

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Bya Dolma Choling

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: July 7, 2007

Attendance: 5 nuns

Please note: This survey is incomplete due to the fact that it required translation through three languages and not much time was available for this visit.

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*

5 nuns – most of the assembly appear to be in their 20's and 30's

2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*

5 nuns

3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*

Four nuns are studying in Dharamsala and 1 nun is studying in Leh. It is unknown if or when they will rejoin the nunnery and therefore, are not included in the assembly count.

4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*

One local girl would like to join the nunnery, but her parents have refused. Most of the parents in the village don't want their daughters to join the nunnery because there is no education available there.

5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*

None

Facilities

The facilities are mostly new and the nunnery is small in size. The nunnery is situated on the side of the mountain, nestled up against a large rock face so there is very little flat ground for adding new buildings.

1. *Prayer Hall*

The nunnery has a newly built prayer hall and an old one which has been abandoned. The new prayer hall has only a few statues, butter lamps, and some wall coverings. There are no paintings and no furniture.

2. *Kitchen*

None

3. *Communal Rooms*

None

4. *Classrooms*

None

5. *Nuns' Cells*

All of the nuns have their own cells, which consist of individual rooms in a building with a common hallway. More rooms will be added as new nuns join.

6. *Teacher's Residence*

None

7. *Toilets (communal)*

1 compost toilet

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

None

9. *Electricity*

There is no electricity. The nunnery has one donated solar panel, which only lasts long enough to power a few lights for 1 hour. Otherwise, they must use kerosene lamps.

10. *Water*

The nunnery receives spring water through a pipe.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

None

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns perform a full moon puja each month and a winter puja led by a monk from Phuktal Monastery.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

The nuns perform a 2 hour puja each morning and 1 hour each evening.

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

No. The nuns have learned basic prayers from a few books.

4. *Is there secular education?*

No.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

None

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

The nuns rarely do work in the village, except for occasionally helping their families to dry barley at harvest time.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

Yes.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

Yes.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

The nuns are generally healthy.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

There is an amchi in the nearby village of Purne or the nuns can go to the free clinic in Padum.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

The nuns can sometimes obtain butter, salt, and tsampa from their families. Otherwise, they believe that they will need Rs. 5000 per nun per year in order to purchase food.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung and scrub wood is collected for fuel. Each nun has a metal stove in her room.

4. *Ritual Texts*

Only basic prayer books

5. *Ritual Instruments*

None

Funding Sources

Gaden Relief is the only major donor. Gaden Relief money is used to fund the winter puja and was also used to purchase statues and wall coverings for the new prayer hall. Villagers occasionally make small donations when the nuns do requested pujas. The new prayer hall was built by supplies and work donated by the nuns' families.

Short-Term Needs

1. A set of the Sungbum texts – the nuns could generate some income by reading the texts to villagers
2. Supplies for the new prayer hall - including carpets and mattresses, a set of 108 butter lamps, and a large 24-hour butter lamp
3. Solar panels

Long-Term Goals

1. Expansion of the nunnery to accommodate 15 nuns
2. A teacher of secular and ritual education

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Rizhing Dorje Dzong

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: August 8, 2007

Attendance: 6 nuns

Please note: this survey is incomplete do to the fact that the full assembly of nuns were unable to sit through the meeting and continued to come in and out of the room. Also, the answers to questions were often contradictory or changed so that it was difficult to understand the true situation.

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*

8 nuns – The youngest is 16 years old and the oldest is 76 years old.

2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*

8 nuns

3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*

Five nuns are studying in Dharamsala, but it is uncertain if or when they will return to the nunnery so they are not considered part of the assembly at this time.

4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*

There may be 2 girls in the village who are interested in becoming nuns, but they are also considering going to study in Dharamsala.

5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*

There are 2 elderly nuns, both age 76.

Facilities

The facilities are mostly older buildings with a few newer rooms built around the old prayer halls. The nuns must help each other cover their roofs with plastic sheets when it rains. A new concrete foot path leads from the road up to the nunnery.

1. *Prayer Hall*

Two halls – both are several hundred years old. Both contain wall paintings, thangkas, mattresses and tables, ritual instruments, books and statues, including one statue of 2-3 meter in height.

2. *Kitchen*

There are 2 communal kitchens, one with a gas burner is used when guests are visiting and the other one is very dark and smoky with an open pit fire stove. This kitchen is only used for preparing food during pujas or group work.

3. *Communal Rooms*

There are six communal rooms - some used for guests and visitors.

4. *Classrooms*

None

5. *Nuns' Cells*

Each nun has her own small house. The cells are of various ages and sizes and most contain 2-3 rooms, but the majority appear to be older buildings with small rooms and very small passages and staircases. Currently, there are 4 empty cells available.

6. *Teacher's Residence*

None

7. *Toilets (communal)*

There is one new compost toilet which is not used and has no door covering.

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

There are no gardens or greenhouse because they would have to pipe water in. The nunnery does own fields down below near the village where they grow peas and barley.

