

A photograph of three young children sitting at a wooden table in a library, reading books. The shelves behind them are filled with various books, including titles like 'Mathematics', 'Democracy Up-Close', and 'How Things Work'. The children are wearing colorful, patterned jackets. A red banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image.

BHUTAN ANNUAL REVIEW 2015

bhutan.savethechildren.net



Save the Children

Save the Children is the world's largest independent organization for children. We are 30 national organizations working together to deliver programs in more than 120 countries around the world. We advocate for children's issues and promote child rights.

In Bhutan we work in close collaboration with the Royal Government of Bhutan, CSOs and the communities to ensure that all children receive the benefit of the programs and their rights are protected.



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Save the Children is the world's leading independent organization for children

Our Vision :

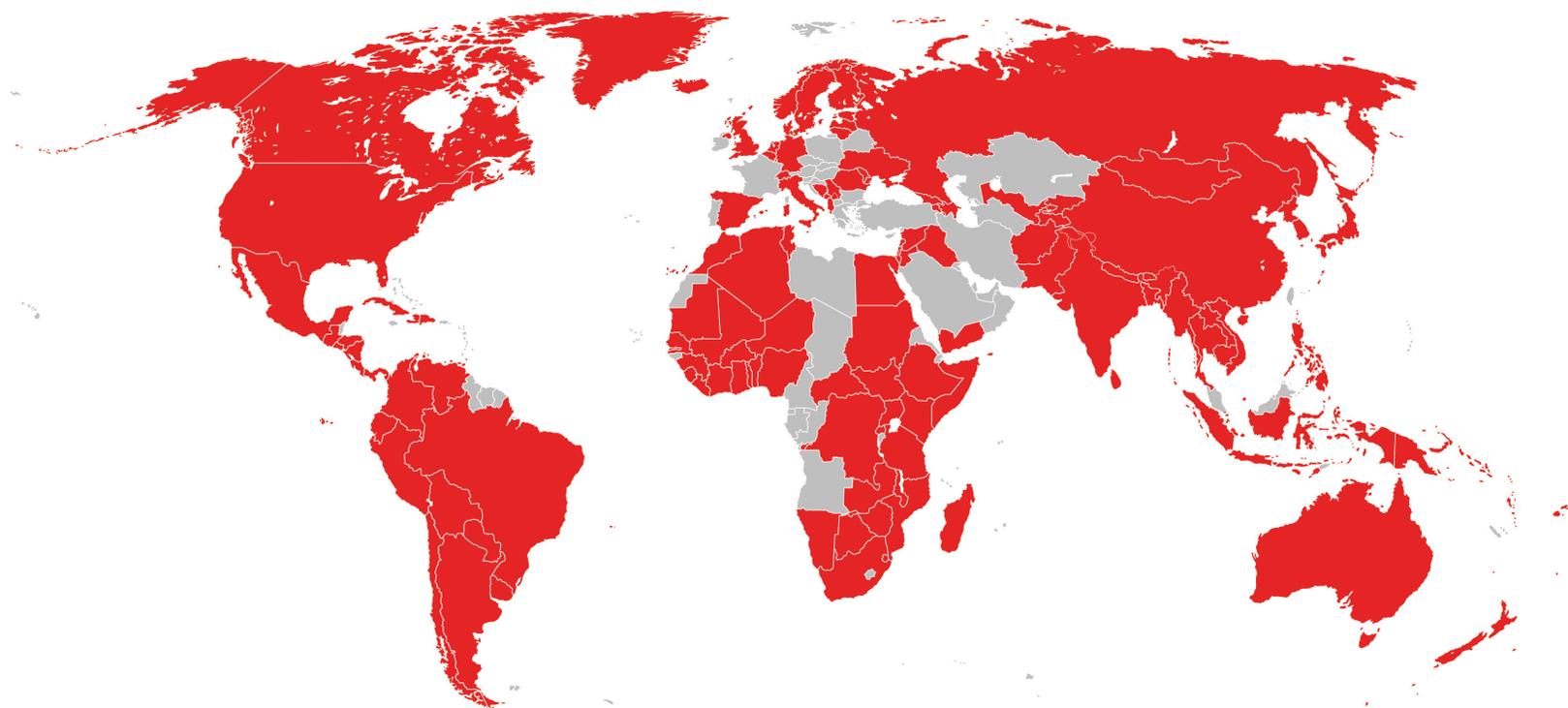
A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation

