



Zangdok Palri Lotus asbl

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School expansion project



Zangdok Palri Sambhota Primary school & orphanage



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◆ *All beings want to be happy* ◆
◆ *No one wants to suffer* ◆
◆ *This is the same for all of us* ◆
◆ *Inner mind is the same* ◆
◆ *Outer body is different* ◆
◆ *Of all the possible situations we
could find ourselves in, human life
is the very best* ◆
◆ *And the development of an
altruistic heart is the crown jewel
of human life* ◆

Patrul Rinpoche



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Dzogchen region

The Dzogchen region is situated at an altitude of 4 000 m on the high Himalayan plateaux, in the region of Kham, which is currently part of the Chinese province of Sichuan.



Figure 1: Dzogchen region

Dzogchen covers an area of 10 000 km², and is chiefly inhabited by Tibetan nomads. The small Chinese population is mainly concentrated in the small town of Kanze, which is the region's main population centre and seat of the local authorities.

The nomad population lives a life dictated by ancestral custom. It is organised in a dozen nomad "villages" - family groups living close together - sharing resources and moving together as the seasons change.

Each village has a council, headed by the village leader, which makes the important decisions that affect the life of the community.



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The nomadic lifestyle is basically one of subsistence-level self-sufficiency. Families who have more than they need, sell products like leather, wool and cheese.

Fewer than five in one thousand hold a paid job and average monthly wages amount to some 200 yuan, or € 20.

The Dzogchen nomads have no education system as we would understand the term. The population is largely illiterate. The "more privileged" children, of whom there are exceedingly few, may occasionally receive some tuition from monks.

There is a school in Kanze, the region's main town, which is attended rather irregularly by no more than a dozen pupils from the wealthier families. Understandably, it is not easy for nomad families to send their children there.

Expansion project of the Zangdok Palri Sambhota School

In 2006, we received authorization from the Chinese authorities, to double the reception capacity of our school, passing to a total of 50 children instead of 25 before.

Considering the significant number of children that do not receive education in the area of Dzogchen, we welcomed this new authorization with great joy. However, before being able to accommodate new pupils, we must enlarge the dormitories and class rooms and finance different other acquisitions, such as new school furniture, school supplies, beds, etc.

We therefore actively seek funds which will enable us to act quickly and to increase the school-orphanage capacity.

Preliminary design

As of March 2006, we started a first preliminary design of the extension of the school building: a two-story wing, where classrooms, bedrooms and offices are harmoniously laid out.



Figure 2: Location of the school with projected expansion

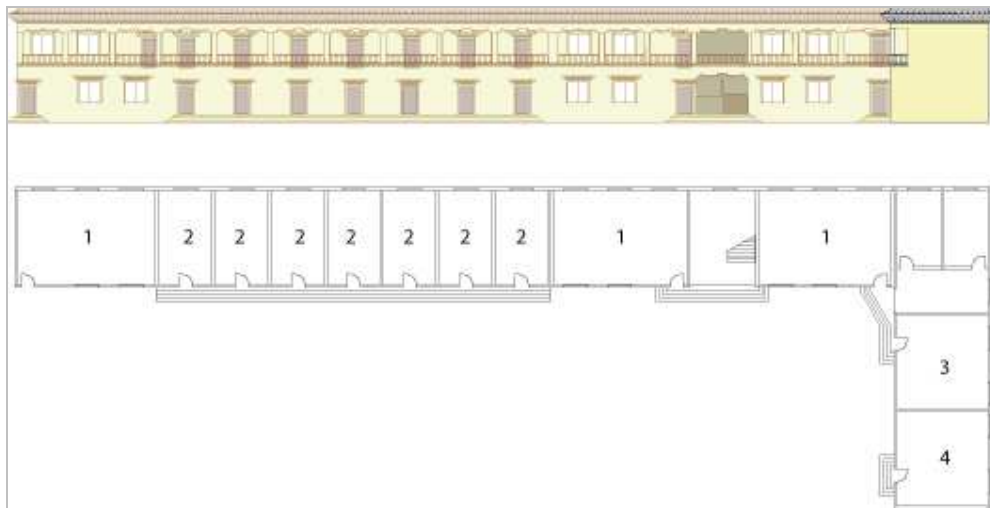


Figure 3: 1) class rooms - 2) bedrooms - 3) office - 4) recreation hall



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Architectural design and estimated schedule

Recently, we received a more detailed study of the project; the average price per m² of construction is calculated at 114.86 €/m². Based on these estimations, we should reach a maximum budget of 169.416 € for the whole of the building.