9. *Electricity*

There is no electricity. The nunnery has 2 solar panels, one from Karma Lekshe Tsomo and one from Gaden Relief.

10. *Water*

During the summer water comes from a mountain stream, which freezes during the winter. There is also a short pipe that supplies water from a year-round stream. A concrete water storage tank has been built but is not yet in use.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

None

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns hold a month-long puja for the first and fourth months. They also have group pujas two times each month.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

None

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

Many years ago one nun learned simple prayers from her parents and these teachings are passed on to the younger nuns.

4. *Is there secular education?*

No.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

None

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

The nuns occasionally are asked to help their families by cooking food during harvest time. In recent times, the nuns return home often because they say there is not much to do at the nunnery without a teacher.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

Yes.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

Yes.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

Health problems include: headaches, chest pain, flu, knee and back pains.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

A village doctor will sometimes visit the nunnery or nuns go to the free clinic in Padum for health care, but they prefer amchi medicine. They claim that, in general, medicine is not curing their

ailments and they wish there were better options. They also would like to be able to see the doctor more often.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

No.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

Nuns' families will provide yogurt and milk. Sometimes the nuns will get grain from their families or purchase it with government ration cards. The nunnery also owns land on which they grow peas and barley. Every 4-5 days nuns will purchase produce in Karsha or Padum. Donations are used to purchase communal food.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung and wood are collected for fuel. Some nuns have gas burners in their cells.

4. *Ritual Texts*

The nunnery has 3 sets of the Sungbum - two were brought from Tibet by villagers before the nunnery existed and the other set was purchased recently with a heritage site grant from the Indian government. They also have a Tara prayer book and other ritual texts from Tibet.

5. *Ritual Instruments*

The nunnery has one communal bell, drum and set of cymbals, but none of the nuns have their own instruments. The statues in the prayer halls were there before the nunnery existed.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Gaden Relief funds are used to purchase food during one of the month-long pujas and village donations are used to support the other month-long puja. Villagers and nuns' families occasionally give donations, but the nuns do not receive a lot of support from their families.

Short-Term Needs

Long-Term Goals

1. A teacher and teacher's room

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Karsha Chuchikjall Kachod Grubling

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: August 9, 2007

Attendance: 19 nuns

Please note: This survey is incomplete and some answers may be incorrect as a result of difficulties with translation.

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*

28 nuns – The youngest is possibly 8 years old and there are a few elderly nuns with the majority of the assembly between 40 and 60 years old.

2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*

20 nuns

3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*

Four nuns are studying in Dharamsala and four nuns are studying in Mundgod.

4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*

There are no more local girls interested in joining the nunnery at this time beyond those that are currently enrolled in the school at the nunnery.

5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*

There are a few elderly nuns.

Facilities

The facilities are a range of older and newer buildings. Some old buildings have collapsed. A concrete foot path connects the nunnery to the village far below and also circles many of the buildings at the nunnery.

1. *Prayer Hall*

On the nunnery grounds is an 800 year old prayer hall, which belongs to the local astrologer and the nuns were denied use of that hall. The nuns' prayer hall was built 32 years ago as a result of four nuns who were determined to get their own place to pray. The room contains statues, books, instruments, thanogas, mattresses, carpets and tables.

2. *Kitchen*

The communal kitchen is a small window-less room, poorly lit by a single florescent light and blackened from years of smoke. There are 2 gas burners and a few open pit fire stoves. This kitchen is only used when cooking for guests or during pujas.

3. *Communal Rooms*

There are 2 communal rooms – a room for receiving visitors containing mattresses and tables and a very basic room with thin, worn mattresses and a few tables, which is used for group meals and for pujas during winter because the room stays warmer than the prayer hall.

4. *Classrooms*

The school building contains two classrooms and a very basic kitchen. The classrooms contain only thin mats on the ground and one blackboard per room.

5. *Nuns' Cells*

Seven of the nuns have their own cells and all the other nuns share cells with either family or friends. These nuns enjoy sharing their cells. However, there is one adult nun who must care for 3 young nuns in her home. She sleeps in a very small room and the 3 girls must share another small room.

The nuns' cells are individual buildings with rooms that vary in size from cramped to comfortable. Some of the buildings are based on a more open single story design and others are two-story buildings with storage areas and cramped passageways and stairs.

6. *Teacher's Residence*

There is a residence for the teacher in the school building.

7. *Toilets (communal)*

There are several compost toilets

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

Many of the nuns have small gardens of flowers or vegetables adjacent to their cells. There is a grove of trees and also a larger fenced plot for growing vegetables and herbs. The nunnery has a greenhouse, which had no plastic cover because the nuns say it isn't needed during the summer.

9. *Electricity*

There is no electricity so the nuns rely on solar panels and kerosene lamps. The nunnery owns several solar panels, mostly used for the communal rooms and there are also 2 outdoor lights powered by solar panels.

10. *Water*

During warm weather, spring water is available and is brought to the nunnery by pipes. In the winter the nuns must go downhill to the stream and collect water. A concrete tank for water storage has been built but is not yet in use.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

There are smokeless stoves in the prayer hall and all nuns' cells.