Our Mission :

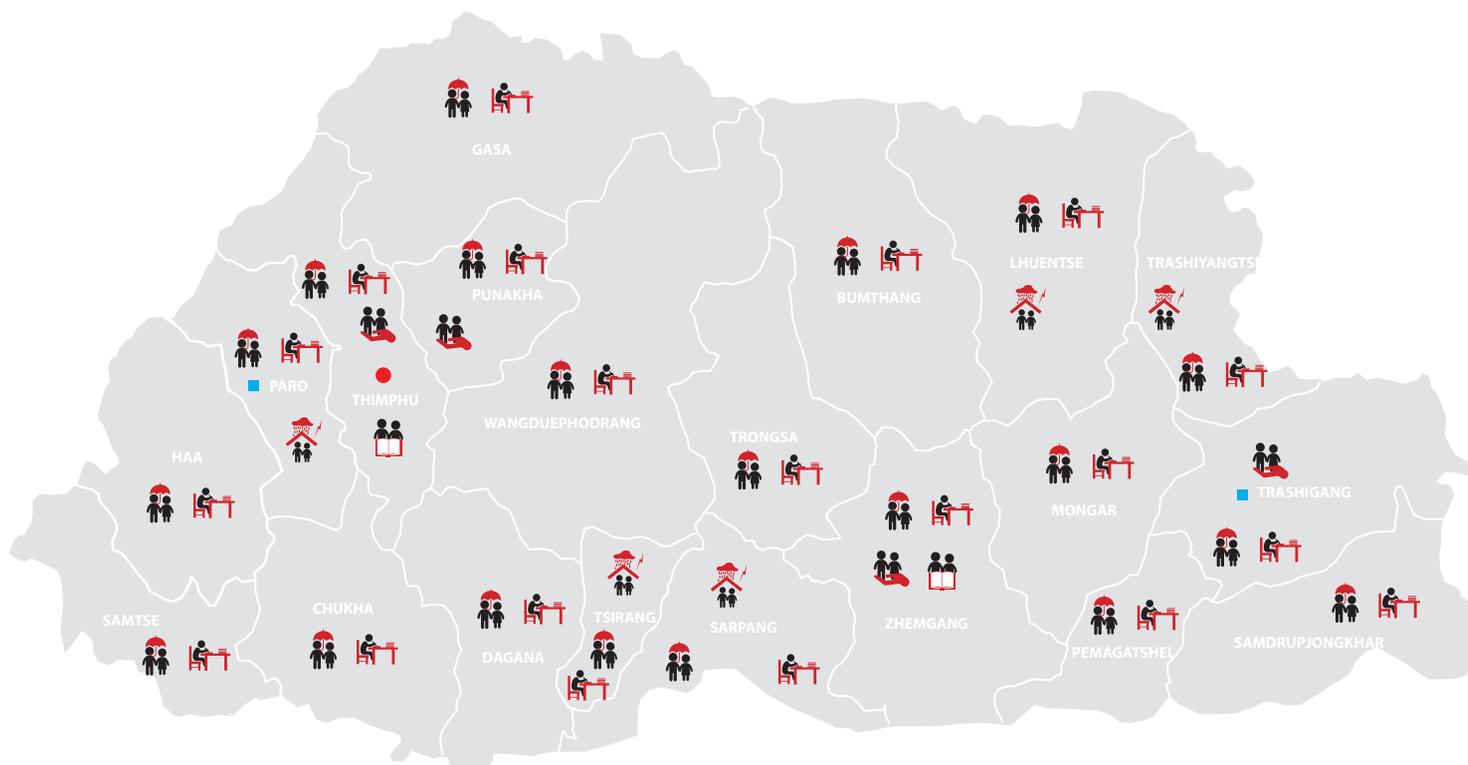
To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives

Where we work:

We work in more than 120 countries to achieve breakthroughs in the way the world treats children



Save the Children in Bhutan: Benefitting Bhutanese children since 1982



 ECCD presence in Thimphu, Zhemgang, Trashigang, Punakha

 Humanitarian presence in Paro, Tsirang, Sarpang, Lhuentse, Trashiyangtse

 BCBI presence in Thimphu, Zhemgang

 Child protection presence in all dzongkhags

 EYE presence in all dzongkhags

 Special Reading Programme in Trashigang and Paro.

Introduction

Save the Children - Bhutan Country Office concluded 2015 successfully, implementing its programme as envisioned in the Country Annual Plan, achieving most if not all, the set targets and milestones.

In **Education**, the National ECCD Centre program Impact Evaluation was carried out with the objective of crystalizing the evidence of the impact of ECCD and to use it to advocate to the Government to include ECCD programming as a national development priority. The final report will be printed and shared with all government and non-government stakeholders.

The ECCD programming also saw the implementation of a new innovation – Emergent Literacy & Maths (ELM), in mid 2015 as a new programme after securing the funding for a comprehensive ELM project called “Crossing the Pass: Scaling-up ELM in Bhutan” under Comic Relief Red Nose Day Fund. The ELM is targeted to improve literacy, math and developmental outcomes among preschool-age children in Bhutan and ensure they have the foundational skills to succeed in school.

The monitoring of the quality of ECCD centre programme using the Quality Learning Environment (QLE) tools was institutionalised in 12 districts in

the country, and will be rolled out in the remaining 8 districts in 2016. The QLE tool of SCI was revised to suit the Bhutan context which was adopted by the Ministry of Education as the QMTEC.

The findings of the Bhutan Children’s Book Initiative implementation monitoring showed that our innovation in early-grade reading had reinforced, and in many cases helped discover, the love and joy of reading among Bhutanese children. The monitoring revealed that the classroom reading corners had been established with books and bookshelves provided, and the teachers were using their acquired skills in reading to the children.

In an innovation stemming from BCBI, the reading programme was adapted and implemented for children with hearing and visual impairment in Wangsel Institute in Paro and Muenselling Institute in Khailing respectively.

We reinforced our support and programmes in Adolescent Non-Formal Education providing real-time information and support to youths and adolescents in the country.

In **Child Protection**, in a major outcome under ‘Strengthening Children Justice System’ project, the Bhutan Program is in the process of establishing a

‘child bench’ to promote children-friendly court procedures in collaboration with the Judiciary and supported the construction of a child-friendly pre-trial detention centre in collaboration with the Royal Bhutan Police. A facility for girl child who come-in-conflict with the law have been established to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into mainstream society.

Besides supporting Police Youth Partnership Programme targeted at juvenile crime prevention, 36 children at the rehabilitation centre in Tsimasham benefitted from our support in vocational training and extra curricular activities.

In **Humanitarian**, focal teachers from the 5 pilot districts were trained on school-based disaster risk reduction and preparedness and had in place updated multi-hazard disaster management plans. The trainee teachers from two teacher training colleges were also sensitized on disaster risk reduction.

And for the first time in the history of the monastic institution in the country and who are regarded the guardian of Bhutanese culture and tradition, a total of 73 monastic institutions represented by 194 participants were trained in disaster preparedness, especially fire safety, which they were most vulnerable to.



Results for Children in 2015

In 2015, we reached **53,560** children and youths through our work directly. We also indirectly benefitted **126,452** children.



Early Childhood Care & Development (ECCD)

OUR GOAL: Children in Bhutan have access to quality learning, care and development in their early years of life.

We reached 4,555 children between 3-5 years of age through our ECCD centre programmes.

