



AMERICAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION | RESILIENCE & HOPE





AHF's mission has always been to take care of people in the Himalaya who are in need and destitute elders, stateless refugees. For those who need shelter and warmth, education,



have no one else — girls at risk of being trafficked, orphaned or disabled children, medical care, or to live without fear and hunger, we're there.

AHF IN THE TIME OF COVID



So far we are supplying 2.7 million meals to people in need.

This year we had to dig deeper.

As the pandemic swept Nepal, alleviating hunger and keeping people safe fast became our priorities. With our long relationships and trusted partners, we mobilized targeted relief to those in urgent need safely, transparently, and with impressive speed, even in the chaotic early months of Covid.

Emergency food relief

Many months' worth of food to 1,000 Sherpas of the Thame Valley in the Everest area who lost all their mountaineering work, 3,000 refugees in nine settlements and a beloved nunnery, and 2,400 families in desperate SGT communities. **In total, almost 1.5 million meals!**

The hunger crisis is not over. There is still no climbing, trekking, or tourism that so many depend on for income. So, we are doing a second round of food relief for the hard-hit mountain communities, plus adding 4,500 villagers in Upper Mustang who are trapped there over the freezing winter. **1.2 million more meals.**

Keep on keeping on

In addition to these new challenges, we continued supporting our partners' core work. Much of it is still essential during the pandemic. Schools may have been closed for several months, but it was still critical to pay teachers.

If we stopped, it would contribute directly to the growing hunger and despair. We would also lose our loyal, carefully built, community-based workforces, who will be essential to recovering from this crisis.

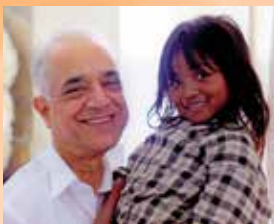
One of the things that sets AHF apart is that we are willing to make long-term commitments to our partners. In this most difficult of years, we could not abandon them.





Keeping people safe! with Covid protections and medical support to Kunde Hospital and outreach clinics in the Everest area, 15 settlement health clinics, the Upper Mustang health clinics, Ngoenga School for special needs children, and (pictured above) the Hospital and Rehabilitation Center for Disabled Children, open and welcoming, with stringent protocols.

HRDC LOVE HEALS



Children lie quietly in their beds, bandaged, some with external fixators or casts. The postop ward is spotless and airy, and the kids sit up and put their hands together in namaste to greet the doctors who stop at each bed with a smile and an encouraging word. The children smile back. They feel taken care of, and heard. Here they have learned that their disability is not karma or shame. They will heal, and learn to walk and play and go to school — isolated no longer from family and community.

But this is not the story for all children with disabilities in Nepal. Thousands still go untreated. They might live in a remote village with no hospital nearby. Or if there is a hospital, the family may be too poor to afford treatment or may hold on to superstitious beliefs. Then what? The

children suffer and become outcasts.

The Hospital and Rehabilitation Center for Disabled Children was established to end the heartbreaks of untreated breaks and burns or birth defects. With gentle expertise and open arms, they make modern medicine available, affordable, and acceptable for all children.

Their patients are sons and daughters of laborers and farmers who earn just a few dollars a day. But no child is turned away for lack of funds, thanks to you and founder Dr. Ashok Banskota's unquenchable vision to heal Nepal's poorest children. Over three decades, nearly 100,000 of them have emerged from the hospital to a happier life.

And the work continues. Every year, HRDC

field teams discover new patients through mobile camps that reach into the most remote corners of the country. If the kids can't get to the hospital, the hospital gets to them.

“You see these children transform when they come here,” says Dr. Bibek Banskota. “When they get some love, when they get their dignity and hope back, they start smiling again. That is what inspires all of us.”

Education and outreach are also integral to the hospital's ethos — raising awareness about disabilities, showing children nothing is “wrong” with them, and fighting social stigma. In a classroom on site, kids can even keep learning while they recover.

At HRDC the staff all know that expertise alone is not enough. The hospital is built on a foundation of compassion and the wisdom that love heals.



HRDC goes on the road. Thumbs up for mobile camps taking care to the kids.





STOP Girl Trafficking prevents girls from being trafficked by keeping them safe in school. With a network that reaches deep into rural Nepal, they find girls whose poverty, family situation, or history of abuse makes them prime targets for predators and enroll them, give them uniforms and school supplies, and pay their school fees. Once a girl becomes part of SGT, that same network of SGT alumnae, teachers, and field workers protects and encourages her until she graduates as an educated, confident young woman.

Dr. Aruna Uprety and her team have been doing this alchemy for over two decades. There are now 12,000 SGT girls in over 500 schools and 14,000 alums. And they are challenging, and changing, attitudes about the value of a girl and what she is capable of — in their families, their villages, and Nepal. All for \$100 a year per girl.



