

Fondazione Lama Gangchen Help in Action onlus

Humanitarian aid for Himalayan communities



MISSION REPORT 2019



“Generosity is the best investment”
Lama Gangchen Tulku Rinpoche
founder



Mission

Fondazione Lama Gangchen Help in Action Onlus offers humanitarian aid in favour of Himalayan communities: education, healthcare, environmental care, protection of the weakest, interventions in emergency situations.

It also works to preserve and cultivate the ancient artistic, handicraft, medical and spiritual traditions of the Himalayas, a patrimony for all humanity.

Vision

May all beings:

- have happiness and its causes
- be free from suffering and its causes
- never be separated from the great happiness that is beyond all misery
- abide in equanimity free from prejudice, greed and hatred
- recover from the sicknesses of mind and body pollution and enjoy relative and absolute health now and forever
- relax in a pure and healthy outer and inner environment now and forever
- enjoy inner and world peace now and forever

*Lama Gangchen Rinpoche
The seven limitless meditations*

ACTIVITIES 2019

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS



Water project Chapakhori Village

The purpose of this project is the Sustainable Development Goal n.6: 'Ensuring water and sanitary conditions for everyone in view of a sustainable world' through the implementation of a collection, accumulation and revitalisation system of water resources from the source to Chapakhori village in the Bagmati region, south-east of Kathmandu.

Currently the population of the village lives without the immediate availability of water necessary for human consumption, for hygiene purposes and to give to their animals. The supply of water in the area suffered a further decline after the earthquake of 2015, which moved the underground faults drying up the village water sources.



*Con il contributo 8x1000
dell'unione buddhista italiana*

*Co-financed
by the Italian
Buddhist Union*



the project, and with the support of the local partner Help in Action, water was eventually found from the fourth borehole.

To make sure not a drop of this precious water was lost, two 500 litre tanks were installed to collect the water:

The second phase of the project, the installation of a pump system to carry the water to some main points located in the village will be carried out in 2020.



About 400 families live in the village of Chapakhori, which is located at the summit of a steep hill. Every day, and often several times a day, people have to walk a long way - downhill and then uphill, with heavy tanks on their shoulders - along a winding path that crosses the valley in order to reach the modest water source located at the base of the hill.

Once the project planning was completed, the first phase of the work began at the end of April 2019. After manually transporting the necessary drilling equipment to the site (not accessible by road), 5 sub-horizontal boreholes were drilled into the sloping foothills below where the village is located. Under the supervision of the Italian hydraulic engineer and geologist, who planned





EDUCATION

Gangchen Samling School

In the academic year 2019-2020, the number of students enrolled in Gangchen Samling School once again increased. Their are now just over 600 students attending the School. The new school building, inaugurated last year, created lots of space for new classrooms and facilities and is now able to accommodate up to 700 students. Classes range from kindergarten to class 10, and are attended almost equally by boys and girls. Most of the pupils studying in the School come from poor families who live in the outskirts of Kathmandu: after paying rent, buying food and other basic necessities, these families all too often have no money for school fees.

The high level of education offered by the School is clearly demonstrated by the results of the final SEE (Secondary Education Exam) government exam, and is one of the reasons why many poor families in the area request admission for their children.

This year the installation of solar panels on the school roof, thanks to funds from the 5x1000 programme, completed the renovation and expansion project, allowing the School to reduce running costs and guaranteeing a continuous supply of clean energy. In recent years, pollution in Kathmandu is very high and the supply of electricity is expensive compared to the standard of living of the population.

The music and dance courses in the School, increased after the 2015 earthquake for their therapeutic effect on young children, continued in the school year 2019/2020. There are two music classes, one for the traditional musical band and a more modern class for those who want to sing, play guitar, keyboards and drums.



EDUCATION FOR ALL



Stationary distribution

Every year the Foundation distributes stationary to many children studying in village schools in the Shankharapur and Rasuwa districts.

The only source of income in these villages is from farming – this means most families are unable to generate any income. Consequently the purchase of school supplies is out of the question for most families. Receiving this material encourages families to send their children, and in particular the girls, to school. Each child received exercise books, pens, pencils, ink, erasers, sharpeners, coloured pencils, book covers and geometry sets for the older children.

FURTHER EDUCATION

In 2019, thanks to the generosity of their supporters, 69 students attended further education courses (college, university or professional vocational training) in Nepal.

The most frequented and requested courses are in subjects such as hotel management, commercial studies, accounting, teaching and the social sciences.

Getting a qualified job in Nepal is becoming increasingly difficult as employers require higher levels of education: candidates are increasingly required to have completed college (class 12). However, reaching this level of education involves costs that are impossible for most of the poorest families to face.

In 2019 Kabita - from Jorpati orphanage and a former pupil of Gangchen School - who studied with the help of our long distance adoption programme obtained a professional nursing diploma. In addition to working in a local hospital, she is taking on greater responsibilities within the orphanage where she grew up.

Another student supported by us, Bijay, is currently in the final year of his degree course. In addition to studying, he now works as a teacher in a local school and is able to help his mother pay the school fees for his younger brother.



