

# HILE NIGALE SHERPA SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE JIRI-07-HILE NIGALE, DOLAKHA, NEPAL

Report No. 4, November 2020 – February 2021

By Sonam Sherpa

1. Introduction
2. Social improvement and changes
3. Project goals
4. Achievements
5. Project benefits
6. Project management

## 1. Introduction

The Hile Nigale Sherpa Social Service Center (HNSSSC) was initiated to mitigate the effects of socio-political disparities, especially educational gaps between affluent and poor people. All children should have equal access to quality education regardless of their families' social and economic status. Nepal has a dualistic system of schools with both public and private schools. Private school education is expensive and typically affordable only by the elite. Most private schools offer English as a teaching and learning language, and many of them also utilize computers in teaching. On the other hand, most public schools are under-resourced and struggling to hire qualified teachers. Moreover, even established public school teachers may sometimes succumb to political and financial corruption or an incompetent person may hold on to a teaching post owing to political influence and arrogantly ignore the needs and issues of the people.

Children who attend public schools often drop out at the secondary level. Of 100 children enrolled in public primary school, only 30 reach the secondary level. This means that 70% of the students do not complete their education. Over 90% of the children fail in English, Math and Science. Thus, families with higher incomes send their children to private school, whereas students from lower-income families attend public schools. This leads to a great inequality in education. The community education center was established to offer children a better educational option than the public school. We aim to provide a quality education for every child in our community and to contribute to the betterment and development of our community and society.

## 2. Social improvement and changes

An educated society is said to promote social changes. We know from experience that without social improvement, it is difficult to effect progress in an illiterate society. Many families in our society still question their children's need to attain a higher education. In the belief that education is a waste of time and money, parents often force their children into hard labor in the field, carrying loads to earn money, and marriage under the age of 16. These attitudes and practices

adversely affect the children's future and well-being. They preclude the children's continued further education, although many are smart and qualified to attain a higher education.

The Hile Nigale Sherpa Community is trying to change some of the villagers' general attitudes by raising awareness of the importance of education. We encourage the parents to further their children's higher education. We promote building our own strong society and people's participating in public meetings and activities. We teach conservation and the importance of preserving both nature and culture, including limited use of plastics and safer waste disposal. We promote environmentally safe practices, sustainable use of firewood to prevent deforestation and saving the forests. We must also address long-held societal superstitions and beliefs which are detrimental to our progress. This can be achieved only through education, as first steps in promoting social change and support for modern development practices.

Co-operation with parents: The parents are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of their children's education. Their attitudes are noticeably improving and include checking their children's learning materials, sending the students to school on time, taking part in parents' meetings, and ensuring their children's attention to body care and hygiene. Some years ago, parents would not care about their children's education and what they learned in school.

Educational development: Reading and writing methods in Nepali and English, English speaking practice, improvement in hygiene and personal care, many sport activities, dancing and singing practice, cleaning the surroundings of their school and home place.

### 3. Project goals

The project aims to address educational inequalities and to provide a quality education for all children. The project does not only focus on children's learning but also provides opportunities for women to acquire general knowledge. We raise awareness of environmental issues, literacy, and we provide self-employment training within the community. We teach and promote good health and nutrition. We offer some scholarships for talented children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Moreover, we try to preserve our own culture, traditions, and language. Our actions are guided by a positive spirit in the pursuit of a culturally vibrant and active society.

### 4. Achievements

✓ Community education building

✓ Computer laboratory

✓ Projector

✓ Library

✓ All children have access to learning materials

✓ The teachers have access to teaching materials

✓ Sports kits and sports shoes

✓ Furniture

✓ Professional qualified teachers

✓ Music instruments

## 5. Project benefits

The community education center enabled our children to continue their education during the Covid-19 pandemic, whereas the public schools were closed April 2020 to November 2020.

Many private schools continued with online classes, but public schools generally lack internet facilities, laptops, or smartphones. During the pandemic, the community education center has provided basic computer classes for all age groups, including math, science, and English language. Primary and secondary level students were able to use computers for learning online.

In rural areas, women usually stay at home and take care of their children. They also work in the fields and care for domestic animals. This has been their traditional daily way of life. Now, the community center has introduced learning opportunities for the women of our community. The center offers special evening classes for women in general education as well as traditional dance, thus providing them with cherished educational and cultural enrichment opportunities in their everyday busy life.

## 6. Project management

Project management is not my profession. It can be challenging and requires sustained intensive dialog and careful explanations to convince a community that is steeped in old fashioned thinking and narrow- minded perspectives. Moreover, it means dealing with governmental and political issues. Suggesting changes to help others is not always considered welcome news in Nepal. Thus, we must keep up our endless efforts in developing community-based education. Today, most of the Hile Nigale villagers appreciate this project, knowing that their children's continued education is assured and well developed compared to some years ago. Moreover, the people value and understood the importance of education as key to reduce poverty.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all visible and invisible donors, especially Christian Lhade, Doris Kuhn, Sarah Hoefler, Martina Handler and all [weltweitwandern.wirkt](http://weltweitwandern.wirkt) team. You have not only provided generous donations but contributed your efforts and energy to this cause in spite of your own busy lives. It is because of your generosity that we are able to establish a role model project in our area!

Hile Nigale, February 2021

Sonam Sherpa