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns have day-long pujas for 6 days each month and a 21-day puja during the fourth month. During winter the nuns do continuous pujas.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

There is a puja each morning and sometimes also in the evenings.

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

Many years back the older nuns were given instruction by monks, which they now pass on to the younger nuns.

4. *Is there secular education?*

Yes, a monk is teaching two separate classes of young girls. Currently the students are separated into a group of Class 1 and 2 and a group of Class 3. There are 27 students coming from several nearby villages, who may or may not become nuns in the future. The school was established by CIBS, who pays the teachers salary. Classes include math, English, Hindi and other studies.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

Winter retreats are done on a rotational basis for three months and 15 days. This year only one nun will participate.

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

Some nuns with elderly parents help care for their parents and help with house or field work.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

The communal kitchen was moderately dirty and there was some garbage blowing around outside.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

Yes.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

A few nuns have eye problems and one has TB.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

There is an amchi clinic at the nunnery or the nuns can go to the free clinic in Padum.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

Two nuns have been studying amchi medicine for 6 or 7 years and are still continuing their studies. Another nun was trained in performing injections in Leh and now visits local villages.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

Milk and butter is obtained from nunnery cows or from village donations in exchange for pujas in village homes. Last year the nunnery grew vegetables, but the nuns were unable to do so this year as a result of a grasshopper problem. They purchased vegetables in Padum or received donations from the village. If their food supplies run low, they receive help from their families.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Wood and dung are collected for fuel. Three nuns have gas burners and all have metal stoves in their rooms.

4. *Ritual Texts*

One set of the Sungbum and one set of the Lam Rim

5. *Ritual Instruments*

The nunnery owns large drums, two sets of cymbals, dorje, small drums and bells. Each nun also has her own instruments which they purchased themselves. Statues were donated by Karma Lekshe Tsomo.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Visitors to the nunnery offer some donations as well as the villagers who make small donations for pujas. Gaden Relief money is used to fund pujas.

Short-Term Needs

1. Guest house with three rooms
2. Bathing room
3. New kitchen
4. More solar panels

Long-Term Goals

Note: The nuns expressed that they are already very happy with the support they are given by Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo because before they had nothing. The items listed under "Short-Term Needs" would be a great help to the nunnery and they have nothing further to ask for.

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Manda Padma Choling

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: August 6, 2007

Attendance: 6 nuns

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*
7 nuns – The youngest are 10 and 11 years old and the oldest are in their 30's to 40's.
2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*
7 nuns
3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*
-
4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*
One girl in the village is interested in becoming a nun, but she is still very young.
5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*
None

Facilities

The facilities are new buildings and the nunnery is very small – only three houses and a prayer hall.

1. *Prayer Hall*
The prayer hall is 6 years old. The nuns worked together to build it and are now adding on a veranda. The prayer hall contains ritual texts, a few statues and a few carpets and tables.
2. *Kitchen*
There is no communal kitchen, but the small entry room to the prayer hall is used as a kitchen with a gas burner. Sometimes the nuns eat communally and sometimes independently.
3. *Communal Rooms*
None
4. *Classrooms*
None
5. *Nuns' Cells*
There are three houses for the nuns that were built seven years ago. Normally, one older nun shares a home with one younger nun. In the next few years, the parents of the younger nuns will build homes for them at the nunnery.
6. *Teacher's Residence*
None
7. *Toilets (communal)*
None
8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*
There is one small garden.
9. *Electricity*
There is no electricity or solar panels.

10. *Water*

Spring water is available during the summer and during winter the nuns get water from the village pipe.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

None

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns perform pujas on seven days during the month. They also hold a 10-day puja during the fourth month. During the 1st and 2nd months the nuns perform pujas and text readings in villagers' homes in return for milk or yogurt.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

Every morning there is a 3-hour puja.

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

The nuns originally learned prayers at the nunnery in Skyagam and now the older nuns are teaching these prayers to the younger nuns. Also, the new teacher at the Skyagam nunnery has invited the Manda nuns to study there again, but the nuns say that it is too far to travel every day.

4. *Is there secular education?*

Occasionally a young man from the village comes to teach the nuns English. The young nuns go to school each day in the village.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

None

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

The nuns spend one or two days each week helping their families with chores such as cooking or collecting water.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

The nuns are generally healthy. Some complain of toothaches.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

The nuns can visit a village amchi or go to the free clinic in Padum for health care.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

No.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

The nuns normally get their food from their families and use donations to purchase communal food from the nearby village of Pye.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

Clothing is purchased in Padum using the nuns' individual money.

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung and wood are collected for fuel. The nuns have metal stoves in their rooms.

4. *Ritual Texts*

The nunnery has part of the Sungbum and some basic prayer books.

5. *Ritual Instruments*

None

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Money from Karma Lekshe Tsomo is used to purchase communal food and supplies. She also donated the statues in the prayer hall. Villagers and family give donations, including money raised from chang parties to build the prayer hall.

