Transformative Education for GNH
A Teacher Action Research Project

Project Report
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Project Background

- **October 2010: Visit to Bhutan**
  - REC & 2 schools in Paro (Shari HSS, Khangkhu MSS)
  - Outcome: Transformative Education for GNH: A Teacher Action Research Project
  - Project Aim: to develop the capacity of teachers to plan, implement and disseminate examples of good practice of Education for GNH.

- **May 2011: Re-visit Bhutan**
  - 1st Leadership Training Course for 7 GNH Seed Schools
  - Outcome: Action Research for GNH Implementation Plan 1

- **April 2012: Re-visit Bhutan**
  - 2nd Leadership Training Course for 7 GNH Seed Schools
  - Outcome: Action Research for GNH Implementation Plan 2
Transformative Education for GNH Leadership Training Courses
Leadership Training Courses Outline

Participatory workshops on:

1. Education for Gross National Happiness & Sustainable Development
2. Transformative pedagogy for GNH
3. Media literacy & Filmmaking
4. Action research as a tool for transforming schools
5. Post course action planning
6. SUSNET web-based support network
# Summary of Action Researches

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<th>School</th>
<th>Plan 1</th>
<th>Plan 2</th>
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<td>Children’s Park</td>
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<td>b. Cooperative structures in Maths &amp; Science</td>
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<td>Drukgyel</td>
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<td>Shari</td>
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Current Project Evaluation

• Teacher Interviews with Leadership Training Course participants in 6 Paro GNH Seed Schools

• Interviews with school Principals

• Visits to classrooms
Areas of Evaluation

1. Action research for implementing Education for GNH
2. Infusion of GNH values
3. Implementation of transformative pedagogy for GNH
4. Scope of media literacy and filmmaking
5. Use of SUSNET
1. Action Research for Implementing Education for GNH

Action research has:

• Lead to teachers reflecting on current school practices and identifying areas for improvement
• Motivated teachers to plan and implement new ideas to promote GNH schools
• Provided a clear and systematic approach for bringing about changes that is evident in each school
• Enabled teachers to understand what interventions are successful, or not, and why they are successful, or not
2. Infusion of GNH Values

Findings:

• GNH infusion with a whole school, holistic approach
• Visible evidence of GNH values displayed around schools
• GNH classroom activities and student application of GNH values
• Positive feedback on the role of Ministry of Education GNH infusion training
• Established structures for dissemination of GNH trainings to other teachers
3. Implementation of Transformative Pedagogy for GNH

Findings:

• Use of participatory teaching methods, especially co-operative learning structures
• Strong connection of teaching and learning for personal and school change based on GNH values
• Encouragement of students to be critical learners
• Empowered students who share their ideas and opinions in class
4. Scope of Media Literacy and Filmmaking

Findings:

• Some teachers have made films of events in schools to share with students and colleagues

• Filmmaking activities in school clubs
5. Use of SUSNET

Findings:

• Teachers have uploaded action research reports

• Some teachers have accessed resources to support action research
Key Factors in Success

• Putting teachers at the centre of educational change
• Peer support – more than one teacher attending training and subsequently inspiring interest and actions from other colleagues
• Trust between teachers
• Principal support
• Enthusiasm, hard work, commitment and dedication of teachers
• Resourcefulness and creativity of teachers
• Implementing action research into daily practices
Key Factors in Success cont.

- Teachers **like** action research as a tool for professional development and educational change
- Teachers taking action rather than waiting for external support or resources
- Training courses as a catalyst for project implementation
- Time to attend courses
- Opportunities provided by REC GNH Seed School project
Challenges Faced by Project Schools

• Time constraints
• Lack of computers and internet connectivity
• Materials required for projects
• Access to external support and resources
• Support for reassurance and guidance
• Making connections and integrating content from various training courses
• Creating a community of practice with other project schools
• Relocation of teachers
Specific Challenges

1. Action research for implementing Education for GNH

- Limited knowledge and experience of Action Research
- Teachers’ confidence and underestimation of capabilities
- Evaluation of actions by teachers
- Lack of recognition for teachers
Specific Challenges

2. Implementation of transformative pedagogy for GNH:

- **Misunderstanding of Transformative Pedagogy**
  
  Other trainings have focused on a collection of teaching methods. As these do not in themselves constitute a pedagogy, this has resulted in misunderstanding of what transformative pedagogy is.

