

# Dagyab e.V.

Sponsoring Association for the Tibetan  
Region Dargya and Minyak  
Report 2013



Helping in Tibet –  
Education, Health, Culture

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Back cover photo: Dagyab monks changing a tyre (photo: Dezom Dagyab)

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Issued in January 2013

## 1 Editorial

*Dear Friends and supporters of the Dagyab Association!*

In late summer 2011, Dezom Dagyab went to eastern and central Tibet for a few months. She had unexpectedly been granted a visa. She first went from Chengdu to our new project area, Minyak, and then to the Region Dagyab, where she stayed for some weeks. She was able to visit all Dagyab projects as well as many monasteries. This booklet contains large portions of her detailed travel report. They demonstrate

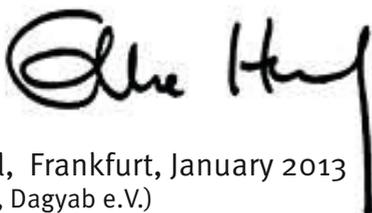
once again how important it is that we be on location and be able to speak with the people directly. As I do each year, I flew to Lhasa once again in 2011 – this time in September. There, I was able to meet with some of those in charge of the aid projects for consultations and for financial accounting. Unfortunately, I did not have an opportunity to go in person to the project regions, as parts of the old province of Kham were off-limits to foreigners.

And in 2012 none of us had been able to go to Tibet: no visas had been issued by the Chinese government. At this time, the Tibetan areas inside the People's Republic of China are undergoing an ordeal. For some months now, the Tibetan world has been and is being confronted with unprecedented conditions. The desperate acts of individual Tibetans who self-immolate and in doing so create a final, cruel symbol of free protest have placed the entire country in a state of emergency. In October, China's new government was elected. For this reason as well, those in power cannot "afford" any unrest. At present, the temptation to keep everything under control is all the more powerful. I have heard hopeful tones from many sides that the new government in Beijing, which at the same time represents a generational shift, might do away with the harshness of the government's Tibet policies.

The Regions Dagyab and Minyak are not affected by the unrest. The projects are running successfully and are of great practical benefit to the inhabitants, and also for their morale. By the way, this time we have marked the passages in which new projects are described with a Tibetan flower. Perhaps one or the other of them will appeal to you, and you might wish to give it your support.

Thank you, and we hope that you will continue to support our efforts!

With warmest greetings,



Elke Hessel, Frankfurt, January 2013  
(Chairperson, Dagyab e.V.)



## 2 Engagements in Tibet - the Regions Dagyab and Minyak



Gen Wangdu in front of a nomad monastery

The Tibetan cultural area encompasses more than 10 million km<sup>2</sup>, is bordered to the south by the Himalayas, to the west by the Karakorum, to the north by the Kunlun, and to the east by several high, snow-capped mountain chains. In the 7th century C.E., the first Tibetan empire with a highly developed culture arose under the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo. 90% of Tibetans are for the most part deeply devout Buddhists; in addition, there are followers of the Bön religion and animistic religions. Since the Chinese occupation in 1951, Tibet has been a part of the People's Republic of China. The originally Tibetan provinces of Ü-Tsang, Kham and Amdo have been assigned to the Tibetan autonomous region (T.A.R.), and the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Qinghai, and Gansu. The Region **Dagyab** itself is located on the eastern border of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, about 60 km from the third-largest city of **Chamdo**, and about 1000 km from Lhasa, at the headwaters of the Mekong River. It is about half the size of Hessen. The landscape there is enchantingly beautiful: fertile river oases with fortified town-like farming settlements, distinctive, deep red, barren cliff landscapes with vertical geological strata and wide, green alpine pastures alternating with each other. The approx. 50,000 inhabitants make their living mainly from agriculture or nomadic herding. So far, roads in Dagyab, which is still very backward even by Tibetan standards, are limited in number. Beyond the two main hubs Yendum and Jamdün, horses are still indispensable means of transportation in the area, whose plains and river valleys lie between 3100 and 4200 m. above sea level.

Our second, brand-new project area, the region **Minyak** in the northwest of the province Sichuan, is part of the so-called autonomous prefecture of Kandze, and is near the famous sacred mountain Minya Konka (7556 m). Minyak is part of the old Tibetan province of Kham. The landscape is fertile and interspersed with traditional Tibetan villages with massive stone houses. Why Minyak? Minyak is Dagyab Rinpoche's place of birth. He and the people of Minyak are and always have been closely bound to one another "for all time." The request for support came from them.

