

Report
on the construction of Chhumbu Primary School
Chhumbu, Ward no. 8, Baganje VDC, Solu-Khumbu
Autumn 2000

This report is the result of four meetings during the autumn of 2000 held by Kurt Lomborg.

1. Friday 15. September 2000 in Chhumbu with School Building Committee
2. Sunday 8. October 2000 in Chhumbu with Skivehus Rotary Klub and School Building Committee
3. Saturday 25. November in Kathmandu with School Building Committee's Treasurer Dachhiring Sherpa
4. Sunday 26. November with Rotary representative Bishnu Subedi and Dachhiring Sherpa

1. Chhumbu School Building Committee meeting – 15/9-2000

Chairman:	Ang Gelbu Sherpa	
Treasurer:	Dachhiring Sherpa	(absent)
Secretary:	Jangbu Sherpa	
Member:	Kami Deu Thami (ward chairman)	
-	Dilli Thami (main constructor)	
-	Sanu Jetta (Subba) Thami	
-	Kusang Sherpa	
-	Sonam Thami (school managing committee chairman)	
-	Kali Bahadur Tamang	
-	Lhakpa Sherpa	(absent)
-	Sonam Sherpa	(absent)
-	Boyle Thami	(absent)
-	Kazi Thami	(absent)
-	Brikhe Thami	(absent)
Interpreter:	Gelu Sherpa (Mountain Spirit)	
Donor:	Kurt Lomborg (Skivehus Rotary Klub & Himalayan Project)	

The School Building Committee expressed their satisfaction with the result of their work on the school. They expressed that the School Building Committee had done its work and was out of function.

Kurt Lomborg expressed his satisfaction with the overall work of the committee and the constructors, which have created a beautiful and nice building; but he did not agree that the building process had finished – some work still remained, and the account of the committee was not satisfactory – so the School Building Committee will still exist until its work has finished.

A very important lack of the meeting was the absence of the most important member of the committee, the treasurer Dachhiring Sherpa.

The School Building Committee seems to have been ruled completely by Dachhiring Sherpa who has the job of treasurer of the committee. He has without authority also taken the jobs as constructor and contractor and completed these jobs without informing the committee about his transactions. Although he has done a good job in constructing the building, he surely is not the contractor who has been dealing with the budget after his own rules. He shall still bear in mind, that he is the treasurer of Chhumbu School Building Committee. On the other hand the experience in committee-work of most of the committee is of very low level, as they have no education at all and this is the first public work ever done in the village, and they expressed that they had no knowledge about complicated matters about decision-making. And during the meeting some members were leaving temporary, and some missed in other ways the complicated language and interpreting, and there also seemed to be other inter-villager relations, which complicated the free speaking.

I): Comments to the school-building:

1. The partitions between classrooms have not been finished. It has all the time been the agreement that the partition should reach the ceiling, as the noise from each classroom is disturbing the next. This job has to be done as soon as possible. It can be done in planks or in plywood, as the committee will decide the cheapest or the best.
2. The ceiling still is bare tin roof. It has all the time been decided that it should be covered as a wooden ceiling. This still is actual as the noise from rain disturbs the education and condensing water from the tin will drip on children, books and furniture. This job has to be done as soon as possible. It should be done in plywood.
3. The toilet + bath + watertap construction has far from finished. It has all the time been emphasised by Rotary that bath + watertap adjoined to the toilet is very important to teach the children cleanliness and hygiene. But this has been completely abolished by Dachhiring. And the toilet is of very poor construction with the basin elevated

and the floor slanting towards the walls. The roof is not fixed. There was no door. There was only one pit and it has no stonewalling. There has to be build a bathroom, and one more pit with stone-tapering, and there has to be lid over the pits, and the toilet floor has to slant towards the basin, and the building itself has to be finished. Although the villagers claim that one more pit can't be dug, this has to be done anyway, eventually on the next terrace. This work has to be done very soon.

