to the rest of the dzongkhags in Bhutan;
- 2) ABS in partnership with German Leprosy Relief Association (GLRA) India with financial support from Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Deutsche Lepra-und Tuberkulosehilfe e. V. (DAHV) will implement the project "Social Inclusive Development for People with Disabilities in Bhutan" in five Dzongkhags;
- 3) Continue our work with UNICEF Bhutan in strengthening childprotection for children with disabilities and fostering the family support groups in Paro and WangdueDzongkhags respectively; and
- 4) Network and collaborate with relevant stakeholders including government agencies, international development organizations, private/corporate sectors and civil society organizations.

## 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 Needs Your Love and Support

ABS sustains its efforts in providing much needed services to children with disabilities and their families by the invaluable support of the community and individuals. This assistance is vital in empowering children with disabilities to reach their highest potential. Your support and generosity can help 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 ABSbank 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

**Royal Patron**

**Her Majesty The Gyaltshen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck**

**Board of Trustees:****Chairperson**

Dasho Kunzang Wangdi, Member

Royal Research and Advisory Council, His Majesty's Secretariat

**Vice-Chairperson**

Dr. Mahrukh Getshen

Transfusion Specialist, JDWNR Hospital

**Treasurer**

Mr. Pema Tshering

Managing Director, T Bank Ltd

**Board Members**

1. Dr. Kinzang P. Tshering, President, Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan
2. Aum Chhimmy Pem, Director, Tourism Council of Bhutan
3. Ms. Deki Yangzom, Managing Director, Lathing Enterprise
4. Mr. Chencho, Head of Government Performance Management Division, Prime Minister's office
5. Ms. Saldon Lhamu, Her Majesty's Secretary, Queen's Project

**Member Secretary**

Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk , ABS Executive Director

**Parent Representatives to the Board:**

1. Ms. Karma Sonam Dorji, Board of Directors, Wood Craft Centre Ltd
2. Mr. Bishnu Bakta Mishra, Education Officer, UNICEF
3. Ms. Prashanti Pradhan, Managing Director, Lee Enterprise
4. Mr. Phuntsho Wangdi, Consultant (In-Country Trade Facilitation and Customs Expert)

**Staff Member**

- 1) Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk, Executive Director;
- 2) Ms. Beda Giri, Technical Advisor;
- 3) Mr. Namgay Dorji, Programme Officer;
- 4) Mr. Sangay Rinchen, Accounts/Administration Officer;
- 5) Ms. Chey Chey, Communications Officer; (On study leave)
- 6) Ms. Sonam Choetsho, Program/Communication Officer;
- 7) Ms. Bishnu Maya Gurung, Social Worker;
- 8) Ms. Pema Yuden , Social Worker;
- 9) Ms. Namgay Om, Social Worker; and
- 10) Mr. ChajayRinzin, Social Worker



**ABILITY BHUTAN SOCIETY**

Near DHI Office, Upper Mothithang

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[www.absbhutan.org](http://www.absbhutan.org)