



JHAMTSE SWITZERLAND

REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR CLASSROOM FURNITURE TO L'ASSOCIATION ENTRAIDE-SOLIDARITES DU PERSONNEL DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

INTRODUCTION

Jhamtse Switzerland raises funding to support a small independent school called **Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community** in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, northeast India. The school is located in a remote region of the Himalayas, close to the borders with Bhutan and China, inhabited predominantly by Monpa people whose history has been closely linked with that of Tibet. It takes 2-3 days to drive to the school from the nearest airport (Guwahati) often with hazardous driving conditions. Due to its isolation and geo-political complexity, Arunachal Pradesh has remained one of the least developed regions of India.



Jhamtse Gatsal, which means *Garden of Love and Compassion* in Tibetan, opened its doors in 2006 and today is home and school for 85 children and 30 staff. The children come from the surrounding villages and have all been rescued from the most precarious family situations. Approximately two thirds of the pupils are girls. The school campus is perched on a hilltop at 2,300m altitude.

Lobsang Phuntsok, the founder, created the school with the support of overseas donors, driven by the desire to serve the people in the surrounding villages, who have little hope of support from elsewhere. In these rural communities, the public school and health care systems are underfunded and often too distant. Put to work by their families as young as the age of five, most children in the region grow up exploited, with little or no education and therefore without the basic skills needed to escape poverty.

JHAMTSE GATSAL CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY: OBJECTIVES



The overarching goal of Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community is to become a learning and knowledge centre for the surrounding communities in the areas of education, healthcare, child care and parental guidance, preservation of social, and cultural traditions, organic gardening and agricultural initiatives, renewable energy and social entrepreneurship, as well as becoming a sustainable and replicable model community founded on the principles of **awakened mind, healthy body and kind heart.**



JHAMTSE SWITZERLAND

The work of Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community revolves around supporting and nurturing the orphaned, abandoned and destitute children of the region by:

- Creating a home where they find **parental care and a loving family** of brothers and sisters to call their own and providing them with protection from social ills such as abuse, violence, trafficking, exploitation, child labour and helping them develop to their fullest potential
- Offering a **high quality academic education** from kindergarten to 12th grade at the Community with emphasis on equal opportunities for boys and girls. Subjects include science, mathematics, social studies, Hindi, English and Tibetan.
- Teaching practical skills to the children through an **Experiential Education Programme ("EE")**, which will ultimately prepare those who do not go to college for future employment in a region where skilled workers are all too rare.
- **Nurturing healthy bodies through teaching cleanliness and providing nutritious food and healthcare.** The children are taught Western standards of hygiene and the importance of drinking boiled water and keeping their environment clean. Good medical care is rare in the region but the children do have a paramedic amongst the staff who takes care of minor health issues and receive occasional visits from volunteer doctors.. Otherwise children need to undertake the grueling 18 hour road trip to the hospital in Tezpur. The Community has ambitions to create a health clinic on the campus in the future and to provide facilities for villagers, thereby contributing to improvements in the current very basic living standards, lack of access to healthcare and poor hygiene in surrounding villages
- **Preserving the traditions of the Tibetan and Monpa cultures** which are in danger of being lost. Traditional art forms, music and, dance are taught as part of the curriculum.
- Becoming **an environmentally sensitive community and working towards energy self-sufficiency.** Jhamtse Gatsal is situated in an area that is poorly served by basic utilities such as water, electrical power and sewage disposal. It is however blessed with potential solar and wind resources. Various initiatives have been undertaken and the Community hopes to extend the benefits to local villages in the future.
- **Learning to be better human beings:** children and staff are taught the importance of love, compassion and respect for their fellow human beings. Western psychologists have expressed interest in understanding how children who have suffered some of the worst traumas possible are transformed once they have experienced the caring environment of the school. Upon completion of the full school cycle by the eldest children (in 3 years time), we believe there will be important conclusions to be drawn, which will be useful to the broader academic community.

JHAMTSE GATSAL CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY: ACHEIVEMENTS

Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community opened its doors in July 2006 with 34 of the most at-risk children from the surrounding villages. The community had 14 staff members. All of these children and staff are still at the Community. Today there are 85 children at the Community whose ages range from 4 to 16. The full time staff currently totals 30 members and three long-term volunteers. In addition the school receives visits from many short-term volunteers from all over the world.



JHAMTSE SWITZERLAND

In its seven years of existence, Jhamtse Gatsal has:

- Changed the lives of children who otherwise would most likely not have survived to adulthood
- Provided a high quality education from Kindergarten to Grade 9 (15-16 years old) on campus
- Introduced Experiential Education programmes in organic gardening, vermicomposting, experimenting with growing quinoa, carpentry, masonry and traditional art.
- Commenced its goal to move towards renewable energy by installing primary and subsidiary solar photovoltaic systems that provide 100% power backup to the academic blocks and family houses during the frequent power outages.
- Installed wireless connectivity via a satellite in an area which has no internet connection and provided laptops to teachers and tablets (hand-held computers) to the oldest children.
- Installed a Western style bathhouse with Indian and Western toilets for children and staff, with separate facilities for boys and girls.
- Set up a clinic and dental chair and equipment with a view to providing medical assistance to the Community and villagers from the surrounding area
- Created organic kitchen gardens that are tended and cared for by the children and ama-las (housemothers); currently these gardens meet about a quarter of the kitchen's vegetable needs during the summer months.
- Implemented environmentally friendly waste recycling programmes, separating food waste, glass, plastic, metal, paper and cardboard, and compost for the gardens, which the school hopes will be copied in the surrounding towns and villages to keep the environment clean.
- Initiated cultural preservation programmes in music, dance and art, which have gained much local recognition in the past year

OUR IMMEDIATE NEEDS

We are seeking funding to purchase classroom furniture, which has become a critical need at the school.