Schools have started to reopen, and SGT girls are thrilled to be back on track and learning.

DISPATCH FROM THE FIELD

I just spent two days in Makwanpur with the STOP Girl Trafficking team distributing school supplies and uniforms, stuffed into brand new backpacks, to 90 girls. 50 of them are new to SGT this year, and when they opened their backpacks and looked inside, they got really excited.

It wasn't difficult to tell the new girls apart. Most didn't have a school uniform at all, and those who did were wearing obvious hand-me-downs. They were thrilled for the day they could go to school looking like they belonged.

I spoke with a half-dozen girls and their mothers or grandmothers. Sadly, their stories are all too familiar. Poverty, dysfunctional families, often kept out of school to work in tea shops or break rocks by the river. Parents who are only now beginning to understand the importance of educating a girl child.

Kumari, a tiny seven-year-old, lives with her grandmother, Phul Maya, who isn't sure how old she is, maybe seventy. They share a two-room hovel with Kumari's uncle, aunt, and their four young sons. Kumari's mother abandoned her when she was quite young, and her father, after spending some time in jail, also left.

"During the long lockdown when school was closed, I spent my time helping with the animals and around the house. But I am so happy to be back at school. I really missed learning. For me, the best things I got today are my copy books. I can't wait to start to use them." — Kumari

Thanks for being there, so we can be there for them.
— Bruce Moore

STOP GIRL TRAFFICKING



"And protecting each girl only costs \$100 a year. That's an incredible bargain to save a human life."

— Jon Krakauer



MUSTANG: THE KINGDOM OF LO

To walk or ride along the banks of the Kali Gandaki then climb to 14,000' to crest the hill above the capital of Mustang, Lo Monthang, is to travel a centuries-old trade route.

Over time, the fortunes of the people of the Kingdom of Lo fell into decline and their sacred temples into ruin. AHF has been in Mustang since the doors of the once forbidden Kingdom opened. And by listening hard and finding dedicated partners, we

have helped nurture a cultural renaissance.

It started with revitalizing the gompas and grew to include the useful things of secular life — daycares, schools, clinics, water. The villages look a little different now, as the 15th century makes room for the 21st. But, as the Lobas take pride in their heritage, traditional festivals have been revived and prayer wheels spin once again.



Daycares, health clinics, local language teachers, 100+ restoration artists trained, and essential public works project — bridges, trails, irrigation, and community centers — are all part of making life a little easier for the people in the high desert of Upper Mustang.

LIFE IN EXILE



33 AHF Osher scholar nursing graduates are now serving on the frontlines.

This has been a very challenging year for all of us. But it has also been inspiring to see the Himalayan community come together. Health professionals, community leaders, and volunteers have all come forward to serve on the front lines since the pandemic took hold. I have been

in close, often daily, contact with them and with school headmasters, nurses, nunneries, and students in group chats.

The first task was getting information about the new virus out

into the community. We translated CDC and WHO guidelines and created informational posters. Next, AHF helped bring essentials: masks, PPE, and sanitizers to 15 health posts and three elders' homes.

“Thanks to AHF’s early emergency medical support, we were able to provide effective care to prevent the spread of the virus in the community.” — Tenchoela, nurse

The long spells of lockdown have hurt everyone. Jobs are lost, people are sleeping hungry, schools are closed, and savings are vanishing. Most refugees are self-employed and depend on daily wages or sales of souvenirs to tourists or in small momo shops, so they have lost all their livelihood. After much discussion, surveys, and diligence, we were able to provide food



relief to more than 3,000 people in the settlements — direct into the hands of the mother of the house.

Now, as winter’s chill arrives, we are doing another round of food relief for them. And as the virus surges, we have helped set up six quarantine centers to give them safe places to isolate away from family and reduce community transmission.

We have long relationships with our Himalayan partners, and the mutual trust and respect is a saving grace. Being in exile, our students, teachers, elders, healthcare workers, and farmers are very vulnerable and they look to us for survival and hope.

Thank you for getting us through this far.
— Tsedo



Keeping learning going. By funding internet, we kept 114 teachers in seven schools giving instruction online to 780 students. From the education officer, "With AHF's support, online teachings have benefited teachers and students from settlements and remote villages to continue their classes."

SHERPAS OF EVEREST



Tengboche Monastery

Full in the Khumbu, the Everest area, is a beautiful time to visit. I always love the spectacular views of the Himalaya, the sounds of yak bells as the fields are ploughed, and the sweet smell of juniper smoke wafting offerings to the mountain gods. A stop

at Kunde Hospital, at 12,600', to see Dr. Kami Temba Sherpa over a cup of tea is always a highlight.

But, this year a solemn air hangs over the Khumbu.