Working in close partnership with the Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, we established 12 ECCD centres with 22 classrooms and provided them with play & learn materials, including locally developed and published children's books.

We helped the Ministry of Education to develop ECCD centre curriculum for 3-5 years old children and a curriculum for parenting education for parents of 0-6 years children. To ensure quality and uniformity in capacity of the ECCD centres, we developed training manuals, which is being used to train ECCD facilitators

at the national level.

In 2015 we introduced ELM (Emergent Literacy & Maths) in our ECCD centre programme to improve literacy, math and the developmental outcomes among preschool-age children and ensure that they have the foundational skills to succeed in school. We trained 100 facilitators on ELM.

WAY FORWARD: The combined effort of Save the Children, the government and other stakeholders have been able to reach a total of 5,894 children or about 13% of the ECCD-aged children in Bhutan.

About 44,429 of 3-5 years old children in Bhutan or 87% have no access to ECCD programmes. The in-

4,555
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creased enrolment rate in ECCD in 2015 is still evident of limited reach, despite an increase from 9 percent in 2014.¹

It is equally important to provide ECCD programmes to most deprived and hard-to-reach children by identifying them and assessing their needs.

To ensure and strengthen the quality of the programmes delivered through ECCD centres, we will strive to implement Quality Monitoring Tool for ECCD Centre programmes (QMTEC) to all ECCD centres in the coming years.

A sustained and effective advocacy is required to present and inform the wide-stakeholders, including the government, on the positive impact of the ECCD center program on the learning and development outcomes for young children. The intended goal of the advocacy is to receive support from the government for ECCD programming as a national development priority.

¹ Ministry of Education, *Annual Education Statistics 2015, Twenty seventh Edition, 2015.*



8,811

children reached through
Bhutan Children's Book Initiative

351

classroom libraries
established

342

teachers trained on how
to read to children



Bhutan Children's Book Initiative

OUR GOAL: Enhance children's learning outcomes through early-grade reading

With the vision 'more Bhutanese children reading more and better books', the Bhutan Children's Book Initiative was launched in 2014 to support children's reading in ECCD and grade PP-III, directly reaching 8811 children; 373 in ECCD and 8437 in grade PP – III.

To enhance children's access to reading materials, and increase their reading frequency, we established 351 classroom libraries or reading corners covering all the primary schools (57) and ECCD centres (7) in the project pilot districts of Thimphu and Zhemgang.

To support children's reading in the classroom, a total of 342 teachers were trained on how to

read to very young children (reading skill & strategies) and on book management.

The project trained local authors and illustrators and helped develop and publish 20 different age, context and theme appropriate books for young children. We then provided 20,000 copies of the 20 titles to the children's reading corners in the project schools in Thimphu and Zhemgang.

WAY FORWARD: A total of 42,022² children in grades PP-III in the remaining 18 districts do not have access to appropriate and adequate support to reading – including reading materials through

support such as provided by BCBI.

An effective collaboration with stakeholders is required to scale-up the programme to reach more children as there are many positive and encouraging outcomes already visible while assessing our monitoring findings. The quasi-experimental study to be completed in October 2016 will provide empirically-validated evidence of the impact of the project.

An evidence-informed advocacy is required to influence and garner support from the Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, for the ownership and scale-up of the BCBI to a national level programming.

² Ministry of Education, Annual Education Statistics 2015, Twenty seventh Edition, 2015, p68

Special reading programme

OUR GOAL: To reach the most deprived children through inclusive programme innovations.

As an offshoot of Bhutan Children's Book Initiative but with appropriate adaptation, we took the 'special reading programme' to directly benefit 108 visually and hearing impaired children in the country.

The project benefitted 82 children with hearing impairment at Wangsel Institute in Paro in west Bhutan, and 26 children with visual impairment at Muenselling Institute in Khaling in east Bhutan.

In addition to training teachers on reading to our differently-abled children, we provided 200 children's books to hearing impaired children and transcribed the 200

titles into braille for the visual impaired children.