Short-Term Needs

1. Communal kitchen and toilet
2. Completion of the prayer hall, including interior paint.
3. Solar panels and gas burners
4. A complete set of the Sungbum

Long-Term Goals

1. Classroom, teacher's residence and teacher
2. Expansion of the nunnery to include more nuns in the future

Note: Despite the fact that Skyagam nunnery is nearby, which is larger and well-established and has a good teacher, the nuns at Manda prefer to stay in their village and hope for the growth of their own nunnery.

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Pishu Namgyal Choling

Buddhist Sect: Nyingma

Date: August 11, 2007

Attendance: 10 nuns

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*

11 nuns – The youngest is 17 years old and the oldest is 82 years old.

2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*

10 nuns

3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*

One nun went to Dharamsala to study.

4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*

There may be 2 girls in the village who are interested in becoming nuns. A few girls also attend the CIBS school at the nunnery in Zangla, but it is unknown whether they will join the nunnery in Pishu. More local girls would join the nunnery if there was a teacher there.

5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*

There are 3 elderly nuns (two are in their 70's and one nun is 82 years old). They all have family in the village who come to the nunnery to help them.

Facilities

The facilities are a combination of older and newer buildings. The nuns indicated that many buildings are in need of repair, too numerous to mention specific details. The nuns indicated that villagers will sometimes help repair the nunnery buildings.

1. *Prayer Hall*

Two halls – one is several hundred years old and the other was built 9 years ago - both contain ritual texts, carpets, thangkas, wall paintings and statues.

2. *Kitchen*

There are 2 communal kitchens, one used in winter and one used in summer. One is dark and smoky, containing a gas burner and an open pit fire stove. The second kitchen has a metal stove and is otherwise empty. The kitchens are only used for preparing food during pujas.

3. *Communal Rooms*

There is one room for winter-time pujas with a large wall of windows currently covered with plastic instead of glass. There are two incomplete guest rooms, one is almost ready but in need of furniture and the other room needs the roof repaired.

4. *Classrooms*

None

5. *Nuns' Cells*

Each nun has her own small house. The cells are of various ages and sizes and most contain 2-3 rooms, but the majority appear to be older buildings with small rooms and very small passages and staircases. Some rooms and buildings have collapsed. Currently, there are 3 empty cells available.

6. *Teacher's Residence*

One small room is available for a teacher, but will be used as a guest room until there is a teacher at the nunnery.

7. *Toilets (communal)*

3 compost toilets

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

A greenhouse was built, but the plastic was destroyed and a new plastic sheet needs to be purchased. There are also a few small vegetable gardens.

9. *Electricity*

There is no electricity. The nunnery has 4 solar panels, which must be moved around to different buildings depending on where they are needed. Three panels were provided by the government and one is from Gaden Relief.

10. *Water*

Water comes from a glacial stream, which often runs dry by early August. During winter the nuns must go very far down to the river to collect water.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

During the first month the nuns read all their texts and villagers bring small donations to the nunnery of butter and tsampa. The nuns do a full moon puja each month as well as a month-long puja for the fourth month.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

Pujas are not performed daily, but on particular important days throughout the month.

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

The nunnery has not had a teacher for 26 years. Originally a lama taught the elder nuns and then he died. This teacher was the father of one of the nuns and he has been reincarnated as a young monk at Hemis Monastery, so the nuns may be able to ask him to come teach at the nunnery. Another teacher came for a few years but also died. Since then, it has been the responsibility the elder nuns to teach the other nuns what they have learned. Also, some of the nuns decided recently that they are in need of particular teachings and intend to go to Leh to receive these teachings.

4. *Is there secular education?*

No. A CIBS school is available in the nearby village of Zangla.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

None

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

The nuns rarely visit their homes in the village and do not do much work there.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

Yes.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

Yes.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

Health problems include: chest pains, gastric problems, heart problems, heart burn, high blood pressure.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

The nuns visit an amchi in the village of Stongde or the free clinic in Padum for medical care, but complained that there is often not enough medicine available in Padum for proper treatment. The three elderly nuns all received eye surgeries during the previous year and report improvement in their eyesight.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

None of the nuns have health care training and do not express much interest, except for perhaps one of the younger nuns.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

At harvest time the nuns visit the villagers' homes and ask for donations of food, which will last them most of the year. These donations include barley, peas and wheat. They have very little produce, which they buy every 10-15 days with money from their families.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung and scrub brush are collected for fuel. All nuns have gas burners and metal stoves.

4. *Ritual Texts*

2 sets of the Sungbum and 1 set of the Kangyur

5. *Ritual Instruments*

The nunnery has a very good collection of drums, dorje, bells, and thangkas. The statues in the old prayer hall were there even before the nuns built the nunnery and they have only added a few statues to the collection.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Gaden Relief funds were last used to purchase butter lamps and carpets. Karma Lekshe Tsomo funded the construction of the new prayer hall. Village donations are collected by one nun each year for the month-long puja. Villagers occasionally give money for pujas, but usually donate food. The nuns do not receive a lot of support from their families.