The recent passing of Ngawang Tenzin Zangbu, Rinpoche of Tengboche Monastery and spiritual leader of the Sherpa people, Covid finally reaching the district, a bad potato harvest, and no income all year from tourism or mountaineering has caused unprecedented hardship.

Kunde Hospital is a lifeline for primary healthcare for the 6,000 Sherpas who live in the Khumbu, and now it is all the more precious as the epicenter for Covid care.

AHF has been there since the beginning of the pandemic, with five months of food relief for 1,000 Sherpas in the Thame Valley and funding for PPE and medical supplies at Kunde Hospital.

Here and at the three outreach clinics, the all-



Special thanks to the calm and caring leadership of Dr. Kami Temba Sherpa and his team of Sherpa health workers for their dedication in these challenging times.

Sherpa staff and health workers have been on the frontlines providing medical care and Covid-awareness for 24 villages to help stop the spread of the virus.

More will need to be done. This part of Nepal is dear to many of us, and we will, with your help, make sure the Sherpas survive until they can once again welcome everyone with their warm hearths, high mountains and, yes, the sweet smell of juniper smoke wafting.

We hope you will join us.

— Norbu Tenzing



Dawa Tenzing, Sherpa grandfather





At the heart of everything we do is helping those who are in need who have no one else. For some, that simply means offering the essentials that sustain life: food, shelter, and the warmth and connection of community.

Orphaned and abandoned children, once alone on the streets, depend on us and our partners, like Child Haven, for a safe place to call home, get an education, and finally feel love.

Call it compassion or good karma or love. These acts make the world a little better by making life a lot better for those we bring back from the edge of desperation.



Navjyoti and Ngoenga Schools give children with physical and developmental disabilities nurturing places to learn and flourish with the support of devoted staff who truly care. All are very special places, filled with joy.

The elders we support have found themselves destitute and alone after a lifetime of struggle as

refugees. We help them find safety and home — with doctor visits, warm healthy meals, and a quiet, comfortable place to drink tea and spin their prayer wheels with new friends. A few have even found love, reconnecting with a sweetheart from their youth or meeting a new one.

Buddhist nunneries and monasteries soothe the soul of the community, providing comfort and strength in times of trouble. They are also a haven, home, and school for girls and boys whose families are unable to support them. We take care of monks and nuns, and they take care of all sentient beings.

Call it compassion or good karma or love. These acts make the world a little better by making life a lot better for those we bring back from the edge of desperation and danger. This year more than ever, they have had to rely on this safety net — and you are an integral part of it.

KINDNESS & FAITH





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*Richard and an ani from Keydong
 Nunnery. She likes to tease him
 about his height.*

Dear friends,

It's been a tough year.

The pandemic upended our lives in so many ways, and Nepal has not been spared. At AHF, we had to figure out how to get people the basics — food and medical supplies, quickly and safely. Fortunately, we have amazing partners on the ground whose dedication always shines through.

Dr. Aruna Uprety went fearlessly into the field in the early months to deliver food and assuage desperation in SGT communities, and to bolster her staff and field workers. She wrote, “In a normal time, I wouldn’t have to go, but in this crisis, I have to show leadership and encourage everyone.”

The Drs. Banskota, Aruna, leaders in the settlements, everyone was ready and worked with our San Francisco and Nepal-based teams to keep people safe and ward off hunger.


We also realized that, even in this crisis, we could not pivot all funding from our core work. We had to manage both. AHF’s willingness to make long term commitments to partners is how we make real, generational change.

And, thanks to you, we have been able to do just that — keep everyone working while distributing a lot of Covid safety protections and feeding 2.7 million meals to people in desperate need.

Thank you for bringing hope, and the resilience it inspires, to so many people in these uncertain times. We are all very grateful to you.

Please stay with us.

Richard C. Blum
 Chairman



Generosity is the natural outward expression of inner compassion and loving kindness.

— His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Fight Hunger \$75 feeds a family in a refugee settlement for a month. **\$225** keeps hunger from the door for three months to get them through the winter.

\$1,500 feeds a whole village in Upper Mustang for a month. Huge gratitude!

STOP Girl Trafficking \$100 keeps a girl safe from being trafficked for a year. **\$1,000** will see her all the way through high school.

Change Destiny \$170 gives a suffering child life-changing surgery at HRDC and integration into society.

Give Compassion \$250 puts a roof over the head, and a smile on the face, of a penniless Himalayan elder for a year. They have no one but each other, us, and you.

Good Karma \$108 supports a Buddhist nun, so she can study the dharma and pray for your health and that of all sentient beings.

Health Lifeline \$500 helps support Kunde Hospital in the Khumbu. The Sherpas of the Everest area will be so grateful.

Save Tigers The tiger is a flagship species that ensures the well-being of the entire ecosystem. Give **what you can** to keep them from vanishing.



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