



AMERICAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION | LOOKING TO THE FUTURE





LOOKING TO THE FUTURE We take care of people in the Himalaya who are in need and have no one else. How? By opening doors to education and health care. By building stronger communities and developing lasting, trusting partnerships. By working in a way that respects both tradition and innovation. By giving people opportunity, and hope, so they can look to the future.



EARTHQUAKE UPDATE

Building back

The spring 2015 earthquakes and aftershocks destroyed lives and livelihoods across Nepal. AHF and our partners organized fast to get food, water, shelter, and other essentials to those in need, and, as days became weeks, relief turned into rebuilding.

With 30 of our partners, we've helped 56,500 people get back on their feet. We've repaired or rebuilt schools, a hospital and clinic, Tibetan nunneries, a women's cooperative, Khumjung Gumpa and a new, sturdier bridge connecting Chosar in northern Mustang to the outside world. And we're still on it. Elsewhere in Mustang, work is underway on the sacred art in Thubchen and Champa Gompas and on repairs to the damaged monastic schools and daycare centers. The TWA Elders Home in Kathmandu is a few months from finished.

It takes ten days by mule to haul building materials to the remote Tibetan village of Samdo, but that didn't stop villagers from rolling up their sleeves. Together we rebuilt the destroyed handicraft center, back in use and generating income selling colorful cotton and wool goods to trekkers. We also repaired the school, which is now stronger (and warmer!), and built new water tanks and fixed damaged pipes, allowing clean water to flow. On a joyful morning they gathered to inaugurate the new structures, making offerings and drinking butter tea to celebrate.

The story of this village is the story of many since the earthquake: **people pulling together in crisis to rebuild their lives and future.** We're honored to help, and grateful you made it possible.

56,500 people back on their feet



Far left: Our intrepid TWA partners in front of the new Tibetan elders' home.

Left: Kunsang Choling welcomed eight new nuns, quake survivors, into their beautifully restored nunnery.

Above: Khumjung Gumpa is being rebuilt to new earthquake standards.



With walls rebuilt and cracks filled, the Tibetan students at Namgyal Middle School in Kathmandu are back learning in their good-as-new classrooms.



STOP GIRL TRAFFICKING

Saving girls

Since year one,
20,000
girls in school

This year
14,100

Every year, thousands of Nepali girls are trafficked into sex work, slave labor or child marriage, their young lives cut short by trauma and abuse. In low caste villages where girls are often valued less than the livestock they tend, the desperation of poverty, or indifference, can push families to do the unthinkable.

And so girls disappear, still sold, but now more often coerced, tricked or lured by traffickers posing as labor brokers with promises of good jobs. The face of trafficking changes with the times. But it remains an epidemic.

STOP Girl Trafficking prevents this tragedy. We do it through education: finding the girl who is at risk and giving her the resources she needs to stay in school, the encouragement to learn her own worth, and a network of allies invested in her safety. And doing it over and over, for every girl who's in danger.

It's working. The movement is growing and evolving as young women who have graduated from STOP Girl Trafficking become advocates for the next generation of girls. Some of our graduates become teachers or tutors – extra eyes to watch over the younger girls. For a problem that's so entrenched, it takes an army, and SGT is building one, because every girl saved becomes a conduit for change, touching many other lives.

Does it matter that a girl can look to the future, instead of being bound to a lifetime of suffering? We think so. Today we've changed the destinies of over 20,000 girls – and counting.



Our hero, Dr. Aruna Uprety

When our partner Dr. Aruna Uprety first visited brothels in India, hoping to rescue Nepali girls whose lives had been stolen, they told her it was too late for them and that she should go back to Nepal and save other girls. So she did, and championed the groundbreaking idea of keeping at-risk girls safely away from the hands of traffickers by educating them. We signed on to her idea and ran with it, creating a 20 year partnership that STOPS Girl Trafficking.





FROM THE 15TH TO THE 21ST CENTURY

Mustang

A severe, poetic place, Mustang is a high desert plateau with dramatic pipe organ cliffs, fifteenth century temples and a walled capital. Once at the crossroads of a great trade route, it became lost in time, a forbidden kingdom only recently opened to the world.



Culturally, Mustang is an echo of old Tibet, but when AHF first visited, the Buddhist monuments were crumbling and in disrepair. The king's top priority was to revive the soul of the place by restoring the gompas and monastic schools. It was not our natural first impulse, but we respond to communities' thoughtful requests, and he was right. The restoration sparked a cultural renaissance that has made the Lobas, the people of Mustang, once again proud of their heritage. Long abandoned festivals have been revived, magnificent wall paintings are again fit for worship, and monasteries and nunneries are flourishing.