WAY FORWARD: The special reading programme is the first of its kind to be initiated for children with special needs and for which they are very happy. While the children are enjoying reading, there is a need to support them with more books, locally published if possible according to them, and in creating reading corners to enhance and ease their access to the reading materials.

There is a need to identify and assess other categories of children with special needs and find ways to reach them with reading programs.





108

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200

titles were transcribed into braille for the visual impaired children

Education for Youth Empowerment

OUR GOAL: Bhutanese youths have access to real-time information and appropriate guidance and support to overcome challenges while exploring opportunities.

Abuse of drugs and psycho-active substances, youth crimes and violence are major youth-related issues in Bhutan according to records with the authorities and the reports in the local media.

The influence from the mass-media, difficulty in finding appropriate employment, economic hardships and a large youth population in few urban centres – are pointed as some of the underlying factors.

In 2015 there were a total of 9,173³ youths looking for jobs, with female un-employment higher by 1.6 % compared to male, and

a majority of them comprising of undergraduates and Grade XII graduates.

We were able to reach 177,289 youths and children through our various programmes implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. We guide our youth to possible future prospects through Career Education and Counseling, Youth forums conducted through Youth Centres, and share information through Youth Digest and Peer-helpers to overcome youth-related challenges.

9,173

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177,289

We were able to reach 177,289 youths and children through our various programmes implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education

³ National Statistical Bureau, 12th National Labour Force Survey, 2014

⁴ Ministry of Education, Annual Education Statistics 2015, Twenty seventh Edition, 2015, p47

WAY FORWARD: An increasing number of youths are dropping out of Grade X⁺ urgently requiring a situational analysis to determine the reason for this emerging trend and in developing appropriate responses so that they are encouraged to continue and complete their education.

Programme innovations are required to appropriately respond to the changing times of our youths and adolescents.

We are yet to identify the hard-to-reach and most deprived youth, assess their need and innovate and implement programmes in their support.



Child Protection

OUR GOAL: Complement efforts of the Royal Government of Bhutan and Civil Society Organizations to create a safer environment for children who are vulnerable to all forms of abuse and neglect and rehabilitate them by piloting innovative approaches

We are proud to be a major partner for Royal Bhutan Police, in implementing programmes for children (0-18 years) at the Youth Development & Rehabilitation Centre (YDRC) at Tsimasham, Chukha. Believing that ‘children deserve a second chance’, we supported 36 children have access to effective rehabilitation in terms of providing assistance towards the various vocational skills offered at the centre and ensuring the meaningful engagement of the children by supporting the extra-curricular activities and purchase of recreational and sports items at the centre in 2015.

We are supporting in implementing, the Child Care & Protection Act (CCPA) 2011 through breakthroughs such as the launching of ‘Strengthening Child Justice System’ project in 2014, to ensure adequate protection

36

children were provided access to effective rehabilitation

and promotion of children’s rights through child-friendly police and judicial procedures for children who come in conflict with the law.

In collaboration with the Royal Court of Justice, the judiciary of Bhutan, we are in the process of establishing the first ‘child justice bench’ as per the CCPA. Further, we supported the establishment of one child-friendly pre-trial detention facility with protected interview room for child victims and witnesses and one rehabilitation centre for girls in

collaboration with the Royal Bhutan Police and built the capacity of the stakeholders in child justice administration through a learning visit to Italy. 541 children from across the country participated in Police Youth Partnership Program (PYPP) which is aimed at juvenile crime prevention.

WAY FORWARD: We will need resources, cutting-edge innovations and advocacy in realising the intended objectives laid down in the National Plan of Action for Child Protection.

Records with authorities indicate an increase in recidivism with incidences of ‘repeat-offenders’ coming in conflict with law making their way back in to the rehabilitation centre. This is evident of the existing vacuum in the after-care services for children



who have served their time at the rehabilitation centre. We are supporting a youth group interested in working with children who are released from the centre as well as children who are in difficult circumstances. The group eventually aspires to be registered as a CSO and strives towards providing assistance to such child in continuing their education or vocational training, to be gainfully employed, and most importantly to be with their families and in their communities through reintegration programmes.