4. There was an agreement that there should be a watertap for drinking water for the children in the schoolyard. This has not been done. 50 meter of plastic pipe and 2 watertaps exist, but no iron pipe or fittings could be found. There still are 5 sacs of cement. A watertap with a proper outlet has to be built very soon. Eventually it can be built at the toilet-bath-building if this can be done in a hygienic way instead in the schoolyard.
5. Due to sinking of the building and moisture from the monsoon, doors and windows doesn't fit anymore. A carpenter should easily be able to adjust this. Hinges and mountings is fixed with very small and insufficient screws. This should be adjusted from time to time.
6. Especially the office part of the house has been sinking considerably, producing extensive cracks in the walls, which has been repaired. The committee is confident that this sinking has only been the once sinking of a new house, but I am afraid it could be due to a weak retaining wall, which can't resist the monsoon. The main retaining wall seems quite well, but the second and lower supporting wall is of a very weak construction of very small stones, and had already fallen down on two points. This wall has to be reconstructed, and more soil should be put on it close to the wall of the office, and more adequate draining should be made, and there must be planted some bushes on the terrace to fix the soil. The wall behind the school is not completed.
7. There was a wish to fix the floor of the officeroom with a stone tapering. And also the classrooms. This job doesn't seem so very necessary right now, but it would be very nice to have this done.

The committee agreed in these points as being lacking.

II): Statement of Account:

Kathmandu Rotary Club has produced a Statement of Account on the basis of receipts, bills and contracts produced by Dachhiring Sherpa. Many of these papers is of a very dubious quality, which for some part can be explained by the lack of reading and writing skills among the persons who should produce these papers.

The committee was explained that the account has finished. All bills were registered and all expenses paid according to the account. This means that all concerning expenses should be fixed now.

Rotary expressed a no-understanding that the expenses of this construction has been more expensive than other constructions of the same type. But Rotary has accepted the Statement of Account for a complete and finished school according to the agreements before and during construction phase. This means that no more funds should be necessary for construction.

The complete Statement of Account was shown for the committee, explained and discussed:

	<u>Account</u>	<u>Unclearified</u>
<u>A. PRELIMINARY EXPENSES:</u>		
For this part the treasurer has produced a very nice and detailed account. Only the cost of a lawyer on 15.000 Rs to produce a standard regulation seemed to high, but a kind of receipt was produced anyway, so it has to be accepted.	<u>28.471</u>	
<u>B. MATERIALS:</u>		
<u>1. Stones:</u> According to the constructors, they used 22 piles for the house + 18 piles for retaining wall (of which some is of poor quality) + 4 piles for toilet = in total 44 piles for the whole school. But the bill for stones says 67.630 Rs . There has been bought hammers and other materials for 5.000 Rs . According to the committee the price each pile is 1.000 Rs incl. transportation to the building site. This means that Rotary has paid for 63 piles of stone. Around 19 piles are missing. In November 1999 I personally saw the stonecutters offloading stones at the building-site of Sonam Sherpa's new house, but it was claimed that Sonam did pay these stones separately to the stonecutters. The missing stones must anyway have either been delivered elsewhere on the cost of Rotary or it has been sold by persons of influence. So the amount of 19.000 Rs has to be paid or repaid by the persons who has received any amount for the stones or who has received the stones.	67.630	19.000
<u>2. Wood:</u> The bills produced for purchase of wood from forest, cutting and transportation does not tell the quantity of wood. All frames for doors and windows was bought separately, and the short beams which support the lower roof was delivered by the villagers with volunteer transport. The price of the remaining wood on approximately 45.000 Rs seems to high for me, and my personal estimate is that half to one third of the wood had been delivered elsewhere. But as there has not been a precise counting of wood, and there is no exact registered quantity of purchased wood, this can not be verified. And the committee thought that the amount for wood for the school is correct, so I have to accept the account for this part although in doubt. This could be verified later on.	52.400	(.....)