## H. E. Loden Sherab Dagyab Kyabgön Rinpoche



H.E. Dagyab Rinpoche giving teachings in Frankfurt

As the former Patron of Dagyab, he was the spiritual and secular head of Region Dagyab until the Chinese invasion of Tibet – as were his predecessors beginning in the 17th century. He belongs to the Gelugpa tradition, which has been founded in Tibet in the early 15th century. Rinpoche graduated in the traditional course of study in Buddhist philosophy at the monastic university of Drepung. In 1959, he immigrated to India together with H.H. the Dalai Lama. There, he obtained the Geshe Lharampa degree (equivalent to a Ph.D.) and among other things, served as director of Tibet House Delhi. Rinpoche came to Germany in 1966 at the invitation of the University of Bonn, where he served as a Tibetologist until 2004. Since many years Rinpoche has given Dharma teachings in many parts of the world including Holland, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Brazil, America, Singapore, Malaysia, India and Tibet. In his teachings he emphasizes the importance of practicing the Buddha Dharma in a simple way without cultural bias and he greatly encourages his students to integrate Buddhist practice into daily life. He teaches in German, English and Tibetan language. Following his retirement he took over the spiritual direction of Tibet House Germany.

### **The founding of the Dagyab Association (Dagyab e.V.) in Germany**

Since 1984, Dagyab Rinpoche has been able to visit Dagyab again several times. Although his countrymen had rebuilt a few monasteries at great effort, but it was clear that the medical care and schooling available to the population was inadequate, and knowledge of traditional arts and crafts was in danger of falling into oblivion. For this reason, in 1993 a few dedicated friends and co-workers of Dagyab Rinpoche who had heard about the situation in Dagyab decided to form a non-profit association with the purpose of supporting development for the people in his homeland. From the very beginning, the Association's work has been focused on four goals: improving the level of education and training – improving medical care – cultivating and preserving Tibet's unique culture – advancing the education and living circumstances of nuns.

*„I feel privileged to be able to make these trips to the incredibly beautiful Region Dagyab for the Dagyab Association. The friendliness and genuineness of the people do away with all urges for western comforts, like the Internet, sit-down toilets and bathtubs.*

### **3 Dezom Dagyab's trip to Dagyab in late summer 2011**

After a three-year hiatus, Dezom Dagyab, Dagyab Rinpoche's niece who lives in Switzerland and Austria, has once again spent several months in eastern Tibet and later in Lhasa as well. She was able to visit all of the Dagyab Association projects and also numerous monasteries in Dagyab.



Dezom  
In Dagyab

#### **Dezom's report:**

*Finally, after four long years, I have once again had an opportunity to travel through my homeland. Although this time I waited for more than three months for my visa and postponed my flight several times, everything worked out fine in the end. The first stage of my journey took me from Chengdu to Minyak. There, I met many members of my extensive family circle. I was of course there not only as a private person, but also visited projects supported by the Dagyab Association. I first travelled to the medical station in Minyak, which had visibly improved, both in terms of construction and the quality of medical care. I then went to Dagyab with a rented transporter, where I was overwhelmed by the positive developments. Not only the country's infrastructure, such as power supply and the road network, but also the monasteries have undergone a major transformation. I met many off the graduates of the Magön Art School and observed them at work. They are praised everywhere, and their work is considered top-quality. To be a Magön artist is a seal of quality, both inside Dagyab and outside as well.*

*And I also met with former students of our Tibetan Medicine Training Institute in Bugön at their new work places, or they dropped by to meet with me. It's wonderful to see how the Association's goals are being fulfilled. The people of Dagyab and Minyak are truly benefitting from the artists and doctors who have been able to build up a professional future for themselves through the support of the Dagyab Association.*

*My joy in being able to visit the nuns' hermitage Dölma Ritrö has not diminished in the course of the years, either. Today, visiting the 450 nuns in their hermitage is quite easy – no two-hour hike on foot, no riding on horseback. The car drives smoothly up the new road, which was partially financed by the Association, and stops right in front of the foot of the nunnery, which has just recently been guided into civilisation with electricity and 10 water connections. Many projects in Dölma Ritrö could be realised thanks to good contacts with the abbot Lama Sonam and our many sponsors. I was able to drive very comfortably by Jeeps far as Rinda Lhakang and Jorke Ritrö. I arrived at the school Sershongthang right in the middle of the intensive construction phase. The ground was being dug up there with a large steam shovel to make room for a new school building. I was shown the new medical station and numerous new dorm rooms during my second visit to the nuns' hermitage Ewam Ritrö, located in the centre of a remote village.*

*All told, I visited over 35 nunneries and monasteries of all traditions and their subsidiaries, the colleges (called khangtse), in the entire Dagyab area (on foot, on horseback and by Jeep), and tried to carry out a small statistical survey, but there are still many of the over 150 monastic facilities that I have not been able to visit yet. I will therefore have to travel to Dagyab many times in the coming years to cover all of them. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all sponsors and supporters – in the name of everyone I met on my trip as well – whose generosity provides the people in Dagyab with a chance at survival, whether in a monastery or nunnery or as artists in the working world.*



Fallen rocks block the road

## THE PROJECTS IN DAGYAB

### 4 School for nomads

The nomadic areas in Region Dageyab are at high elevations and sweeping in extent. About half of all Dageyab-pas are nomads or semi-nomads, which means that at least in summer they live mostly in tents in their extended family groups, with whom they migrate from one pasturage to another, according to a sharing plan that the individual “clans” renegotiate with each other each year. Due to the families’ distant and alternating abodes, schools in nomadic areas of necessity had to be conceived as boarding schools. Instruction and care is on a full-time (all-day) basis, nine months of the year from September until May.