The following 4 classrooms (allocated by subject) currently do not have furniture:

- English,
- Hindi,
- Bhoti (Tibetan),
- Social Studies

The children are obliged to study on the floor on mats and small cushions, which is not optimal for concentration and writing.

Each class has a maximum of 15 students.



JHAMTSE SWITZERLAND

We are seeking to purchase 15 desks and chairs for each of the four classrooms (ie a total of 60 sets of desk and chairs). The teachers at Jhamtse Gatsal prefer individual desks and chairs (rather than 2 person desks) to allow for more individualized instruction as well as giving the maximum options for the classroom organization in these subjects, where discussions are important.

In the past, the school has used a local carpenter to make wooden desks on the campus, however the cost and availability of wood as well as high labour charges due to the time needed to make the desks and chairs has proven this solution too expensive and too time-consuming. Lack of availability of basic amenities in the area of Arunachal Pradesh where the school is situated means that the school is required to meet most of its purchasing needs in Tezpur, in Assam (367km away). The school has obtained the offer below from a suitable vendor in Tezpur:

Item	Cost in INR	Cost in EUR ¹
60 sets of desks and chairs @ INR2,566 per set	154,000	1'925
Transportation cost	40,000	500
Fiscal sponsor charges @ 3% ²	6,000	75
TOTAL	200,000	2'500

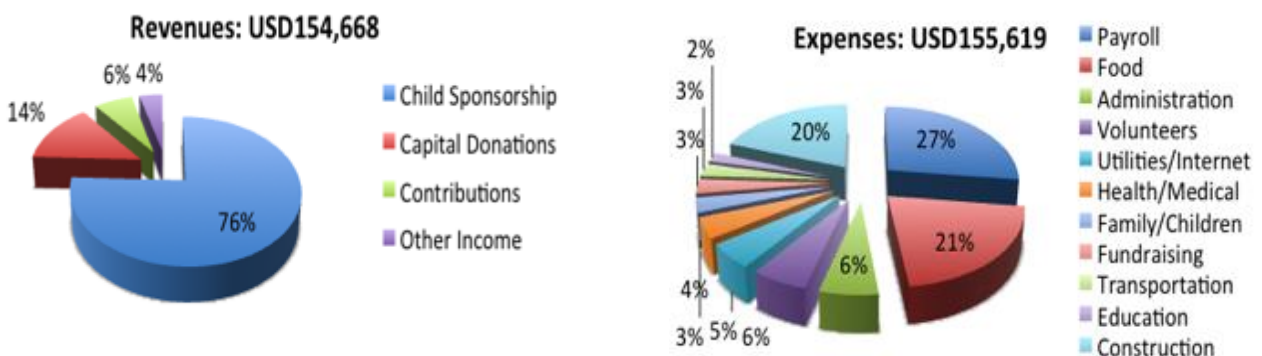
¹ We have used an indicative FX rate of INR80 for EUR1. Rates have fluctuated dramatically over the past 12 months from INR 71 to 90 for EUR1

² We are required to transfer funds to the school via a Fiscal sponsor in India who is authorised to accept funds from foreign donors. The sponsor takes a 3% fee.

Timeline for implementation: the vendor has requested 20-25 days from date of order to delivery. Delivery from Tezpur to the school can be organized in 1-2 weeks after order completion. **Therefore we would expect to be able to complete the purchase, transportation and installation on campus within 2 months of receipt of funds.**

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

To date the school has depended largely on financial support generated by Jhamtse International in Massechussets, USA and more recently by Jhamte Switzerland. Below is the summary of the 2012 financial accounts of Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community.





JHAMTSE SWITZERLAND

Jhamtse Switzerland is a not-for-profit association established in the Canton of Geneva with the sole mission of supporting the Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community ("JGCC"). The three committee members work on voluntary basis so donors can be reassured that all funds raised go directly to the benefit of the school.

The goals of our association are as follows:

- Fundraising to pay for schooling costs and capital projects at JGCC
- To find long term and short term volunteers to teach or bring needed expertise to JGCC.

We will provide you with all information you may require on the deployment of your donation, should you approve this request.

Donations should be paid to the following account:

Banque Raiffeisen d'Arve et Lac

CH-1225 Chêne-Bourg (Genève)

Beneficiary: Association Jhamtse Switzerland

Account Number: 12-6616-4

IBAN: CH35 8018 8000 0940 7798 8

BIC: RAIFCH22188

CONCLUSION

An investment in the future of the children in this remote part of the world can bear far-reaching positive results on the global prosperity quotient. With your generous support, you can become our partner in providing quality education, eliminating poverty and bringing prosperity to this neglected and underdeveloped region of Arunachal Pradesh. An investment in Jhamte Gatsal Children's Community is an investment to ensure the future of the many children in the region that would otherwise have lived many more years of disillusionment and deprivation.