- **A focus mostly on the participatory principle**
  (Ethical, Conscientising, Activist, Situated, Diversity-Affirming, Researching)

- **Broader Scope**
  
  Greater scope for transformative pedagogy and GNH to impact not only individuals and schools, but also communities.
Project Evaluation Summary

+ Putting teachers at the centre of school change is empowering, motivating and one of the most effective methods for enabling school change

+ Capacity for teachers to implement Education for GNH in their schools has increased

+ A culture of reflective practice for on-going school change has been developed

+ Examples of good practice of Education for GNH have been produced and disseminated
Project Evaluation Summary cont.

+ Tools to transform teaching methods and to share new teaching practices with others have been acquired

+ Participatory teaching methods are being used in the classroom

- Limited inclusion of media literacy and filmmaking activities

- Limited use of SUSNET for resources and as an online community of practice

- The project website has not been accessed

- Training manuals have not been used by existing or new participants
General Recommendations

1. Involve more schools in the Transformative Education for GNH action research project

2. Increase involvement of other teachers in project schools

3. Encourage schools to complete their second action research cycle (since LTC 2)

4. Support the publication of action researches, e.g. Rabsel, to facilitate dissemination of project outcomes and impact

5. Strengthen on-going support from REC to project schools
General Recommendations cont.

6. More training on Action Research and Transformative Pedagogy

7. Simplify SUSNET and Action Research methodology

8. Align the Transformative Education for GNH project with:
   REC’s Professional Development Program (Transformative Pedagogy for the 21st Century) and GNH Seed School Project

9. Encourage more use of SUSNET as internet connectivity improves

10. Create a GNH Seed school community of practice

11. Give more recognition and reward to participating teachers
Future Project Suggestions

The project can contribute to the National Education Framework, REC’s co-operative teaching strategy trainings, and Ministry of Education GNH trainings by continuing the development in schools of transformative pedagogy and action research as a tool for implementation of Transformative Education for GNH.

Therefore the main suggestion for the future of the project is:

Consolidate existing action research projects and develop a project plan for expanding action research and transformative pedagogy in other GNH Seed Schools.
Transformative Education for GNH Project Future

2013-2014:
Continue to support existing project schools

2013-2014:
Create a pool of Action Research Mentors I
- Action Research Mentors I develop a training module and give an Action Research Leadership Training Course to small groups of teachers from new schools (Spring 2014)
- Each Mentor sustains Action Research in their own schools
- Mentors give support to new schools and develop a community of practice with all participating schools

Spring 2015:
Evaluation with Mentors and schools mentored

Spring 2016:
Create a pool of Action Research Mentors II
- Action Research Mentors II develop a training module and give an Action Research Leadership Training Course to small groups of teachers from new schools (Spring 2016)
- Each Mentor sustains Action Research in their own schools
- Mentors give support to new schools and develop a community of practice with all participating schools
Conclusion

The inspiring and dedicated teachers we have met demonstrate the power of Teacher Action Research and Transformative Pedagogy to provide a solid foundation for transforming Bhutan’s education system to achieve the country’s Gross National Happiness goals.
Further Project Information

• The Project Website:
  
  http://education4gnh.webs.com/

• SUSNET
  
  https://optima.discendum.com

User account: gnhvisitor
Password: gnhguest
Kadinchey

Kiitos
Methodological Framework for the Transformative Education for GNH Project
Theoretical Framework for Transformative Pedagogy

GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS VALUES AND PRINCIPLES
(E.G. Equality, Fairness, Justice, Non-discrimination, Diversity, Sustainability)

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY THEORIES
(E.G. Empowering, Liberating, Engaged, Border)

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION FOR GNH

GNH ASPIRING SCHOOLS
TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGY
FOSTERING TEACHER EMPOWERMENT

GNH SCHOOLS