Along with the restoration, we've worked with our partners on worldly matters. There are 14 daycare centers keeping 167 children safe, Tibetan language teachers in the schools, and a hostel in Jomsom that allows Loba kids to complete their education through high school. Health care workers are on duty at seven clinics, and youth groups in every village lead invaluable public works projects, like installing drainage and irrigation systems and building community halls. And gleefully play soccer. Goooooal! And they're right back in it!



From chortens to childcare, from dharma to drainage, our projects rebuild the culture and community of Mustang.



Across Mustang, the Loba spirit is alive, and their revitalized Buddhist traditions give them balance as the 21st century comes to their corner of the world.



HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

Health care

The rugged terrain that lends the Himalaya its beauty can be a barrier to medical care for the people who live there. The nearest clinic can be many days by foot, and odds are good it may be unstaffed.

For a child, even a simple burn or break left untreated can be life-shattering, making school, community or future literally out of reach. The stories are heartbreakingly common: a child is left home alone all day while his mother works in the fields because he cannot walk and she has no other options.

Enter Dr. Ashok Banskota. We first met “Dr. B.” when he was running a makeshift orthopedic hospital, alone, for the poorest of Nepal’s children. His total commitment to every child in his care moved us to help him build his team, and then the Hospital and Rehabilitation Center for Disabled Children, 23 years ago.

Today HRDC is a world-class orthopedic hospital that treats 20,000 of Nepal’s most disadvantaged kids every year. Dr. Banskota’s approach to care still combines skilled surgery, physical therapy and ingenious inhouse-crafted prosthetics with a deep compassion for the whole child – body, mind, and spirit. Their informal motto, “love heals.”

Elsewhere in the Himalaya, we build clinics, supply medicines, and fund health workers. A nomad in Tibet has a doctor to keep a simple cut from turning fatal, a Tibetan refugee in a remote camp can get the medicine he needs, and a woman in Mustang can bring her child into the world safely.