HELP FOR VILLAGE COMMUNITIES



In 2019, aid reached the Manhottari district. This area of Southern Nepal was affected last year by heavy floods that swept away the few possessions of many families. Today it is in conditions of absolute poverty and still without help. Many people are living in makeshift shacks, without any furnishings. These villages are home to the people of the untouchable caste, who are considered to be on the border of humanity.

In Kathmandu, at Gangchen Drukhang professional training centre, 2000 large quilted blankets were made by hand. Afterwards the monks and volunteers of the

Drupkhang faced the difficult journey to reach these people.

With the help of the local authorities, efforts were made to distribute everything as evenly as possible. The padded blankets, which can also be used as mattresses, were received with immense joy by those who currently sleep on the bare earth or on wooden planks, with no protection from the cold and bad weather.

This project was funded with part of the money received from the 5 × 1000 programme in 2018.



and on activities such as simple guest houses and tea shops. Unfortunately the 2015 earthquake moved the underground faults and the water source has dried up. The situation in the village is now dramatic. Many have been forced to leave the village in search of work in the cities and those left behind have lost their livelihoods. In particular the elderly population of the village is now in desperate conditions. We were able to offer help to the elderly and poorest families thanks to the Emergency Fund: shoes, clothes, food and school materials for the little ones.



The village of Tatopani is located in a remote pre-Himalayan mountain area. The meagre earnings of the inhabitants were based on a source of thermal healing waters, frequented by local Nepalese or by passing trekkers,





HELP FOR MONASTERIES

Monasteries in Tibet, Nepal and India only survive thanks to the donations they receive. Many welcome abandoned children or children from poor families who are unable to look after them as well as lonely elderly people without other support. The monasteries have always been a material and spiritual reference point for the communities surrounding them. The Foundation's support reached several monasteries in 2019, to help them cover essential costs (food, blankets, medicines, shoes, kitchen utensils, textbooks, maintenance

and reconstruction of buildings) contributing to the conservation of a precious culture.



Sed Gyued Monastery

This year a “non-profit” school was officially registered within this Kathmandu monastery according to Nepalese government standards. For the first time, the 65 young monks living in the monastery, in addition to their monastic education, began to study the subjects of the national school curricula such as English, mathematics, social studies, sciences...

Most of these children are living at the monastery because their families are unable to take care of them. Some were brought to the monastery after losing their parents in the 2015 earthquake, others

were entrusted by families who lost their homes and all their property.

The Foundation has supported the monastery for many years; also this year it helped to cover teachers' salaries and offered financial support so that there are the best possible conditions for living and studying.

Medical supplies and new robes for the monks were also donated in 2019. Having no spare clothes - especially in the monsoon season when the weather does not dry the laundry - the young monks often found themselves forced to wear wet clothes which resulted in various health problems.



NEW PROJECT

two monastery buildings

In 2019, the Foundation received requests for help from two monasteries in Kathmandu that are home to many children without families or from families who are in extreme difficulty. In Sed Gyued Monastery there are now 65 small monks and 11 adult or elderly monks; in Nyanang Phelgyeling Monastery there are 56 monks, 40 of whom are children.

Sed Gyued urgently needs new classrooms and bedrooms for the young monks. Unfortunately, after the 2015 earthquake, Phelgyeling has experienced the progressive advance of large cracks in the main building, built 50 years ago, which houses the kitchen, classrooms and dormitories.

A project to construct a new building in each of the monasteries was presented to the 8x1000 programme of the Italian Buddhist Union; two architectural studios in Kathmandu prepared the architectural and structural projects.



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ALAMBUH GYUED MONASTERY PARIWAR NEPAL



A geological company carried out soil tests to examine the suitability of the land on which the buildings will be constructed.

A 3-storey building was designed for Sed Gyued, to be used as classrooms and dormitories for the monks. There are 4 floors planned for Phelgyeling, the ground floor to be used as a kitchen and dining hall, on the upper floors dormitories for the young monks.

The project was presented to UBI in December 2019, and in March 2020 we received the good news that the first phase was approved.



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HEALTH EMERGENCY FUND



In 2019, the Foundation once again helped the medical centre in the Mawakanpur district of Nepal by supplying medicines.

This clinic provides primary health care to around 8,000 villagers. Especially during the rainy season these people are cut off from any other medical service, as the swelling of the rivers prevents access by land for months. A supply of basic medications were provided including: antibiotics, pain killers, antiseptic, cough syrup, vitamins and so on.

A 'first aid' kit was also provided to Sed Gyued Monastery in Kathmandu. The close contact in which 65 very lively young boys live, means that skin rashes, colds, coughs and so on, spread rapidly throughout the monastery. The monastery gratefully received a supply of antiseptic creams, bandages and plasters, disinfectant, cough syrups, generic medicines, pain killers.

Emergency fund

The Emergency Fund also made it possible to give immediate help to those who urgently needed it this year. The Fund works to ensure a safe place to sleep, food and medical care for vulnerable people such as the elderly, the sick and the disabled.

Most of the people who come to request help are experiencing extreme difficulties and need immediate support for their daily survival.

For example, this year we were able to help 10-year-old Tenzin Dawa from the village of Tatopani. Dawa is thought to have suffered a cerebral haemorrhage, and the doctors had given no hope to the family. After a long and intense therapy, he has slowly regained his ability to speak and move. Now he's talking, walking and laughing!



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Thank you all for your precious support!