3. Revenue for wood: This is the payment for obtaining permission of woodcutting two times, and bills is produced.	4.206	
4. Other materials: Tin, cement, pipes and other materials are all purchased by Rotary and bills are produced.	86.702	
5. Toilet: Basin, watertaps and other materials for toilet are purchased by Rotary and bills are produced. But only basin, two watertaps and two pieces of plastic pipe could be shown. No one seemed aware about where the rest should be.	5.951	
MATERIALS IN TOTAL:	216.889	19.000 + ...
C. LABOUR:		
1. Carpenter work: The carpenter verifies that he has received the amount for this work.	10.000	
2. Building construction: The bill produced by lump sum says 70.000 Rs for this work. The constructor says he has a contract on 35.000 Rs . Of this amount he has still only received 20.000 Rs . Dachhiring still has to pay 15.000 Rs to fulfil the contract with Dilli Thami, who also claims that Dachhiring owes him 3.600 Rs for other work, but for which works was not clarified. The remaining amount must still be available for the construction.	70.000	15.000 35.000
3. Ground work and walling: At the first school construction meeting in 1997 a contract was produced saying that all work on levelling the land for the building and for playing ground should be done voluntarily. Most of it was done, but some was done by contract produced in November 1999, saying that all levelling and walling should be done for 35.000 Rs . But still some wall behind the playing ground has not been done, and the lower supporting wall is of poor quality, so the contract is not fulfilled. And I claimed that the villagers still owe some volunteer work, which the committee didn't agree in. But they must fulfill their contract when stones are available. The amount is paid in full.	35.000	
4. Toilet: Dachhiring is claimed to have told the constructors not to build a bath and only to build a crude toilet building without consulting the committee. While digging the first pit they did meet problems due to a big rock underground. But still the contract on 15.000 Rs for building the toilet, bath, watertap and two pits is not fulfilled. Pasang Sherpa claims that he and Subba Thami has only received 6.000 Rs for the job done. The contract has to be fulfilled by building the bathroom, digging one more pit and finishing the toilet.	15.000	9.000
5. Roofing: Ang Dawa Sherpa from Sagar did this work, and he has received 1.500 Rs . He know that Dahiba from Sagar and Lhakpa Sherpa from Chhumbu has received each 750 Rs and that Dachhiring himself did help in the roofing.	9.000	6.000
6. Plastering: Pasang Sherpa and one more man did this work. Pasang claims that they received 6.000 Rs as their full payment, although the bill says 11.000 Rs .	11.000	5.000
7. Painting: This work has been paid in full according to the bill.	4.500	
LABOUR IN TOTAL:	154.500	70.000
D. OTHERS:		
1. Transportation of materials: The transportation from Kathmandu to Jiri was arranged by Rotary, while Dachhiring arranged the transport from Jiri to Chhumbu. Although the last part seems quite high paid it has to be accepted as details is not available.	29.950	
2. Furniture: The committee expressed that they could have done this parts much cheaper. But they were very satisfied with the result and the furniture function well.	61.200	
3. Transport of furniture: This was arranged by Rotary in full and accepted.	20.750	
4. Miscellaneous: No comments for this part.	25.563	
OTHERS IN TOTAL:	138.463	
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT:	537.323	89.000 + ...
Received from Skivehus Rotary Klub	552.909	
Donation from 5 tourists in November 1999 and delivered for Ang Gelbu	2.500	
INCOME IN TOTAL:	555.409	
Rest amount (Income minus Statement of Account)	18.086	18.086
According to Committee Meeting still available for further construction		107.086 + .

III. Budget for remaining construction

A budget for the remaining construction was discussed.

1. Remaining partition could be done by plywood or by wooden planks. The last option was preferred. Expenses estimated to **20.000 Rs**.
2. Ceiling by plywood was estimated to **20.000 Rs**.

3. Toilet + bath + watertap + pit + lid should be done under the contract on **15.000 Rs.** But the committee claimed the price to be **20.000 Rs** extra.
4. Watertap nicely build of cement was estimated to **8.000 Rs** if it should stand separately in the schoolyard, but if build in connection with the toilet it is already included under 3.
5. Adjusting doors and windows and repairing cracks in the wall was offered by Dilli Thami as volunteer job.
6. Retaining wall and wall behind playing ground would be difficult to do as almost no big stones is available close to the village. As this probably is due to misuse of the stones produced for the school, the responsible persons should provide new quality stones voluntarily, as well as the villagers in common should provide some volunteer work. But the committee claimed this work to be done for the amount of **40.000 Rs.**
7. Stone floor for office-room is not so necessary, but if an amount of the treasurers cash amount should still be available it could be done. If there will not be enough Rotary could consider paying this, on the condition that all the mentioned points 1-6 is finished in a satisfactory and sufficient way. The price for this work is estimated to **12.000 Rs.**

The committee asked Rotary to provide funds for this work. This was rejected by Kurt Lomborg. Rotary has provided sufficient funds for the whole construction. There will not be given more money for construction except for point 7.

The committee expressed their doubts about Dachhiring's willingness to submit the amount. Kurt Lomborg expressed that he was confident that Dachhiring would do so, as he had promised to do his work as a treasurer in honesty and without cheating.

Kurt Lomborg does not care so much about the remaining budget as Rotary is not involved in this economy as the rest economy is either available elsewhere or included in already agreed contracts. The committee must discuss the account very seriously with Dachhiring to find which amounts are still available. The villagers should consider very eagerly fulfilling their contracts. And they should consider that their contracts already have been of amounts high enough to cover the rest work. And they should consider also themselves to donate personal efforts for the school of their village and of their children's future. The committee shall finish the school in the one way or the other.