Our clinics reach **56,000** people

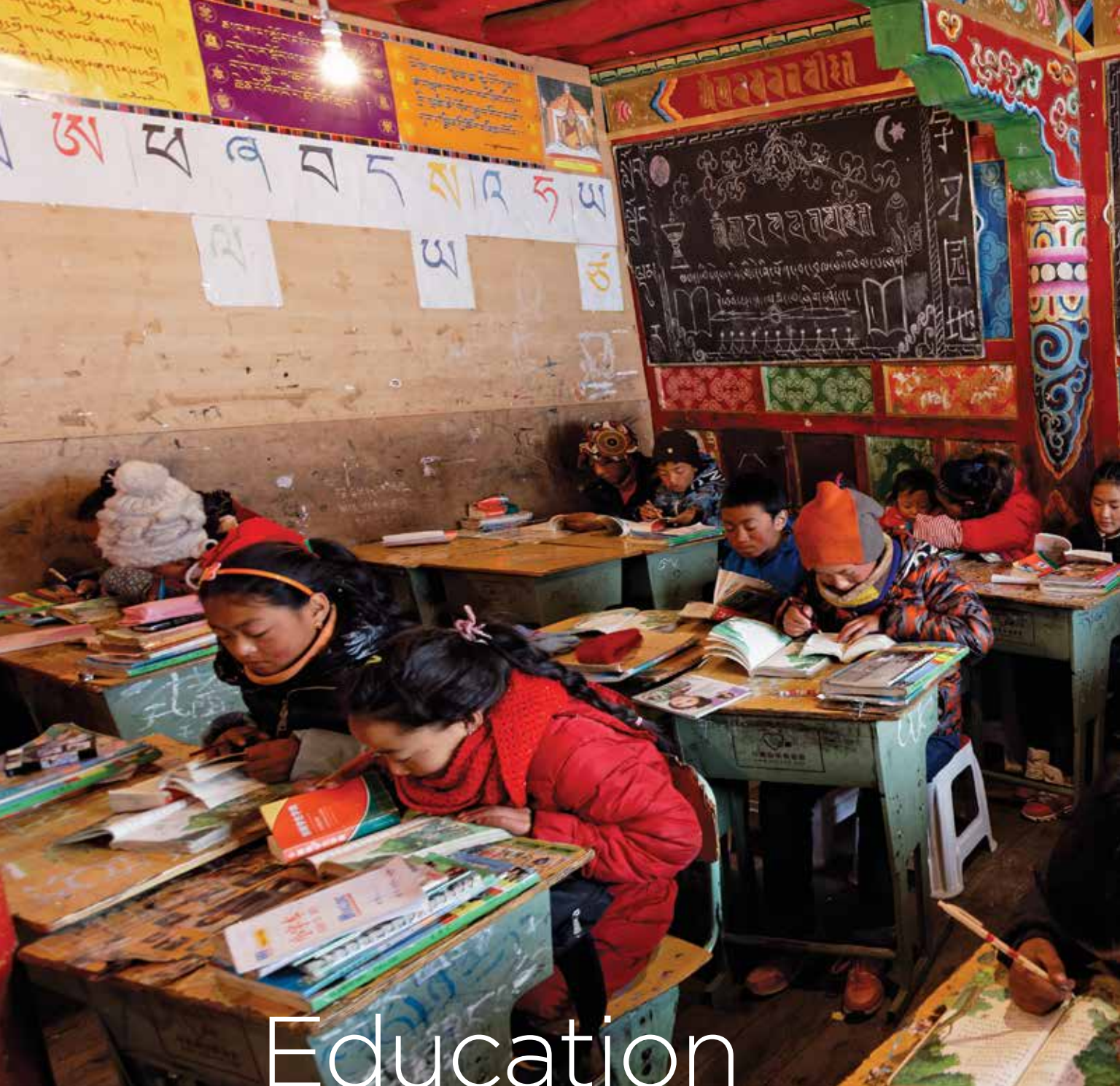


Closing the gap between people and health: whether it's keeping a remote clinic stocked with medicine and well-staffed in Mustang or on the Tibetan plateau, fixing Sherpa smiles at Namche Dental Clinic, or ending the suffering of young patients at HRDC.



“It’s staggering that 27% of children under 15 years of age have some form of disability in my country.”

- Dr. Bibek Banskota, son of Ashok and the new face of HRDC



Education

Nothing looks as squarely toward the future as education. And nothing else has education's power to transform lives. For Tibetan refugees, Sherpas, Lobas in Mustang, village girls – for any child facing daunting odds because of caste, gender or poverty – education offers a path forward, to opportunity and hope, and the freedom to make choices in a world that will often be very

different from their parents'.

Our homework is to clear the obstacles that keep kids from going to school. A school might be too small: add classrooms. Or too far away: build a hostel for students to stay in (with a good cook to make all those school lunches). Even help with school supplies and uniforms can be essential to allow students to succeed. And when they do, we all win.

17,500

KIDS IN SCHOOL



Often parents can't afford books, or even pencils. We've seen students divide a pencil into four so everyone can write.



THE STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE Tibetans

Our support for Tibetans in exile is broad and deep. We work with every camp in Nepal and in the most remote settlements in northeastern India. Each is different, but their pressing concerns are the same: health care, education, care for elders, infrastructure and livelihood.

Tibetans prize education. As stateless refugees, they know it is the only thing that cannot be taken from them. And parents are amazingly willing to sacrifice to get their children to school.

From daycare through primary school, high school, and on to university, we help carve out a path: building and supporting hostels so children from remote settlements can continue their educations; buying books, school lunches and uniforms; paying teacher salaries; and offering college scholarships. Whatever it takes for young Tibetans to be citizens of the world.

To nurture health, we send malaria and typhoid testing kits to a camp in the jungles of India, provide a medical fund for camp residents in Dhorpatan, an ambulance in Herbertpur, medicine and doctor visits in Tashiling.

Some work lifts up the entire settlement: loans for community enterprises, repairing community halls, furnishing schools, planting trees, and fencing settlements to protect farmland. It's in our DNA to help Tibetans in their struggle to survive and maintain their culture in these difficult times. And they respond with a dignified and heartfelt gratitude that is beyond heartwarming.



80,000
inside Tibet,
20,000 in exile



Karma, hostel student, aspiring doctor

Karma is 12 and wants to be a doctor. She lives in the hostel next to Mt. Kailash School in Hyangjia settlement, Pokhara. Karma is from a tiny village in Manang and went to a local Tibetan school through grade three. But with no higher level school nearby, her parents, who get by farming a small plot of land, decided to send her to Hyangjia. They did this for her future, even though they now see her only a few times a year. For the rest, she lives with 66 other Tibetan children who, when we met them on their day off, were acting like a big, boisterous family.