The construction could be achieved within two years.

July 2008: six year anniversary of the creation of the school

We are preparing for a journey to Dzogchen in 2008 in order to celebrate the six years of operation of the school and to make an extensive evaluation.

We would like to collect a great number of financial engagements and promises of donations as soon as possible, in order to take advantage of this unique opportunity to be able to announce more good news: the start of the expansion project.

School and Orphanage

The school opened in August 2002, with classes starting 1 September for a group of 25 children, boys and girls aged 5 to 16. Pupils were selected in light of their family situation, priority being given to orphans and children from the poorest families. Almost all pupils live in the school, being either orphans or coming from nomad families.

Two Tibetan teachers teach Tibetan, Chinese, calligraphy and math. English courses are planned. The children are also taught dancing, physical education and drama.

Two villagers were hired to look after the children and take care of the cooking and household tasks. Yet another staff member guards the school's yak herd.

Indeed, some ten yaks provide the children with milk for butter, cheese and yoghurt, and their manure serves as fuel.

A waterhole dug on the school premises provides drinking water and avoids long marches to a rather distant source.

For most of the year, the children receive lodging at the school. Their family situation permitting, they spend the spring and winter holidays with their families.

Other projects at investigation stage

It is of course essential that the school can in the short or medium term provide for its own needs. From this point of view, several projects are currently being studied as for example: sale of arts and crafts, activity that could be managed



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by the school and, later on, the creation of a cooperative dairy which will be able to benefit not only the school, but the whole area. This type of initiative already proved to be beneficial in other Himalayan areas.

School Partners

- The Zangdok Palri organisations

Together with the Luxemburg organisation, another not-for-profit organisation named Zangdok Palri was created in Belgium, with the same social agenda and in close collaboration

- The Local Tibetan Committee, representing the population

The project was created in response to requests from the Tibetan population, represented by a local organising committee, made up of representatives from various nomadic groups

- The Chinese authorities

The Chinese authorities gave their consent to the building of the school and to the expansion project

- The Swedish Tibetan Society for School and Culture

The school library was funded by the Swedish Tibetan Society for School and Culture, a Swedish NGO already responsible for the construction or renovation of 108 schools throughout Tibet (www.tibet-school.org)



Figure 4: the school opened in Augustus 2002



Figure 5: View of the school and dormitory in 2003



Figure 6: school inauguration, first pupils



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Figure 8: Pupils



Figure 7: 2005, building with teachers' quarters



Figure 9 : Pupils



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Schooling, essential for a better future

The Dzogchen school-orphanage helps alleviate the principal problems facing the children and youngsters in this region: malnutrition, risk of prostitution and exploitation, marginalisation.

Malnutrition

Independent healthcare organisations have estimated that, due to the population's extreme poverty, half of the Tibetan children are malnourished and suffering from deficiency illnesses.

The Dzogchen school directly addresses this issue by offering a balanced diet and regular health check-ups to further the children's development.

Prostitution

Prostitution has expanded at an unprecedented rate, mainly in the capital Lhasa, but also in many other Tibetan cities. Though still mainly in the hands of Chinese immigrants, prostitution is gradually affecting the lives of Tibetans also, especially young girls from impoverished rural families. Many have moved with their families to Lhasa to find work, or have been recruited directly from their family homes with the false promise of a steady job in the city.

Literacy and schooling are an important protection against this risk, providing these girls access to numerous professions requiring literacy.

Exploitation

Among the severely disadvantaged population of this region, orphan children are sometimes taken in by distant relatives who regard them as a cheap source of labour.

The Dzogchen school-orphanage gives priority to orphan nomad children in its accommodation, offering them an environment, suited to their age, to grow up in and develop their abilities.

Marginalisation

Confronted with incredible numbers of Chinese colonizers, most with some form of basic or professional training, young Tibetans see their future heavily compromised if they cannot get the education they need to face their society's modernisation.