An important activity that remains

to be pursued is the development of a 'diversion guidelines which would provide for an alternative to dealing with a child in conflict with the law through means other than a judicial proceeding.

We will also support the National Commission for Women and Children in setting up an information management system (IMS) as a central database for all issues relating to child protection in Bhutan which would provide the way forward to streamline data on children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with law.



Rehabilitation facility for girls

Humanitarian

OUR GOAL: Children are safe and resilient in school and at home in their community from natural and man-made disasters.

Bhutan faces impending danger from ‘glacial lake outburst floods’ (GLOF) as it lies down stream to 25 potentially dangerous glacial lakes out of a total 2674 glacial lakes.⁵ The 2004 floods due to a breach in one such lake, and the most recent one on 28 June 2015, are illustrious of the fury of this natural hazard and the devastation it can cause to lives, properties and Bhutan’s fragile mountain-ecosystem.

Bhutan lies on a seismically active eastern Himalaya with records of about 15 major earthquakes from as early as 1713 to until 2015⁶. The September 2009 and 2011 earthquakes are the most recent one that damaged homes and private properties, public infrastructures and historical and religious monuments, though loss of life was negligible⁷. Wild fires, landslides,

flashfloods and windstorms are other disasters.

Since 2010 we are engaged with our local partner Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Department of School Education, Ministry of Education, Royal Bhutan Police, Ministry of Health, local governments, the Central Monastic Body and local communities – to reduce risks and be prepared for multi-hazard response and recovery.

We have reached 39169 children and adults with our disaster preparedness and capacity building programs in 5 pilot districts spread across the country. Our project activities have covered 131 schools and 73 monastic institutions.

Our past achievements include the development of the national facilita-

tor’s guide for comprehensive disaster preparedness in schools; the training of school principals and disaster focal teachers in school safety and Education in Emergencies; the institutionalization of regional core group of trainers; and other capacity building and preparedness activities such as stockpiling of disaster risk reduction materials and equipment. The current “Comprehensive Education Sector Disaster Management Project” supports the formulation of the Education Sector Disaster Management and Contingency Plan; the preparation of a teacher’s Handbook on DRR along with training for Principals and disaster focal teachers; the initiation of a DRR program for monastic schools and institutions; and the facilitation of a community based disaster management process

⁵ Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs, *Outcome Evaluation of Disaster Risk Management Programme in Bhutan, 2014*

⁶ Kuensel, May 9, 2015

⁷ Royal Government of Bhutan et al., *A report on Joint Rapid Assessment for Recovery, Reconstruction and Risk Reduction, 2009*

25

potentially dangerous
glacial lakes

73

Our project activities have
covered 131 schools and 73
monastic institutions



in Paro district that would ensure the integration of school and district disaster management plans with the annual and five year development plans.

WAY FORWARD: Save the Children's disaster management program in Bhutan would need the resources, both technical and financial to support the implementation of priority risk reduction and preparedness activities identified under the Education Sector Disaster Management and Contingency Plan, including facilitating the procurement and strategic placement of necessary stockpiles along with required capacity building.

Given the high vulnerability of monastic schools and institutions we will pursue to strengthen and expand the disaster risk management program

initiated for monastic schools and institutions.