Short-Term Needs

1. Repairs for older buildings, especially the older kitchen and one of the guest rooms.
2. More solar panels to provide lighting year-round.
3. New bookshelf in the prayer hall because the existing one is broken.
4. Construction of a wall with a door to enclose the front entrance of the prayer hall in order to improve heat retention during the winter.

Long-Term Goals

1. A teacher
2. Regular donations in order to pay for produce, repairs, clothing and medicine

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Sani Kachod Ling
Buddhist Sect: Drukpa Kagyu
Date: August 5, 2007
Attendance: 10 nuns

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*
22 nuns – The youngest is 5 and the oldest is 42.
2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*
13 nuns
3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*
Six of the youngest nuns live at home and attend school in the village. There are not enough rooms for all of them at the nunnery and their families can build rooms for them when they are old enough to fully commit to the nunnery.
4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*
Yes, but lack of schooling at the nunnery is a deterrent.
5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*
None

Facilities

The facilities are new buildings. At this time the nunnery consists only of nuns' cells, all of which are of similar age and size, and are in good condition. Construction is already underway for a prayer hall and in the future they have plans for a communal kitchen, a communal storage room, library, second toilet, and retreat rooms.

1. *Prayer Hall*
Currently the nuns use the small prayer room belonging to Barden Monastery that is adjacent to the nunnery. This year they are constructing a prayer hall for the nunnery with the assistance of hired laborers and foreign volunteers.
2. *Kitchen*
There is no communal kitchen, but a nun's cell has been temporarily converted into a communal kitchen and dining room. This kitchen contains a gas burner. Sometimes the nuns eat communally and sometimes independently.
3. *Communal Rooms*
None
4. *Classrooms*
None
5. *Nuns' Cells*
Approximately half of the nuns have their own cells and half of them share cells. Nuns are sharing rooms because they cannot at this time afford to build their own rooms and/or have only recently joined the nunnery. More cells will be added in the future. Some of the cells are individual buildings with 2 rooms and others are built as adjoining rooms of a single building, each nun having 2 rooms to a cell.
6. *Teacher's Residence*
The nuns built a room attached to the Barden prayer room for their teacher to use. The construction of this room was funded by their teacher.

7. *Toilets (communal)*

1 compost toilet with an attached bathing room

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

Some of the nuns have very small individual gardens with flowers or vegetables. A plot for the greenhouse has been dug and it is currently being constructed. A few groves of trees have recently been planted.

9. *Electricity*

There is unreliable electricity available until 11p.m. each day and most nuns have solar panels borrowed from their families.

10. *Water*

Glacial stream water is piped down into the main part of the nunnery and is accessible through a faucet mounted in a concrete block. Small irrigation ditches also run throughout the property to water gardens and trees.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

None

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns are awaiting the completion of their prayer hall in order to perform group pujas and expect to hold pujas on six days each month. After the last winter retreat the nuns had a 15 day puja and hope to have a one month puja the following year. This puja is followed by 5 day readings of the Kagyur texts, Tara and other prayers.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

None

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

One monk from Barden Monastery instructs the nuns.

4. *Is there secular education?*

No

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

All nuns participate in a 3-month winter retreat.

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

The nuns will help their families cook food if there is a puja performed in the home as well as do occasional favors when asked by the family. The nuns also help cook during pujas performed by monks.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

Yes.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

Yes.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

Health problems include: eye problems, arthritis, chest pains, ear problems, flu.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

The nuns visit a village amchi or go to the free clinic in Padum for health care.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

No. Two of the nuns went to the local amchi for training, but decided that they did not have enough time to devote to the amchi training and felt that they were too old for learning new things.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

The nuns obtain most of their food from their families or purchase food with a government ration card. During pujas nunnery funds are used to purchase food.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

Clothing is purchased using money from nuns' families.

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung is collected for fuel. All nuns have gas burners and metal stoves in their rooms.

4. *Ritual Texts*

The nuns own basic prayer books and part of the Kagyur is available to them in the Barden prayer room.

5. *Ritual Instruments*

Some nuns have drums and bells. A large drum was purchased this year, but the nuns need cymbals and more water bowls.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Khandro Thrinlay Chodon, Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Money from Khandro Thrinlay Chodon largely supports the construction of new buildings. Money from Gaden Relief is used to purchase food and other kitchen supplies. The nuns receive a lot of support from their families and some donations from villagers, including money raised from chang parties.

Short-Term Needs

1. Completion of the prayer hall, which will include all furnishings and ritual instruments such as thangkas, statues, mattresses, 21 Tara statues, and the Sungbum and Kangyur texts.
2. Communal kitchen
3. Retreat rooms
4. More trees

Long-Term Goals

1. Developing a diverse program for the nuns that will allow one-third of the nuns to be on retreat, one-third of the nuns to work on crafts (including carpet-making which one nun is skilled at already), and one-third of the nuns to study.