In the Serzhongthang nomads’ school, the number of students has remained fairly stable. Each year about 20 – 30 children leave the school because they transfer to the secondary (middle) school, begin secondary education programmes – such as training programmes for future Tibetan doctors – or return completely to their parents’ nomadic households. About 10 – 20 new children are admitted yearly.

Here, the teachers are all Tibetan and come from the region. The curriculum is Tibetan, mathematics, natural science, geography, history, music and technology. Chinese is taught as first foreign language starting in the third grade. Examinations are held twice a year. Although the school was established with Association funding, the guidelines for state accredited schools of the Tibetan Autonomous Region must be followed. Now, the salaries of the five teachers are paid completely by the government of the Tibetan Autonomous Region.



**Dezom reports:**

*During my unannounced visit to the school, the only personnel I met with were Pachen, the cook and (assistant) teacher, and Sogyi, a care-giver who is also a cook. Of the 6 nomad teachers 4 had gone to shop for vegetables in the municipality. The school itself was caught up in construction activities that had been underway for the past 10 days. The big yellow steam shovel looked really outlandish in the nomadic landscape. A huge hole had already been dug where new school rooms were to be built, and which will be paid for by the government. I also met with two Tibetan carpenters at their work. Unfortunately teachers employed by the government are contractually obligated for only one year. In addition to their salaries, the teachers are provided with food by the municipality. At this time, 118 students from class 1 – 6 are receiving instructed. Among them are 20 – 25 future nuns and monks.*

**5 Sponsorships for children in Dagyab**

or us westerners, taking on one or more sponsorships is a genuinely effective way to give children - especially those in remote nomadic areas who receive scarcely any support - the chance to at least learn reading and writing, and thus create a foundation for themselves. Ideally they can then transfer to secondary schools, as we have seen in the past.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank our faithful sponsors once again. These regular donations are very, very important to us. They guarantee that we are in a position to continually transfer funds for writing materials, clothing, additional food, etc., and to put aside funds for new buildings or for interior furnishings.

Sponsorship coordinator:

Hanne Grimm, Märzgasse 10, 69117 Heidelberg.

Tel. and Fax: +49 (0)6221/ 23736,

e-mail: grimm@dagyab.de

You can help nomad children with a monthly donation of 13 Euros, deducted quarterly from your bank account (= 39 Euros per quarter).

**6 Traditional Tibetan Medicine**

Comprehensive medical care for the population is the Dagyab Association's primary goal in training and supporting traditional Tibetan doctors and the construction of medical stations especially in remote regions. As we know from reliable sources, although the government is now sending many so-called doctors into remote areas, most of them are poorly trained. Normally, they have completed a six-month course in basic medicine, are supplied with few medicines – such as headache tablets – and are completely unable to treat complicated cases or chronic illnesses. Here, Traditional Tibetan Medicine (TTM), with a minimum training period of six years and a good rate of success is clearly preferable where chronic illnesses are concerned. In the training institute set up by the Dagyab Association, 56 TTM doctors – with support from the Trace Foundation – have now successfully completed their studies. Most of them are now working throughout Dagyab.

The **Magön<sup>2</sup> Health Station** is popular with the people.



Waiting room

**Dezom reports:**

Each day, our team of doctors – and beginning in June 2011 the 17 year-old Thubten Lhamo who requested to train as a medical practice assistant – treat 20 – 100 patients. Above all, the poorer sectors of the population use the services of these experienced doctors, because with 5 Yuan, medications for an entire week consisting of 4 daily medication units, the most inexpensive medical care is made available. Blood sampling, moxibustion and acupuncture are free of charge here as well.

An expansion of the health station (construction costs approx. 150,000 Yuan) would be very helpful and meaningful, since there is a great need and demand for medical care here. I can confirm that, during my unannounced visits, the press of patients was always enormous, and the benches in the practice were fully occupied. Even on Sundays, the doctors were being visited in their private rooms. There is also a great need for astronomical calculations, and for this reason the doctors asked me to look for sponsors for purchasing a computer and printer.

Medicines are produced on-site; nonetheless it is also necessary to purchase medications and herbs elsewhere. The daily wage for collecting herbs per person is 50 Yuan. 50 people are needed for an entire month to cover the demand for herbs for producing medicines. No capital is available for this purpose, and the doctors must pre-finance medicines out of their own salaries and loans. Here, financial support with detailed, well-thought-out planning would be very helpful.