The land of the school is still not registered under the name of the school. Mrs. Rinji Sherpa who is the owner of the land has all the time been willing to donate the land for the school, but she is not able to transport for Salleri to do the registration. Her husband Ang Gelbu promised to see to that this comes through, eventually by asking an officer from Napi-office to come for Chhumbu. Rotary will pay the expenses for this registration as long as they will be within the amount of **2-3.000 Rs.**

2. Chhumbu School Building Committee meeting – 8/10-2000

Participants:

The same members of Chhumbu School Construction Committee as in the previous meeting plus some villagers.

As representatives of Rotary:

President Peder Nielsen

Bent Skadhede

Niels Oestergaard

Kurt Lomborg

(also Himalayan Project)

Interpreter:

Kazi Sherpa

(Himalayan Project, Nepal)

The "Preliminary Report on Chhumbu School Committee Meeting of 15. September 2000" which is the same as all written under this reports chapter 1, was carefully read for the members of the meeting.

The members of the committee verified all the content and all conclusions of the report and no new information's were submitted.

The conclusion of the Rotary members was that the School Construction Committee should finish their work inside the budget and the already delivered amounts. A count of stone and wood used for the school should be done by qualified members of the community.

A minute report were written in the school's report book and signed by all participants.

3. Meeting with Dachhiring Sherpa in Kathmandu – 25/11-2000

Participants:

Dachhiring Sherpa	(Treasurer of Chhumbu School Construction Committee)
Kurt Lomborg	(Skivehus Rotary Klub and Himalayan Project)

The “Preliminary Report” (Chapter 1.) translated into Nepali was carefully read and discussed point by point, which gave the following comments from Dachhiring Sherpa:

The committee-members have no education and have no knowledge about accounts, money-matters and committee-work. And Dachhiring has not had the time to visit Chhumbu for the last eight months.

About the still not finished parts of the school following was commented: The partitions and the ceiling had not been finished because they was not sure whether the ceiling should be under the roof or between the upper part of the walls, and also there had never been delivered materials for this purpose, as well as there had not been delivered funds for the purpose. The toilet-bath had not been finished because there had been some problems with digging the pits, and also the villagers could not see any reason to build a bath with cold water, which would never be in use. The watertap in the schoolyard would produce a lot of mud, and a good opportunity to throw water on each other. The sinking of the building is a new buildings one-time sinking, as there is a huge rock under the office-wall, which will prevent more sinking. And when the lower supporting wall has been planted with bushes it will stabilise and no more problems will occur in monsoon. The still not stone-covered supporting walls are not necessary to cover, as the mud-wall on these places is stable enough. Stone-floor in office-room would be very nice and give the school a longer life, but it should be in the classrooms as well.

Dachhirings comments to the Statement of Account was that no money have been misused and no money is stolen, in the contrary he had spend some of his own money to fulfil his commitments. As bills often is difficult or impossible to obtain, and as he hasn't so much experience in keeping account, some expenses is not in Rotary's account. About details in the account and the Preliminary Report Dachhiring could supply with further informations:

B.1) Stones: I was shown one receipt on **40 piles** of stone paid by the amount of **37.930 Rs**. A second revision of Rotary's account could show if there should be more receipts of the same kind. Sonam Sherpa entered the room in the end of the meeting and he claimed to have a receipt on 20 piles of stones from the stonecutters for the building of his new house. Dachhiring said that the rest of the stonecutting for the school was administered by his father Ang Gelbu Sherpa, and he would investigate about this when he will go for Chhumbu this winter.

B.2) Wood: First **200 piece** of wood was cut and secondly **150 piece** was cut in the forest. All wooden beams for the roof is delivered by **Kami Deu Thami** for the price of **1.000 Rs each**. Dachhiring will carry into effect that the quantity of wood used for the school is calculated to see if it correspond to the delivered.

C.2) Building construction: Not only **Dilli Thami** but also **Subba Thami** has received **35.000 Rs** each given personally in their hands. But from **Dilli Thami** Dachhiring has set-off a personal loan of **8.000 Rs**. About 15.000 Rs and 3.600 Rs still not paid Dachhiring does not understand, but he will settle this when in Chhumbu.

C.3) Ground work and walling: For later repairing on the walls **Pasang Sherpa** and **Subba Thami** has two times received **1.200 Rs + 1.200 Rs**, which bills Dachhiring claims to have delivered for Rotary, but they doesn't figure in the account.