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Skyagam Phagmo Ling

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: August 6, 2007

Attendance: 13 nuns

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*
17 nuns – The youngest is 16 and the oldest is 43, most nuns are in their 20's and 30's.
2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*
17 nuns
3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*
-
4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*
There are four girls in the village who will become nuns, but are currently learning prayers and studying in the village.
5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*
None

Facilities

Most of the buildings are 8-9 years old. All of the rooms leak when it rains and one roof has already collapsed.

1. *Prayer Hall*
The larger prayer hall is 7 years old and there is also a very old, small prayer hall that existed before the nunnery was established. Both contain books, statues and thangkas.
2. *Kitchen*
The communal kitchen is small and leaks when it rains. It has a single gas burner, a metal stove, and open pit fire stove. The nuns eat together six days of the week for the main meal during the day and have one day that they cook individually. Evening meals are cooked separately.
3. *Communal Rooms*
None
4. *Classrooms*
Normally classes are taught in the small glass room that encloses the prayer hall entrance.
5. *Nuns' Cells*
Some of the nuns have their own cells and some nuns share cells with 3-4 others. Nuns are sharing rooms because they cannot afford to build their own rooms. The nuns' cells are individual buildings with small rooms, storage areas and cramped passageways and stairs.
6. *Teacher's Residence*
There is a residence for the teacher at the nunnery.
7. *Toilets (communal)*
1 compost toilet and one bathing room
8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*
Normally the nuns will grow a small amount of vegetables at the nunnery, but recently the nunnery and the entire village have been plagued by bugs and are unable to grow anything.

9. *Electricity*

There is no electricity and the nunnery has one communal solar panel used for the prayer hall, which was donated by Gaden Relief.

10. *Water*

During summer water is available from a stream and during winter the nuns must go to a spring that is quite far from the nunnery.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

None

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns have day-long pujas for 7 days each month and a 15-day puja during the fourth month. During the first and second months the nuns read texts in village homes for which they receive Rs.10 each.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

There is a one hour puja each morning.

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

One young monk from South India was recently assigned to teach at the nunnery by request of Karma Lekshe Tsomo. The monk's salary is paid by his monastery because Karma Lekshe Tsomo donates to them. The monk has established a strict study schedule which includes debate, Tibetan writing, study and reading sessions, and meditation/contemplation periods. Some studies are also divided for older and younger nuns. The teacher says he will remain at the nunnery until he teaches them everything that he can. Then he will leave and expects the older nuns to continue teaching younger nuns.

4. *Is there secular education?*

No.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

None

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

None?

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

The nunnery cannot afford very many stainless steel pots and the cheaper metals get into the food. Health problems include: flu, high blood pressure, gastric problems, eye problems, heart problems.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

There are two village amchis and the nuns go to the free clinic in Padum for tests and medicine.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

No nuns are trained in health care. One nun is interested in learning – both her father and brother are amchis.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

The nuns purchase food with donations from Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. They get yogurt, milk, and butter from their families. During harvest time the nuns will collect butter and barley from the villagers. Produce must be purchased from Padum.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

Clothing is purchased using money from nuns' families. Also, clothing was donated by Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo and occasionally by villagers.

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Mostly dung and a small amount of scrub brush are collected for fuel. Some nuns have gas burners and all have metal stoves in their rooms.

4. *Ritual Texts*

The nuns own basic prayer books and one set of the Sungbum, which they raised money to purchase.

5. *Ritual Instruments*

The nunnery owns one large drum, but no individuals own instruments.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. The nuns receive only a little support from their families and some donations from villagers. The prayer hall was built on money that the nuns collected by traveling all over Zangskar.

Short-Term Needs

1. Classroom – The prayer hall and enclosed entry room are too cold to use for classes in the winter.
2. Books for debate and meditation instruction
3. Individual drums and bells

Long-Term Goals

1. English teacher

Note: The nuns say that they are in need of many small things, which are difficult to obtain because they do not receive much support from the village or their families.

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Tungri Phuntsog Ling

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: August 5, 2007

Attendance: 7 nuns

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*

16 nuns – The oldest nun is 85 years old and most of the assembly range in age for 30 to 50.

2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*

11 nuns

3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*

Three young nuns remain at home in the village in order to go to school. The eldest nun lives with her family because she is sick and needs extra care and another has gone to Leh for medical care.

4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*

There are 3 local girls planning to join the nunnery.

5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*

There are two elderly nuns of age 73 and 76 still living at the nunnery. These nuns are sisters and live in the same room. They have very little money to get supplies and have only one distant relative in Padum, who may help them occasionally. The younger nun is deaf and blind and is unable to leave her room. The older sister must collect all the fuel and food for both of them and has to leave the stove burning at all times for her sister to stay warm. Their mattresses, blankets and clothes are in poor condition and insufficient for warmth during the winter.

Facilities

The facilities are mostly older buildings with a few rooms built two years ago to surround the old prayer hall. Some of the nuns' cells have collapsed roofs or unusable rooms, but there is not enough money in communal funds for repair of individuals' rooms and if the nuns' families cannot pay for the repairs then nothing is done.