Medicines from Dageyab have such an excellent reputation that patients from Lhasa order particular medications with prized herbs from Dageyab. The reason is that the mixing of the herbs in mass productions in Lhasa is not anywhere near as good as that of our health station.

*It would therefore be a good idea if the Magön Health station could run a kind of pharmacy in the centre of Magön. This would relieve the doctors in the practice, who could then concentrate more on treating their patients. The monastery is not permitted to set up a practice in the city, but they could sell the medicines produced by them there.*



### **Bugön<sup>3</sup>- health station**

#### ***Dezom reports:***

*Our trusted team member of many years, Gen Wangdü-la, has had an assistant, Gen Chösang Tendrok (30) for three years now. They both work both in the practice in the village centre as well as in their private quarters. The people come gladly to the two monk doctors and esteem their competence highly. And the treatment fees of 5 Yuan for a 7 days' ration of medicines is very low. Starting in December 2008, following the transfer of the medical training institute to Magön, they handed over the rooms being released to the nuns as educational and living facilities, because the latter had no accommodations at all. Since then, the Tibetan doctors are struggling with space problems of their own. The press of patients is sometimes so great that the practice in the village centre is too small. Their personal accommodations nearby then serve as alternative. Furthermore, the repurposed shop and bar they rent does not provide a suitable examination room or overnight accommodations for patients.*

*Their wish is for a new building on the site of the old monastery kitchen. The Daggyab Association has already approved their request.*



### **7 Monastery/nuns' projects**

At this time in Daggyab, there are about 3000 nuns and monks in the two main monasteries, in small village monasteries, hermitages and private households. Although almost all ordained persons wish to join a monastery, where the conditions for study and practice are present, this can only be realised if the government expands the existing permits in terms of numbers and the monasteries offer the corresponding conditions both in terms of space and support.

With Daggyab Rinpoche's approval, the Daggyab Association has decided to focus primarily on advancement of the nuns, contributing in this way to altering the nuns' quality of life and strengthening respect for them in the population. The facts of the matter are that traditionally, nuns were almost always disadvantaged in Tibetan society. Systematic studies, regular donations, to say nothing of granting full ordination were simply not "meant" for them. Unfortunately, even at the start of the 21st century, little has changed in this unlovely and disrespectful treatment of nuns.

However, the nuns and also a few responsible lamas are now at work together on reforms with full and clear intent and self-confidence. Officially about 1000 nuns are now living in the somewhat larger nuns' hermitages of Jorkhe Ritro, Evam Ritro and Drölma Ritro and in the nuns' residences of Sämogön. In addition, many nuns are living with families – for the most part involuntarily. Regrettably, they are there highly valued as permanently available extra labour power.



Dharma tutors in Dölma Ritro

### **Nuns' hermitage Dölma Ritro**

The Hermitage of the Goddess Tara is the largest in Dagyab and lies hidden – reachable only by a climb up a steep side valley to approx. 4200 m above sea level. A majority of the nuns are being instructed in Buddhist philosophy by the universally esteemed Geshe Sönam. This course of study is comparable with the basic course of study for future geshe in monastic universities. An additional advanced course of study is under consideration. Thus, the establishment of a complete course of study for the geshe degree (degree: Ph.D. in Buddhist philosophy) for these nuns can be expected in the future.

### **Dezom reports:**

 *"I reached Dölma Ritro comfortably by car instead of a 2 hour trek on horseback as in my earlier trips. Although the road is not asphalted, building a road at all in this wild region is still a huge achievement. The paths between the individual buildings of the nuns and the assembly hall are still not in good condition and are very slippery. This is the largest hermitage in the vicinity of Magön, and at this time 412 nuns aged from 7 – 97 are living here.*

*Nun performing mandala ritual*



*The new assembly hall - financed by the Association – is well-utilised and has room for all of the nuns. Lama Sönam upholds the superb quality of the Dharma studies and 14 of his students (female and male) have come so far that they themselves are now teaching. Of course, most of the Dharma tutors are now nuns, but there are also a few monks, and the main teacher is and remains Lama Sönam.*

*A large-scale assembly was held during my visit; and judging by the good quality of the offerings, the beautifully-arranged flowers and of course the Dharma practice, one sees the high quality of this teaching centre. In addition to Gen Ngawang Tondrü (age 52), four more nuns aged 37 -47 hold important offices in the hermitage.*

*In terms of infrastructure, there are now power lines, in addition to the road that reaches right up to the edge of Dölma Ritrö's grounds. And the 10 water faucets are naturally a great relief for the nuns.*



*Toilets are still not available, 7 toilet facilities are planned, costing an estimated 50,000 Yuan per facility.*



*There are still rooms in which 3 – 6 nuns must live together. For this reason, construction of additional buildings is desirable. Dölma Ritrö has also gotten a large influx of next-generation nuns, due in particular to the excellent Dharma teachings. About 100 nuns live outside the hermitage.*

