

KIX IDRC Review Meeting A Multi-Country Study on Educational Innovations for Out of School Children (OOSC) and Children at Risk of Dropping out in Bhutan

On August 26, 2023, the Paro College of Education held a productive review meeting and brainstorming session involving four key implementing partners: Changangkha Middle Secondary School, Yangchen Gatsel Higher Secondary School, Ability Bhutan Society (ABS), and VTOB Foundation (VTOB). These partners are dedicated to executing intervention programs aimed at reaching out to Out-of-School Children (OOSC) and youths with disabilities. The event saw the participation of school principals, SEN teachers, and facilitators from these educational institutions, who engaged in a comprehensive daylong discussion. Notably, parent representatives of the children and youths benefiting from the intervention program were also in attendance, alongside an official from the Ministry of Education and Skills Development.

This initiative, supported by KIX IDRC (Canada), revolves around action-oriented action research and serves as a pilot study for a term of one year. Its anticipated completion date is September 2023. Throughout its duration, the participating schools and institutions have diligently provided support to OOSC and youths with disabilities through after school hours intervention programs. These initiatives encompass a wide range of activities, including imparting activity for daily living skills (ADLS), nurturing computer literacy, delivering functional curriculum, honing pre-vocational skills, and administering behavioral therapies. The interventions are tailored to cater to the specific needs of the children and youths involved.

During the meeting, all implementing partners took the opportunity to present the current status of their intervention programs. They shared success stories, highlighted challenges, and voiced their concerns. Additionally, parent representatives offered valuable insights into the experiences of their children who are beneficiaries of these intervention programs. In a bid to plan for the future sustainability and expansion of these programs within their own school and institutional groups, an Appreciative Inquiry approach activity was conducted. This exercise spurred a thoughtful discussion on strategies for ensuring the lasting impact and scalability of these interventions moving forward.