1. *Prayer Hall*

The nunnery has two prayer halls, one is 500-600 years old and a new hall adjacent to the old one was built two years ago. Both halls contain statues, books and thangkas.

2. *Kitchen*

The communal kitchen is a spacious room with a few open pit fires and a gas burner. This kitchen is only used when cooking for guests or during pujas.

3. *Communal Rooms*

There are 2 communal rooms – a room for receiving visitors and for pujas, containing mattresses and tables, and a currently empty room that will be used as a guest room.

4. *Classrooms*

None

5. *Nuns' Cells*

All of the nuns have their own cells except for two sisters who share a cell. The nuns' cells are two-story buildings containing rooms of a good size, as well as storage areas and cramped passageways and stairs. Some of the buildings have collapsed rooms and need repair.

6. *Teacher's Residence*

None

7. *Toilets (communal)*

2 compost toilets

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

The nuns used to grow vegetables in gardens and a greenhouse by bringing in water, but it has become too difficult as there is not enough water now. The nunnery owns two small groves of trees.

9. *Electricity*

There is electricity paid from communal funds and one solar panel used in the prayer hall that was donated by Gaden Relief.

10. *Water*

The nunnery used to get water through a pipe, but the pipe broke and now they must go very far uphill to collect water from the stream. During winter this stream freezes and they must go down to the village to collect water. The nuns have submitted an application to the government for the repair of the pipe.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

None

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

The nuns have day-long pujas for 7 days each month and a month-long puja during the first month.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

None

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

The nunnery has never had a teacher. The elder nuns teach the younger ones.

4. *Is there secular education?*

No. The nuns have requested a teacher from an organization in Leh who will also pay the teacher's salary.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

Occasionally nuns will undergo 1 month or 15 day retreats. Only two nuns can enter into retreat at one time because there is too much work to be done at the nunnery.

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

None

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

Yes.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

Yes.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

Health problems include: flu, colds, sore throats, headaches, dizziness, stomach aches. One nun had a stomach operation, which did not fully correct the problem.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

There is an amchi in the village or the nuns go to the free clinic in Padum. They complained that the clinic in Padum often runs out of medicine.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

One nun had a father who was an amchi and has a brother who is an amchi. She has studied the amchi books, but has not completed her training although she could ask her brother to help her finish. At this time she is able to diagnose illnesses that the nuns have and then ask her brother to provide the medicine. Other nuns also expressed interest in learning both traditional and Western medicine.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

At harvest time the nuns travel throughout Zangskar requesting donations of barley and butter for their month-long puja and also use money donated by Gaden Relief to support the puja. Nuns with family members in the village can get food from them; otherwise they must ask for food in the village or borrow government ration cards in order to buy food. Vegetables come from the village or are purchased in Padum. The nunnery used to own a cow, but no longer has one.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

Clothes are sometimes provided by families or villagers. Otherwise the nuns can go to the village and ask for donations of clothing.

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung and scrub wood is collected for fuel. One nun has a gas burner and others have metal stoves in their rooms.

4. *Ritual Texts*

The nunnery has one set of the Sungbum, which was handwritten in Zangskar and donated by the village to the nunnery, and one set of the Kangyur, which was purchased by the village.

5. *Ritual Instruments*

The nunnery owns a large drum and a set of cymbals. Each nun also has her own bell and drum which they purchased themselves.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Villagers occasionally make donations, including money or supplies for building projects. Gaden Relief money is used to fund the month-long puja.

Short-Term Needs

1. Repair of the water pipe
2. Furniture for the guest room
3. Butter and flour for puja tsok
4. Solar panels
5. More ritual texts

Long-Term Goals

1. Teacher for learning rituals, pujas, meditation and Tibetan language
2. Guesthouse

Zangskari Nunnery Survey

Nunnery: Zangla Byangchub Choling

Buddhist Sect: Gelug

Date: August 10, 2007

Attendance: 7 nuns

Population

1. *How many nuns are part of the assembly (dge gdun)?*

21 nuns – The youngest is 15 years old and the oldest is 85 years old. Four nuns are in charge of finances and one nun for initiating pujas.

2. *How many nuns actually live at nunnery?*

14 nuns

3. *If not all nuns live at nunnery, why not? Lack of food, space, or funds?*

All nuns who are not living at the nunnery are doing advanced studies outside of Zangskar. (3 in Dharamsala, 2 in Leh, 1 in Varanasi, 1 in Karnataka)

4. *Are there more local girls interested in being nuns but not yet enrolled? What are the obstacles?*

15 young girls from the villages of Zangla and Pishu come to the nunnery for classes but still live in their parents' home.

5. *How many elderly nuns? What type of support do they need? Who is caring for them?*

There are 2 elderly nuns (75 and 85 years old).

Facilities

The facilities are a combination of older and newer buildings. There is a concrete courtyard and several flower gardens. The nuns indicated that many buildings are in need of repair, too numerous to mention specific details.