*A library is also in progress, and statues and wall paintings still remain to be produced.*

*Unfortunately, our female doctor of many years has left for Chamdo because of the better pay there and a substitute has not yet been found. And as of now there is no chöra<sup>1</sup>. Because of the large number of new nuns, the second hall is also used for prayer ceremonies and assemblies. Here, construction of an additional building for the important debates that must be held as part of the programme of studies would be very helpful.*

### **The nuns' hermitage Jorkhe Ritrö**

The hermitage is located above the town of Jamdün and currently shelters 80 nuns, 18 monks and 105 female novices - called gedrug (tib.: dge brug). As a rule, the nuns and monks study Lam Rim, the Graduated Path to Enlightenment – in other words a complete overview of Buddhist doctrine - as well as the daily rituals. The Jorkhe Ritrö health station is still very welcome and is a blessing for the nuns, especially for the older ones, who until now had no medical care at all. The Association has been able to finance additional new houses for the nuns.

**Dezom reports:**

*The new managers of Jorkhe Ritrö, Sonam Tashi (age 40) and Künsang Tsomo (age 43) welcomed me at the monastery gate together with the other nuns and monks. Unlike previous visits on horseback, one can now drive comfortably by car right up to the monastery entrance. The ascending road is of course not asphalted, but this is no problem for experienced Dagyabpa drivers. The journey reminded me a bit of the streets of San Francisco ... as the driver here - I for one was definitely a bit scared. A full assembly is held on the 10th, 15th, and 25th days of each Tibetan month. The ages of the nuns and monks in Jorkhe Ritrö range from age 8 – 83 now, there are even water pipes financed by the municipality.*



*Power lines are in planning, but the implementation date is not yet known. The new kitchen is in lively use. And construction of a new chöra is in planning. The high-quality wood for the pillars and roof-beams has already arrived. A good Pecha teacher for textual study is desired.*

*There are no toilets on the monastery grounds.*

*15,000 Yuan are needed for renovating the Tara prayer room.*

*There are still not enough rooms for the monks, at the moment 6 monks share one cell.*

*And 7 houses are still needed for the nuns (one hut for 2 nuns costs approx. 6000 Yuan).*



*10 nuns have no family relations to support them.*

**The Jorkhe Ritrö health station**



*The health station of the nuns' female doctor Dr. Dechen-la is very well-tended and orderly.*

*She uses the greater part of her annual salary of 3600 Yuan for purchasing medicines. Dr. Dechen is therefore requesting support.*

**Ewam Ritrö**

*75 nuns are currently living in this nuns' hermitage, located in the middle of a village. They enjoy a good reputation as Tantric practitioners (mainly Vajrayogini).*

*The Dagyab association has financed a new prayer and assembly hall, and the non-profit association Nepalhilfe e.V., which has accompanied our projects with great good will and interest for years now, had kindly financed an urgently needed health station.*

**Dezom reports:**

*Lama Tondrü (age 59) is the director of the hermitage with over 74 nuns. They are between 20 -70 old and stay permanently in the hermitage. The nuns have free time off only one month per year.*

*The nunnery still has no electric power and the water pipes are few in number, but there is running water from the available water conduits.*

*At this time, one of the nuns is taking medical training in Chamdo and Magön.*



*All told, from 2007-2011, funds from the Dagyab Association enabled the construction of a medicine station, 14 housing units for nuns and an assembly hall. Naturally, all of the nuns took part in the construction as well, and family members also made financial contributions. 5 additional houses for nuns are still needed, since up to 4 nuns must share a room.*

## Nuns' projects around Bugön Monastery

The large residences in the vicinity of the Bugön monastic university, which were purchased and renovated with funds from the Dagwab Association for the nuns studying there, are called "sämo-gön" (Tib.: daughter monastery). In addition, nuns have moved into the former partially detached medical institute built a short way outside the village. It is very well suited to the nuns' needs, is built in traditional Tibetan style, surrounded by a wall, and has a vegetable garden and fruit trees. They can reach their place of study in Bugön Monastery in about 20 minutes on foot.

## Püntsok Chünlo nomads' monastery

### **Dezom reports:**

*To my surprise, on my way through the nomadic area to Sershongthang School, the simple village monastery had been transformed into a magnificent new building. The nomads had contributed to the construction with strength and dedication, and also donated a lot of money. The gate is very impressive, and the monastery is now two storeys high as well, and offers much more space, both for the monastery school there and in the new assembly hall.*

*Gen Amo (age 42) tells me that about 60 monks in ages from 7 – 48 are officially registered here, with most of them studying in Bugön and Zaga-Pubo. They only come for assemblies, which each last 7 – 15 days and take place twice a year. 7 monks and 26 school children, all provided for by their families, live here permanently.*

*The monastery desires solar power and donations for Buddha statues as well as funds for painting the monastery walls.*



## „Aid for the nuns in Dagwab“

The Dagwab Association seeks to provide the nuns in Dagwab with the greatest possible support, and hopes for your support.