In Tibet, where nomads are being forced off their land, Tibetan is barely taught in schools, and Tibetan culture and faith are gravely undermined, we still work, quietly, in remote parts of the plateau. We are honored to have impeccable partners who risk everything to make life a little better, a little more hopeful, for their fellow Tibetans. Together, we've built 36 bridges, 23 clean water systems, 15 schools, and 10 health centers, and offer ongoing support to clinics, schools, elders and 650 nuns, keeping the spirit of Tibet alive.



SHELTER FROM THE STORM

Taking care

Some people just need a lifeline to bring them out of the shadows of hunger, homelessness and fear. Their circumstances may be heartbreaking, but their needs are simple – safety, shelter, something to eat, kindness.

The Tibetan elders we care for, whether they have had the rough, uncertain lives of refugees or suffered inside their homeland, have come to the end of their years penniless and alone. From Kathmandu and the Tibetan settlements in Nepal and India to high on the Tibetan plateau, we offer these lovely elders the comfort of a warm home and a place to spin their prayer wheels. They offer back what they have: an infectious, transparent joy.



Abandoned children and those with special needs easily fall through holes in the thin social safety net. Children with disabilities are often left alone in dark rooms because their struggling families don't have the resources or understanding to care for them. So Navjyoti School does. It's a joyful place where children laugh and play – and dance – learning life skills at their own pace. And so does Ngoenga, a home for Tibetan children with severe disabilities, where the staff care for their young charges with seemingly boundless compassion and dedication.

Caring for the most vulnerable speaks to the heart of what we do. It sustains life and laughter and dignity for those who most need it. And you can read their gratitude by the light of their smiles.



Child Haven is home, school, and loving family for children who have no one else.



Nunneries aren't just places to sustain the faith, they can also be safe havens for girls whose families are unable to support them. We take care of them, so they can take care of all sentient beings.





FROM THE HEART

Commitment

Dear Friends,

Afno Khuta ma, aafi ubhenu in Nepali literally means, on my own feet I will stand by myself – or as we'd say in English, stand on my own two feet. It's wonderful to hear in a thank you because it means we have been successful at helping someone – whether it's an SGT girl who has graduated and become a teacher, a woman in Maya Devi's cooperative who is raising goats that bring her a little money and respect, or a disabled child who, after surgery, can finally, literally stand on their own feet, sometimes for the first time. Seeing that on my last visit to Dr. Banskota's hospital brought tears to my eyes.

These are small miracles, but important ones. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, "We may sometimes feel that we can't do much as individuals, but humanity is made up of individuals; we can make a difference."

We take care of people in the Himalaya who have no one else, and when we can help them stand on their own feet, they can look to the future and feel hopeful. Please be part of it. Someone will have a future because of you.

Best personal regards,

Richard C. Blum
Chairman



This Year in Review is dedicated to Meriama, an inspiration to all of us.

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Many thanks to the generous person who donated the cost of producing this publication.



Boudhanath Stupa rebuilt and reconsecrated, 11/20/2016.

We touched the lives of **316,000** people this year

Save a life, change a life. Please be generous!

Caring

\$48 keeps a Tibetan elder in a warm home with food, tea and loving care for a month. **\$576** gives them comfort and company for a year.

Opportunity

\$65 buys a goat for a poor Nepali woman, giving her the power to lift her family out of poverty and stand on her own two feet. How about a pair? This gift keeps on giving.

STOP Girl Trafficking

\$100 changes a destiny. Save a girl from being trafficked into slavery by keeping her in school for a year.

Healing

\$150 heals a disabled child's body and spirit with transformative surgery and compassionate care from the Drs. Banskota at HRDC.

Education

\$360 sees a young Sherpa through their final year of high school and into a brighter future.

Water

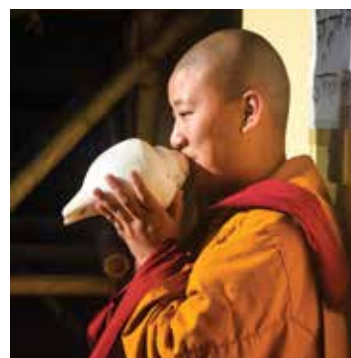
\$720 pipes clean water – scarce and difficult to reach – down from the mountains to a family in Tibet. Bonus: less time collecting water means more time for daughters to attend school.

Let there be light

\$1,389 installs solar power at a remote health clinic in Mustang so the lights are on and healing happens. **\$8,334** covers all the clinics, from Tangye in the south to Chosar in the north.

Tigers are Sentient Beings too

\$ what you can. Fewer than 3,000 tigers are left in the wild and poachers are growing ever more aggressive. Join the fight to protect these magnificent creatures. Your children will thank you.





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Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.
— His Holiness the Dalai Lama