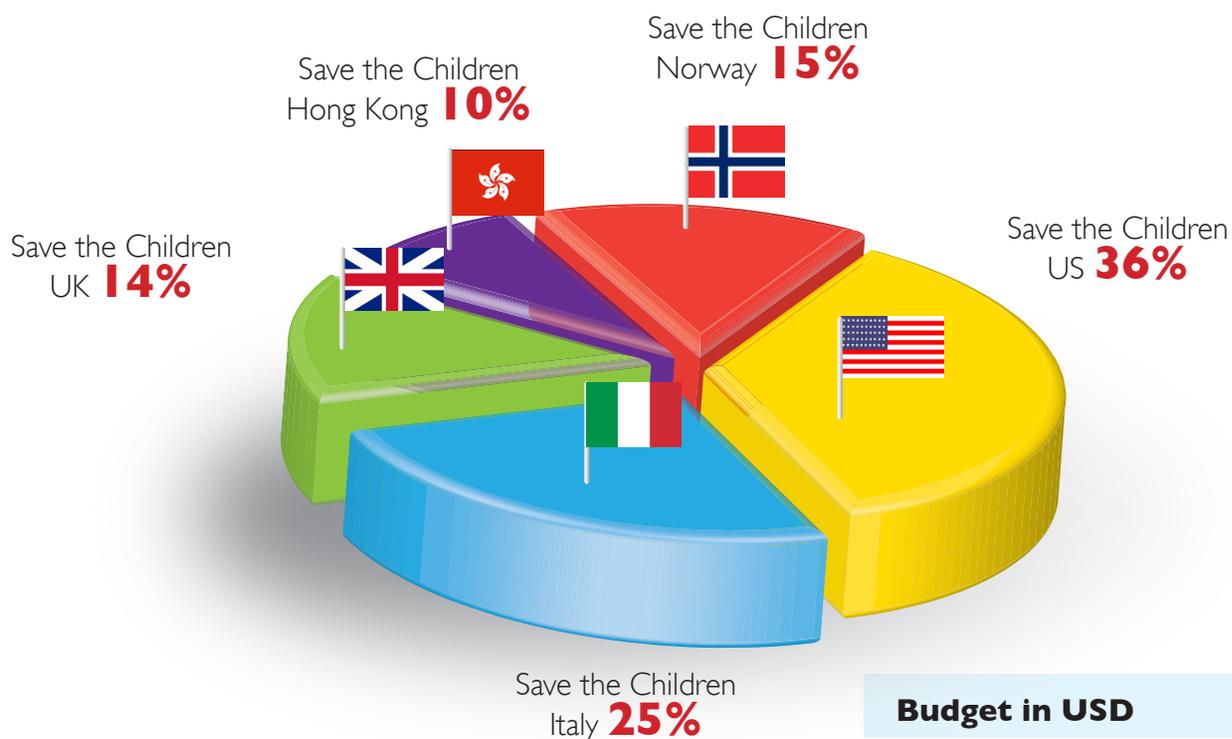
We will also endeavor to adapt and expand our schools based disaster management program into Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centers based on our experiences so far. Similarly, we will put in more effort to develop and support disaster management programs for children with special needs and build capacities of parents and care givers.

Another area we will support is the integration of disaster risk reduction knowledge and concerns into school, college and teacher training curriculum. This would ensure not only sustainability of our efforts but also strengthen the culture of resilience in schools and in society at large.