A monthly sponsorship of 5 Euros is not much, but can be of great benefit if many dedicated people can be found to contribute.

### **If you are interested and need information, please contact:**

**Info:** Sylvia Billich, Tel. +49 (0)2103 66708, [sylvia.billich@gmx.de](mailto:sylvia.billich@gmx.de)

**Account manager:** Inge Jansen, Tel. 0228 319432, Email: [maassenjansen@googlemail.com](mailto:maassenjansen@googlemail.com)

## 8 Arts and crafts schools

The Magön School of Arts and Crafts, built in 1998 below the monastery, now enjoys an excellent reputation both within and beyond the region as well. Most of the students are learning thangka painting, and wall, pillar and ceiling painting. The monks Dungkar and Logyal serve as administrators. Kunga Gyaltzen, a responsible, very good graduate of the school, has taken on the artistic and content direction, together with two other older students. Two students are deaf. There is also a nun among the students, the extremely gifted Ani Sonam. The school's reputation is now so high that there is a far greater number of applicants than can be accommodated. For this reason, the responsible parties have decided to take new applicants only every two years.



New painting class room

**Dezom reports:**

*The new painting classroom, which offers optimal conditions for upcoming artists has been in existence for three years. One eye-catcher is the brush as symbol of painting school on the pillars of the room. A large portrait of Dagyab Rinpoche on the wall also refers vicariously to the numerous sponsors who make this training possible. The other classrooms are still in the old buildings, which are no longer in good condition. With many graduates who have very successfully embarked on careers, and the 87 current students (1st class 20 students, 2nd class 26 students, 3rd class 41 students), the Magön school's excellent reputation is being disseminated far and wide. The waiting list is still very long. The 20 students in the senior class will soon graduate, and a solid future awaits them.*

*A former Magön art student earns his living as a teacher at the municipal middle school with a monthly income of 2800 Yuan plus room and board provided by the school, in Chamdo teachers earn 3500 Yuan per month plus 12 Yüan per day. Many are booked by the surrounding monasteries, or by private persons who wish to decorate altar rooms in their homes.*

*The students' dorms are bursting at the seams. Up to 7 people sleep in one room. The buildings are very old and show signs of severe wear and tear. A new building would really be a good idea here. On a picnic outing lasting several days, our students were able to get to know each other better, and it was very moving to see how well the two deaf-mute students were integrated into the group. They played cards with the other students, made jokes and took part in group dances. It was lovely to see that they were not subjected to discrimination, as is so often the case – including in Tibet.*

*A desire for the school's own thangka gallery is growing stronger. The 10 best of the graduates are to be employed, in order to show their works and thus make the school better known outside the region. The responsible parties' wish at this time is for a building that can mount a thangka exhibition in a prominent fashion on the main street of Magön, and that also offers a work studio on the 2nd floor and living accommodations on the third floor.*



## High Quality Art Gallery in Dagyab Magön

10 graduates of the Magön Art School wish to found their own institute and Art Gallery.

The school's thangkas now enjoy an excellent reputation – not only locally, but transregionally as well. Having completed their training, these thangka painters seek to successively improve their quality and hold exhibitions in China (and other Asian countries) on a regular basis. They will also participate in art contests.

They wish to acquire a piece of land in Magön and construct a studio house there.

The construction of a type of gallery for art producers in the city of Yendüm, Dagyab, is of central importance for enabling the art school graduates to continue their artistic activities.

A new, three-storey building with a surface area of 7 pillars (approx. 70m<sup>2</sup>) on each floor would cost about 1.000.000 Yuan, if they build it themselves, including the grounds.

According to Logyal, the responsible monk, a monthly stipend of approx. 3000 Yuan is appropriate. The cost of paints and gold are 51000 Yuan annually.

The German Dagyab Association (Dagyab e.V.) finances and supervises the building's construction and purchase of the grounds.

We still need sponsors for the monthly stipends.



Magön thangka painting students together with Dezom and Logyal

## The Bugön Arts and Crafts School

### **Dezom reports:**

*Since the director's death, the school has been headed by Gen Tradja and Gen Nyendrak, neither of whom have completed a course of study in thangka painting. During my visit, of the 26 students aged from 15 – 30, six students were absent. One was taking an advanced course in Lhasa, some were at home for family reasons. In winter, instruction periods are from 9.00 until 18.00, and in summer from 8.30 until 19.00, including a break. Over the year, about 2 months of instruction all told are cancelled due to the profitable hunt for the caterpillar fungus<sup>4</sup> harvest and Losar, the Tibetan New Year's*

*festival. Since there is no boarding school for the students in Bugön, they receive 15 – 80 Yuan in support for accommodations. The students must give the school a certain percentage from commissions. These funds also flow back into non-discretionary expenses. Length of training is planned at three years.*