C.4) Toilet: There is a signed receipt on **15.000 Rs** for this work done by **Pasang Sherpa** and **Subba Thami**. The money was given in full in the hands of **Pasang Sherpa**.

C.5) Roofing: The full amount on **9.000 Rs** is given in the hands of the contractor **Hari Kharka**. Dachhiring himself did help in this work, but he did not receive any salary for this. The name of the contractor is new to me, as no one has mentioned about him during our meetings and my investigations.

C.6) Plastering: Dachhiring claimed that five men and not two did this work, and all five have received their payment each one personally, and a receipt is produced. The men are **Pasang Sherpa, Lhakpa Sherpa, Ngima Wonchu Sherpa, Pemba Tamang** and **Kancha Tamang**.

C.7) Painting: This work was done by **Hari Tamang, Saila Khatri** and **Ramu Kharka**.

D.1) Transportation of materials: A receipt was shown telling that **17.000 Rs** was given in advance for the porter naike. The remaining payment of the porters should be given by Rotary.

Donation: The donation on **2.500 Rs** by tourists has been forgotten by Dachhiring, and this amount should still be available in Chhumbu at Dachhirings father Ang Gelbu.

All in all Dachhiring gave many new details to the account of the school, which can be verified later. Many new names came on the list. Some can be explained by drunkenness of the interviewed person (Pasang Sherpa), or by temporary absence from the meeting by another person (Subba Thami), or by some contractors doing all the work without knowing that others should have participated, but for C.5 I don't understand how a trustworthy man as Ang Dawa can forget, that he is paid by Hari Kharka.

More investigations should be done, but is it worth it?

4. Meeting between Kathmandu and Skivehus Rotary Clubs and Dachhiring – 26/11-2000

Participants:

Dachhiring Sherpa	(Treasurer of Chhumbu School Construction Committee)
Bishnu Subedi	(Kathmandu Rotary Club)
Kurt Lomborg	(Skivehus Rotary Klub and Himalayan Project)

In this meeting we tried to conclude all the three previous meetings. The whole school construction has taken place in a very remote village, where the educational standard is as low as almost possible, and this shows the obvious need of a school in this particular place. And we also shall bear in mind that what we have done until now is a clear success, as we have build a schoolhouse of a not so bad standard, in which we have enrolled 38 students who is following the education with the greatest enthusiasm, because we have employed two very good teachers. The mountain-rumours out there says that our school is something special.

With all the diverging information's about the spending of the funds for the construction, we concluded that we will now close all more speculations about the account, and settle that what is paid is also what have been build. Though with three exceptions:

- A) New important information's or irregularities show up
- B) The Construction Committee and the villagers will not finish the work
- C) Skivehus Rotary Klub will not accept this conclusion

1. The toilet-bath-watertap shall be finished satisfactory as previous described in the already written contract. Watertap shall be included in this work, but shall only be build at the toilet-bath, with a proper outlet. Wood and stones shall be found at the responsible or the villagers shall provide it for their own means. Cement, iron rod for pit-lid and some pipe shall be provided by Rotary.

2. Ceiling and partition shall be completed within the amount for construction of the building and/or by volunteer work by the villagers and/or by finding the funds where it can be taken from the budget. The materials consist of already provided wood which is in reserve or which has been used elsewhere, and for the rest it shall be set up with plastic-covering and plywood under the roof with joining's covered by wooden lists, which is also the case with joining's between planks in the partition. The materials not available in Chhumbu shall be paid and delivered by Rotary.

3. The stonewalls around the school shall be completed and reconstructed without any expenses of Rotary.

Dachhiring shall within one month go for Chhumbu to clarify all the points in this Report, and if any subject is still not satisfactory enlightened, he shall see to that it will be completely settled and have a minute report written on each subject in the school report book. And he shall also report that the construction committee agree in the above mentioned three points. All committee members shall sign this report.

When this point has completed he shall take measures of the inside of the roof and of the lacking partition and he shall estimate which other materials are needed to finish the toilet-bath. These information's he shall deliver for Bishnu Subedi, who will calculate a budget for which materials is needed, which he will send for Skivehus Rotary Klub. If Skivehus Rotary Klub decides to send the fund necessary it should be possible to finish the work during the winter vacation in mid-january to mid-february.

Let us finish the past and look for the future where we should see the children grow up in Chhumbu with a new perspective of their mind and of the village as a whole.

Kjeldbjerg, Denmark the 3. December 2000

Kurt Lomborg!