The school has a role to play in keeping Dzogchen's youngsters from being marginalised, providing them with the skills they need to survive in tomorrow's world.



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Year budget

The yearly budget needed to run the school-orphanage is as follows:

food (for 25 children and the staff):	6.500 €
clothing for the children:	3 300 €
health budget*:	1 000 €
bed linen and toiletries:	850 €
Electricity:	200 €
wages (teachers, cook, household help, coordinators, yak guard):	4 060 €
Total:	15 910 €

A Stay at Dzogchen

Since the beginning of the Zangdok Palri programme, members of the organisation have visited the area yearly - at their own expense - to follow up on the progress made and to assess future needs. Each visit has found the children fully motivated for their studies, and student reports all show rapid progress. These first few years are a true success story!

These visits also reinforce the close relation with those responsible for the local project, Mr Soga and his wife Ms Dechid. This young couple, highly active and motivated for the project, provided the plot of land for the building of the school. They also manage all local coordination, including the purchase of food supplies, cooking of meals, building maintenance etc.

In the course of only a few years, since the start of the project, stable and reliable relations have formed which hold promise for the future of our activities in Dzogchen.

Answering the Appeal of the Local Tibetan Population

Zangdok Palri Lotus, a not-for-profit organisation under Belgian law, was created in 2000 in response to a cry for help from the inhabitants of this region.

The Zangdok Palri programme is active in four domains:

- education



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- healthcare
- economic development
- cultural preservation and respect for the contemporary mode of living of the nomad population

It is virtually impossible for the Tibetan nomad children to get an education. The only school in the region does not provide lodging and is therefore out of reach for children whose families are often one or two days distant. Also, most nomad and farmer families simply cannot afford an education for their children.

Our first project has been the construction of a primary school and orphanage.

It is, of course, indispensable for the school to be self-supportive. With this in mind, there are, at present, several projects in preparation. Among them, the creation and sale of hand-crafted items is a project which can be managed by the school itself. In the longer term, the creation of a dairy cooperative could benefit not only the school but also the entire region. This kind of initiative has already proved its worth in other Himalayan regions.



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Appendix A: Members of the Board

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Appendix B: Mission Statement of the ASBL (articles of association summary)

"The association is dedicated to the national and international assistance of those in need or in difficulties, to provide themselves with their fundamental needs of human development, without any discrimination due to race, religion, belief system or social background.

In this, the association adheres to the vision on human development communicated by the United Nations.

The association will generously provide natural resources, economic wealth, methods, technologies or knowledge that it disposes of, permitting to contribute to the fundamental needs of the target population.

Principal domains of intervention of the association are, although not exhaustive or definitive:

- *physical and moral well-being*
- *education, schooling and learning*
- *economical and social development*
- *preservation of the cultural, social, religious and linguistic heritage of the target population*


In its activities the association will take care to favor the development of infrastructures, organisations and systems, that ensure that the target population will in the future be able to provide their own development.

The association is able to accomplish, without being limited thereby, any operation that views to realize itself, or facilitates the realization of, its social objective and could assist any person, organisation or project with similar objectives. The association is able to receive and make donations, receive endowments, receive and consent to loans and effect any operation in view to finance its activities".



Appendix C: Architectural estimations summary

建设工程造价预（结）算书

建设单位: _____ 施工单位: _____ 工程规模: <u>1475m²</u>	单位工程名称: _____ 施工单位取费等级: <u>III级且挂</u> 工程造价: <u>1746258.70</u>	建设地点: <u>德格县(竹庆)</u> 工程类别: <u>III类</u> 单位造价: <u>1184.10元/m²</u>
建设(监理)单位: _____ 技术负责人: _____ 审核人: _____ 资格印章: _____	施工(编制)单位: _____ 技术负责人: <u>廖庆海</u> 编制人: _____ 资格印章: _____	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">四川省建设工程造价管理总站备案章 姓名: <u>李永</u> 注册号: <u>S07011523</u> 单位: <u>德格县华洋建设有限公司</u> 合办于: <u>2007</u> 年 <u>12</u> 月 <u>10</u> 日</p> </div>

年 月 日