*At this time almost everything is in short supply. Paper purchases are partially financed through fines for absence. In addition, Gen Tradja expects all students to appear in the chuba, the excellent, but also expensive traditional outer clothing.*

*A new building for the school is urgently needed. The situation with adequate space is precarious; a pleasant environment for work and learning is for all intents and purposes impossible. For years now, the Dagyab Association has also sought to have a trained teacher come to the school who would take on overall responsibility as well, but we have not yet succeeded.*



Bugön thangka-painting students

## **9 Thangkas from Dagyab**

You can order thangkass from Dagyab - now in superb quality. Any number of thangkass is always available in **Tibet House Germany's shop**. But individual sizes and depictions can also be ordered. Please discuss your wishes with shop director Martin Brüger. The only catch is that purchasers have to be very patient, since communications and transport paths to and from Dagyab are long.

Contact: Tel.: +49 (0)69 71913594. Please note: the shop is not always open, please leave a message on the answering machine or mail us: [brueger@tibethaus.com](mailto:brueger@tibethaus.com).

## 10 Projects in Minyak



Amchi Sherab Lodrö

For years now, inquiries and requests for support have also been coming for aid projects in the eastern Tibetan region of Minyak, where Dagyab Rinpoche was born. Now, a health station in the town of Sampa Karpa, under the direction of the Tibetan doctor Sherab Lodrö (who was trained in Dagyab Jamdün) has been running for over a year with great success. Unfortunately, there is as yet nothing new to report about establishing a thangka painting school there.

### **Dezom reports:**

*The development of the health station supported by the Dagyab Association is breath-taking. During the last 4 years, Amchi Sherab Lodrö has expanded his well-established practice by 4 rooms for patients. His reputation is now so high that patients come for consultations from over 100 km. Away. People pass on his telephone number, and appointments are often made by phone. As a Tibetan doctor, his specialty is chronic illnesses and many patients come in regular intervals. 10 – 15 patients per day are normal, but sometime there are 30. Sometimes he is also asked to make house calls, which he does on his rickety motorcycle. Transporting patients in winter is particularly difficult. He must therefore make a great many house calls then. He had the patient rooms built for this reason as well, so that patients, together with their families, can be admitted on an inpatient basis. They can then be observed under his medical supervision without having to travel great distances every day. He has increased his annual sales turnover in medications from Derge from 5000 Yuan in the beginning to 40,000 Yüan, and that at a price of 2 Yuan (0,25 Euros) for a day's ration, mostly consisting of 4 medication units. Of course, especially expensive medicines are accounted differently from the usual ones. Since his prices are very low and he does not demand any fee for urine diagnosis, pulse diagnosis or giving infusions, patients are happy to recommend him. He has also been successful in treating stroke cases, which confirms his excellent reputation. On his own initiative, Amchi-la did advanced training in treating and stabilising bone breaks with a prominent doctor. He is deeply interested in advanced training. In answer to my question as to what is most urgently needed in Minyak, he answered: eye surgery.*

**11 Tabular overview of current project requests**

1. Magön: expansion of the health station	construction costs approx. 150.000 Yuan
2. Magön: Purchase of a computer and printer for the health station	approx. 1500 Euro
3. Financial aid for production of medicines	3400 Euro
4. Magön: TTM pharmacy	expenses to be determined. Possibly only rent.
5. Bugön. Expansion of a health station	approx. 19.000 Euro
6. Dolma Ritrö: financial support for 27 nuns with no family relations	60 Euros annually per nun
7. Dolma Ritrö: 7 toilet facilities	7000 Euros (1000 Euros per facility)
8. Dolma Ritrö: Books for the library	approx. 1000 Euros annually
9. Dolma Ritrö: Wall paintings for the library	approx. 500 Euro
10. Dölma Ritrö: Statues	3500 Euro
11. Dölma Ritrö: : Chöra, debate hall	approx. 20.000 Euro
12. Jorkhe Ritrö: 7 houses needed	Total approx. 10500 Euros (1500 Euros per house)
13. Jorkhe Ritrö: 3 toilet facilities	3000 Euros (1000 Euros per facility)
14. Jorkhe Ritrö: Renovation of Tara prayer hall	190 Euro
15. Jorkhe Ritrö: 10 nuns with no family relations	60 Euros annually per nun
16. Jorkhe Ritrö: Purchase of medications	500 Euros annually
17. Ewam Ritrö: 5 additional houses, each with two rooms and a kitchen	Total approx. 7500 Euros (1500 Euros per house)
18. Püntsok Chünlo nomad monastery: Solar power, Buddha statues, painting the monastery walls	2000 Euros one-time donation
19. Magön Thangka Studio: grounds	45.000 Euro
20. Magön Thangka Studio: building	85.000 Euro
21. Magön Art School: start-up aid for 10 artists	350 Euros per month per person
22. Bugön Art School: new building	18.000 Euro

## 12 Dagyab Association Switzerland

Together with some friends, Dagyab Rinpoche' niece, Dezom Dagyab, founded the Dagyab Association Switzerland. In recent years, she has travelled often to Dagyab and has dedicated herself with enthusiasm and expert knowledge to the projects.