Financial budget outlay

Member wise Budget in % and USD

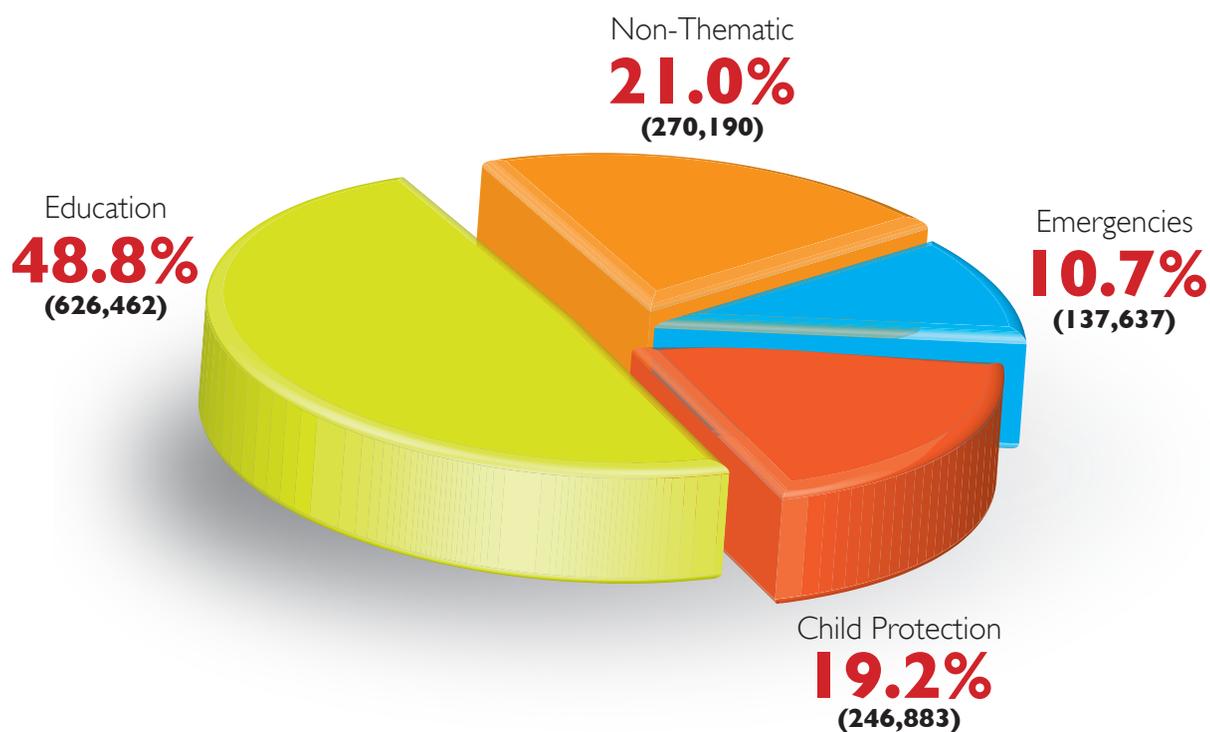


Budget in USD

SCN	229,698
SCUS	553,173
SC Italy	375,841
SCUK	217,608
SCHK	150,000
Total:	1,526,320

Financial Overview

Actual spending by theme in USD



Actual spending in USD: **1,281,172**

Thank You to all our Donors and SCI Members

for enabling us to innovate, implement, and scale-up our programmes and transform children's lives.

Austin Hearst Foundation in enabling us to lead the way in ECCD programming for our children in Bhutan.

Charlotte Ransom & Tim Dye, UK in helping our children discover the love and joy of reading.

Save the Children US in providing crucial support to our youths and adolescents; and in innovating reading programme for our children with hearing and visual impairment.

Tony Lun/Vanguard Charitable Trust, USA for helping children in conflict with the law receive a second chance.

Save the Children Norway in keeping our children safe from disasters.

Save the Children UK in helping our children discover the love and joy of reading.

Save the Children Italy in providing safe and child-friendly environment for our children who come in contact with the law.

DiPECHO, European Union in keeping our children safe from disasters.

Save the Children Hongkong in enhancing the quality of ECCD programme for our children.

Thank You to our implementing partners

for your continued support, trust and confidence in Save the Children and for efficient implementation of the programmes to benefit our children.

- **Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC)**
- **Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan**
- **Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan**
- **Dratshang Lhentshog**
- **Dzongkhag Administrations of Thimphu, Paro, Zhemgang, Tsirang, Lhuentse, Trashiyangtse, Sarpang**
- **Royal Bhutan Police, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan**
- **Royal Court of Justice**
- **Bhutan National Legal Institute**
- **National Commission for Women and Children**
- **RENEW (Respect Empower Nurture Educate Women)**



Sound Wang - Wang
Ka ka - kaza
Yum - Yum
Whash - Whash
Woo - Woo
Ting - Ting
Voom - Voom
Moo - Moo
Tsok - Tsok

Bumthang → to hear the river
rush
Wangdi → to hear the strong
winds sing
Punakha → to see the beautiful
dzong

Zhemgang → to see the tall
green bamboo grove
Galephu → to see the vast
Plains
Heavenly mountains → to float
with soft, cool clouds
Moving monster → Thank you

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