1. *Prayer Hall*

Two halls – one is about 500 years old and the other is new, both contain ritual texts, thangka paintings and statues. The new room also has mattresses, carpets and tables.

2. *Kitchen*

The communal kitchen is 2 years old. Most meals are prepared here for the assembly. This kitchen contains a gas burner and metal stove.

3. *Communal Rooms*

One room for receiving visitors contains mattresses and tables and one room with large windows for pujas, which contains carpets and tables.

4. *Classrooms*

None (the puja room is used as the classroom at this time)

5. *Nuns' Cells*

Each nun has her own room(s). The cells are of various ages and sizes, some nuns have a single room and other cells contain 2-3 rooms. The cells are built in groups of 2 per building. At this time there are a few extra rooms available for new nuns.

6. *Teacher's Residence*

One cell for a teacher.

7. *Toilets (communal)*

There are 2 compost toilets, but the newest one is inconveniently located too far down the hill and currently has no door coverings.

8. *Gardens or Greenhouse*

Four or five years ago a greenhouse was built, but the plastic was destroyed and a new plastic sheet needs to be purchased. There are also a few small vegetable gardens and large flower gardens.

9. *Electricity*

Electricity is available for Rs. 25 per month for each nun. The electricity is created from hydro power so several months during the winter there is no electricity because the water is frozen. The nunnery has 1 large solar panel and 3 smaller ones, but 2 are broken.

10. *Water*

Water comes from a glacial stream, which is piped to the nunnery. They have an open ditch for the kitchen water source and some plastic hoses to direct water to gardens and other parts of the nunnery. There is a small plastic rooftop water storage container on one building. During winter the piped source freezes and the nuns must go downhill to collect water.

11. *Smokeless Stoves*

Activities

1. *Ritual Calendar*

Each month there are 7 days of special pujas. During the first month there is a 26-day puja and in the fourth month the nuns hold a 5-day puja. The nuns also read texts in the village during July.

2. *Daily Prayer Sessions*

Puja every morning for 1.5 hours

3. *Is there prayer or ritual instruction?*

There was a teacher from Tibet at the nunnery who died 6-7 years ago. The nuns believe that they cannot get another teacher to live at the nunnery because it is too cold. The nuns are literate and can read prayer books, but are unable to learn much more after grade 5 unless they go to Leh for further studies.

4. *Is there secular education?*

CIBS established a school for grades 1-5 at the nunnery. Classes for 15 nuns between the ages of 7 and 9 are taught by a monk from Karsha. This teacher is new, but the previous teacher stayed for 6 years. Courses include math, English, Hindi and Buddhism. Students must buy their own text books.

5. *Retreats or Meditation*

None. A long time ago, some nuns used to do 2-3 month retreats during the winter in small meditation cells in the mountainside.

6. *What communal activities do nuns owe their community on an annual or monthly basis?*

When there is no work at the nunnery, the nuns will go to help their families in the village.

Health

1. *Is sanitation adequate?*

Sanitation could use some improvement: the communal toilet was nearly full, kitchen waste was not disposed of in a timely manner and flies were abundant.

2. *Is the water supply clean?*

The water source from the kitchen was an open ditch rather than a closed pipe, leaving it open for contamination by animals and garbage and it contained a lot of algae growth.

3. *Are most nuns healthy? What are the most common ailments or complaints?*

The nuns say that in general their health is good. There is one nun who had to go to Leh for health problems.

4. *Is there adequate medical care/medicine available?*

The nuns visit an amchi in the village or the free clinic in Padum for medical care. Serious problems require travel to the hospital in Leh.

5. *Are any nuns trained in health care?*

One nun received amchi training in Leh, but never returned to the nunnery because she got married.

Basic Necessities

1. *Food*

Food is donated by nuns' families or money earned from pujas or donors. The nuns will buy produce from Padum if they have extra money. The nunnery owns one cow.

2. *Clothing and Other Supplies*

Puja money is used for clothes and other supplies

3. *Cooking/heating Fuel*

Dung and wood are collected for fuel. Some nuns have gas cylinders.

4. *Ritual Texts*

2 sets of the Sungbum and 1 set of the Kangyur

5. *Ritual Instruments*

Horns, conch, dorje, and drums are available to the assembly. Each nun has her own bell, but they do not own individual drums because they never received the teachings for them.

Funding Sources

Major donors include Gaden Relief and Karma Lekshe Tsomo. Gaden Relief funds are used to support the fourth month puja and village donations collected by one nun each year for the month-long puja. The last Gaden Relief donation was also used to purchase a gyaling instrument. General donations are put into a nunnery fund while puja earnings are kept by individual nuns.

Short-Term Needs

1. Mattresses and tables for the prayer hall because if an important lama visits the nuns must borrow the furniture from others.
2. More solar panels to provide lighting during the winter.
3. A guest room. The room currently used as a kitchen was originally built to be a guestroom until their old kitchen collapsed and they needed to use the guest room as a kitchen instead.

Long-Term Goals

1. A teacher of the Lam Rim