She came to Germany when she was 5 years old, did her Abitur (A-levels) in Switzerland, trained as a surgical nurse and has often carried out operations in Tibet together with Interplast Germany. She founded the Dagyab Association in Switzerland together with other Tibetans and in recent years has been in Dagyab several times to supervise the projects. She is currently studying Tibetology and international development at the University of Vienna.

### **Address of the Dagyab Association Switzerland:**

Dezom Dagyab, 9542 Münchwilen, Rütisstr. 4c,  
Tel. (0041) 071 9663019,  
Email: snowlions@googlemail.com

## 13 How can you help?

The people in Dagyab and Minyak are highly motivated by the aid coming from Europe. They clearly understand that this aid is a great opportunity for them.

Your help means a step forward towards more health, education and preservation of a unique culture.

Your engagement is a contribution towards a life with human dignity in both regions in eastern Tibet. And it brings about international understanding that creates affinity, in spite of the great distance, cultural differences and different life situations.

The people in Dagyab and Minyak rely on our engagement. Please help us continue the projects that have begun and to set impulses for new assistance!

### **Our administrative costs never exceed 5 – 6% of our donation income. All members work as volunteers.**

You can deposit general or earmarked donations for the four areas of medicine, schools, art or monasteries to the Dagyab Association (Dagyab e.V.) account:

Sparkasse Südliche Weinstraße in Landau

Acct. No. 135 060 150

Routing No. 548 500 10

IBAN: DE 70 5485 0010 0135 0601 50

SWIFT: LANS DE 55

You will receive a donation receipt at the start of the following year. However, please include your postal address (postal/ZIP code, city/town, street, house number, country), otherwise we have no way of knowing where to send the receipt! For all interested in donating regularly to the Association, please note the option of having a set sum regularly debited from your account at intervals set by you. This saves you work and the Association can plan better financially.

#### **14 Board of directors and contact**

DAGYAB e.V. – Sponsoring Association for the Tibetan Region Dagyab  
c/o Elke Hessel, Am Weingarten 32, 60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany  
email: info@dagyab.de - www.dagyab.de

**Chairperson:** Elke Hessel, see above  
(Supervision of projects in Tibet, annual report)

**Deputy chairperson:** Prof. Dr. Klaus Jork, Dieburgstr. 50 A, 63225 Langen, Germany  
(Consultation on medical projects)

**Treasurer:** Angelika Spliethöver, Herrnneuses 44, 91413 Neustadt a. d. Aisch, Germany  
Tel. +49 (0)9161 873090, email: ang-spli@web.de

#### **Sponsorships (coordination):**

Hanne Grimm, Märzgasse 10,  
69117 Heidelberg,  
Germany  
Tel. and Fax: +49 (0)6221 / 23736  
email: grimm@dagyab.de

#### **Sponsorships for nuns:**

Info: Sylvia Billich, Tel. +49 (0)2103 66708, email: sylvia.billich@gmx.de  
Finances: Inge Jansen, Tel. +49 (0)228 319432, email: maassenjansen@googlemail.com

#### **Supervision of donation drives in Germany:**

Bernhard Vetter, Schwabenstr. 56, 90459 Nürnberg, Germany  
Tel: +49 (0911) 447503

You can also support the Association through donation drives.

We will be glad to assist you with our experience and information materials. Please contact the board of directors (see above) or the Association representatives in the following areas, who will gladly support and advise you:

#### **www.dagyab.de**

The Dagyab Association's homepage is available in three languages:  
German, English and Spanish.

Footnotes:

1 – Chöra: a place of assembly or a hall for the disputations – logical debates – that must be held as part of the study of philosophy.

2 – Magön derives from ma (tib.: ma) mother and gön (tib.dgon) monastery. Magön is the main monastery of the region Dagyab. At the same time, it is also the district name.

3 - Bugön derives from bu (tib.: bu) son and gön (tib.dgon) monastery. Bugön is the second-largest monastery of Region Dagyab. At the same time, it is also the district name.

4 – Tibetans call the caterpillar fungus Cordyceps sinensis Yartsa Gunbu („summer grass – winter caterpillar“). The trade in Yartsa Gunbu is now a gigantic market. In ancient Tibet Yartsa Gunbu was often used as currency, as well.

**15 Donation history, accounting and financial status 2012**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Income in Euros</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>43.825,20</b>	<b>52.252,81</b>	<b>44.350,54</b>	<b>44.177,69</b>	<b>47.375,63</b>	<b>94.188,31</b>



Dagyab Thangka

