

Help in Action



REPORT /TIBET

Tibet 2016



LONG DISTANCE ADOPTIONS

The distribution of aid in Tibet took place between December 2015 and February 2016. The region we help, Dakshu Shang district, in Shigatse province, is one of the most arid and less fertile areas on the Tibetan plateau, about 4,000 metres above sea level.

The traditional subsistence economy of the 19 villages in this area is based on the meagre harvests of mountain agriculture, usually not sufficient for even the needs of the family. Since a few years possibilities for work on construction sites and factories in Eastern Tibet have opened up, and some people have made this move to ensure an income for their families left in the villages.

At the same time, thanks to the constant support of our long distance adoptions project and the constant commitment of the local government, almost all village children are now receiving an education - whereas previously the illiteracy rate was almost 100% in this area.

SCHOOLS

Every year we offer help to all children and young people living in the villages of this area. About 700 children are of school age and go to primary school at age 6/7. Primary school runs from the first to the sixth grade. High school from the seventh to the twelfth grade. All these students received school supplies, new school uniforms, backpacks and bags for a year.

In recent years many children have completed their high school education and can find work in the nearby town of Shigatse. Some pupils, of whom we are very proud, were able to go to the university in China where students with the best results in secondary schools are awarded places. The support we provide, gives these villages the opportunity to build a new generation that is well prepared, capable of finding work and introducing new perspectives and openings in the traditional rural culture.

MONASTERIES

Traditional Tibetan culture is incredibly rich in spiritual, artistic and medical terms: an authentic heritage for humanity. For many years we have actively tried to preserve this culture within the monasteries, who live on offerings and donations. The 'long distance adoptions' project is therefore also used to help monks living in various small monasteries in the region. Monastic life is extremely simple from a material point of view; the monks wake up at 4 o'clock in the morning and divide their day between prayer, the daily work needed to run the monastery and the activities requested by the inhabitants of the local villages. The monks are regularly asked to perform prayer ceremonies for births, weddings, for the deceased and for sick people. Requests to the monks for advice, for some comfort or material help make the monastery an essential reference point for the surrounding communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

The reforestation project in this high and arid area has been running for years. Every tree planted here is invaluable. Around the villages thousands of trees have been planted, and because their growth is patiently protected, they are beginning to form large green areas that will play an important role in the lives of small communities: they provide protection from the strong winds and sandstorms, protect against soil erosion and landslides, create shades and a shelter from the burning summer sun.

STATIONARY DISTRIBUTION

Many children in village schools have to study in miserable conditions so once again this year, we spread our help to support 305 children attending 3 village schools by giving them a years supply of school stationary.

Although many village children are able to attend school - books and stationary are not provided which means they have to study without! Most of their parents, who have no monetary income and live by subsistence farming, are unable to provide them with this luxury.

We also distributed stationary to the children of Jorpati orphanage, the Hope Foundation and the 51 young monks of Sed Gyued Monastery.

SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP

For the second year we sponsored the Shree Jana Bhuwana Primary School in Shikharpur Village for this academic year to ensure that the 90 children that presently attend it will continue to receive an education.

SED GYUED MONASTERY

As well as stationary for the year Sed Gyued Monastery was provided with funds to pay the salary for two teachers as well as for more desks and benches for the mini-monk students.

We were also recently able to provide the funds necessary to make a new well and hand pump for the monastery, which is home to 51 young monks under the age of 15. The hand pump is extremely necessary as the monastery is often left without water when their present pump doesn't work due to the load shedding of electricity.

EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY FUND

Health post

We were able to provide medical equipment and a supply of emergency medicine for a health post in Mawakanpur District which cares for the needs of around 8,000 people. During the monsoon season this community is completely cut off from any other services by a large river that becomes uncrossable. The small clinic was provided with basic but essential equipment such as blood pressure monitors, stethoscopes, thermometers, weighing scales, a sterilising unit, otoscope, forceps and so on, as well as a stock of gloves, masks, disinfectant, cotton wool, gauze etc. After consulting with the doctor of the clinic we also provided a stock of emergency medicines: antibiotics, pain relief medicine, children's vitamins, cough syrup...

Blanket distribution

At the beginning of the year as the winter cold set in we distributed much needed blankets to vulnerable families living in villages that were destroyed by the earthquake or to people who were forced to relocate due to damage and threat of landslides.

Although we had shipped a number of blankets to Nepal, we also ordered blankets directly from producers in Nepal. This was aimed at giving people work and ensuring an income for people who desperately need it. A temporary factory was also set up in Gangchen Drupkhang where hundreds of quilted blankets made.

During the first distribution 1700 families in Bhumtang and Saamle villages received blankets. After this 700 families in (Sindupalchok district) received blankets and 1000 families in Mawakanpur. A number of other blankets were given to people in particular difficulties in and around the Kathmandu area. Particular care was always given to old and vulnerable people who also received winter coats.

Distribution of clothes and shoes

In November the Association was able to distribute shoes and clothing to families in Mawakanpur.

Gangchen Drupkhang

Gangchen Drupkhang in Kathmandu, was built in 2006 to create a basis for activities and professional training in traditional Himalayan crafts and culture: hand carved furniture and decorative objects, traditional paintings and artworks, healing incense and herbal remedies of the ancient Tibetan tradition - an ancient heritage of the Himalayan medical culture.

In recent years, the center has created good opportunities for training, employment and social integration for some of the poorest people living in the suburbs of Kathmandu. Special attention is always given to mothers in difficult situations, young people, the unemployed with families who need support and disabled people. This is to offer them a renewed sense of dignity and at the same time make use of the precious, artistic, spiritual, cultural and medical knowledge of the Himalayas and to support that too.

The Gangchen Drupkhang building suffered major structural damage during the earthquake in 2015 - particularly on the ground floor and the first floors - making it completely inaccessible: there was damage to the supporting columns, the walls and even to the staircase inside the building. When the immediate need were met, the planning for reconstruction of the building was started. An Italian architect, expert in post-earthquake reconstruction, was invited to the site and carried out an inspection of the building in June 2015.

A fundraising campaign among our international supporters was coordinated, allowing the work to be carried out. The work was resumed at the end of 2016.

Many thanks to all who contributed!