

Norsang and Lhakpa
Bakhang village, Nepal



TIBET MATTERS

Issue 40 | SUMMER 2022



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Tashi delek!

Welcome to your summer issue of *Tibet Matters*. We hope you enjoy reading about the groundbreaking and inspiring work your generous support has made possible.

Thanks to you, we have been supporting Tibetan communities in India and Nepal as they recover from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic while continuing our work to strengthen self-sufficiency and help build brighter futures.

We are particularly excited to tell you about some innovative new projects, including an update on our recent Ladakh greenhouses appeal, and a new drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre for Tibetans.

These grassroots projects meet the challenges faced by the Tibetan exile community with practical solutions, and give Tibetans the tools they need to thrive.

There are lots of ways you can get involved in our work, including shopping our unique range of gifts and handicrafts at enlightenedgifts.org or sponsoring a Tibetan individual, or even an entire community!

A huge thank you from all of us at Tibet Relief Fund for your continued support and compassion for Tibetan people.

Philippa Carrick

Philippa Carrick, CEO

Solar hot water and toilets for Pandhra Mile

The Tibetan community of Pandhra Mile in Himachal Pradesh now has a new toilet block with solar-powered hot water washbasins. The project was delayed by lockdowns, but work was finally completed in April 2022.

Settlement officer Thupten Choephel said,

“ Before, people were using the river to take their bath and open space for toileting. Construction of new toilets and bathroom (sic) create a healthy environment and well-being of society. The solar panel helps settlers take warm baths and wash clothes during the cold weather. ”

Camp leader Migmar said,

“ We are thankful for the completion of this project, which helped us to have a regular bathing and clean toilet to use. ”

Top right: A resident of Pandhra Mile
Right: Pandhra Mile



Delhi Community Kitchen thrives

“ A community kitchen has been soul for not only the outside of the people who are hungry, but also people like me to get the service to pay them. I am extremely honoured to be part of it. ”

- Tenzin Wangchuk, Community Kitchen Head Chef

The team at the Delhi Community Kitchen has been busy since they opened in September 2021, thanks to your donations to our appeal last year.

They serve nutritious breakfasts like puri, egg and aloo (potato) at a cheap price to students and workers. The meals are completely free to homeless and disadvantaged Tibetans and Indians. Lunch is a thali (various dishes) with rice and dal (lentils). Around 30 free meals are served each day, with many more distributed around the local community.

The kitchen also employs some of their former customers, giving them a source of income and hope for the future.

Thank you for helping the brilliant Community Kitchen get set up and established in their permanent home in Majnu-ka-Tilla.



Sonam (above) and Mingmar, Community Kitchen staff members



A new Community Hub opens for Tibetans

We are so excited to announce the opening of a brand-new Community Hub in June 2022, just below the Community Kitchen.

There has long been a need for a “citizens’ advice bureau” for Tibetans living in India. The new Hub, run by Tibet Relief Fund and Empowering the Vision, will provide advice on jobs and how to apply, information on civil rights within India, and signpost Tibetans who have fallen through the cracks of society to access the help they need.

We also plan to hold exciting events like film screenings, book launches and open mic nights, exhibitions for emerging artists and creatives, and provide a workspace for those without access to a computer.

Your support has made this possible.
Thank you!



New projects

Thanks to your ongoing support, we have started working with these grassroots projects who do groundbreaking work within the Tibetan exile community.



Early years literacy in Ladakh

This year, we started working with Shatsa, a local NGO who aspires to, “infuse reading habits among [their] children.”

“ One of the big challenges is that after school, many of the kids don’t have a reading environment at home, as parents are either busy with work or just adhere to the school curriculum and homework given by teachers. In some cases, parents are not literate and cannot support their children. ”

- Tenzin Panten, Shatsa project lead

Thanks to you, Shatsa has set up the first community library in Leh, with over 2,000 new books! Your donations also fund two librarians and run programmes, including a mobile library for nomadic children and workshops for parents on the importance of reading for their children.

Through your support, Tibetan children in Ladakh now have access to a wide variety of reading materials in English and Tibetan, improving their confidence in reading while preserving their language and culture.

“Rewa” - hope for Tibetans recovering from addiction

“Rewa” means hope in Tibetan. We are delighted that, in April, your donations helped establish Rewa Recovery Centre, a new rehabilitation clinic for Tibetans in Dehradun, north India that will bring hope to many.

Addiction and substance abuse are serious issues within Tibetan communities in India, but there isn’t much help available. Tibetans face many challenges as displaced people living the life of refugees. Unemployment and adapting to a new culture while separated from family and friends means many end up with addictions to drugs, alcohol or prescription medicines.

“ It is difficult to get proper numbers of substance users from school or a settlement ... no organisation admits there is a substance abuse problem in their community because of the reputation. Many addicts are in a cycle of psychosocial issues leading to homelessness and abandonment by family and society at large. ”

- Ngawang, Rewa co-founder

Rewa addresses the challenges faced by Tibetans who can’t afford expensive Indian rehabilitation centres. So far, there are ten service users at the centre, and eventually it will house up to 30 people. Patients follow a six-month treatment plan, which includes after-care and help to find work, often the main barrier preventing people from moving forward.

Schoolchildren in Hanle, Ladakh where one of the greenhouses is located (right)



Healthy futures for Tibetan children in Ladakh

“ A greenhouse will help us in many ways, but the most important thing is that we get fresh vegetables easily and without any chemical mixture. It is very important for our health. ”

- Stanzin Padma, Tibetan Children's Village School pupil, aged 14

It is very difficult to grow vegetables in Ladakh in winter because of the harsh climate and terrain. People pay high prices for fresh produce, which many Tibetan families cannot afford. This means these families consume fresh vegetables only once or twice a month during winter. Importing vegetables from the plains also generates carbon emissions, contributing to climate change.

Thanks to your donations, we have built two solar greenhouses in Ladakh in partnership with Tibetan Organic Farming in Leh Ladakh (TOFILL).

Locally grown, fresh vegetables will benefit growing schoolchildren like Stanzin. She and her schoolmates are now helping manage the greenhouse in their school grounds.

The greenhouses are specially designed for high altitudes, using polycarbonate sheets instead of polythene. In place of the usual unbaked mud bricks, these are built with stone walls, which absorb heat in the day, releasing it at night to reduce frost. They will also last years longer than traditional greenhouses.

This project directly benefits over 1,000 schoolchildren and indirectly will benefit 1,000 more families, saving them money on vegetables, allowing them to use the greenhouses and learn valuable skills.

Residents at Rewa Recovery Centre, Dehradun, India



Bakhang



New houses for seven families are on the way

A heartfelt thank you for your donations to our spring appeal. Your response has ensured seven more Bakhang families will soon have safe homes. They couldn't afford to rebuild on their own, even with the government grant from Nepal, so your donations have made an enormous difference to their lives.

Norsang and Lhakpa (cover) will soon be out of their temporary shelter and living in an earthquake-resistant house. Lhakpa (below right) says:

“ *In the old house lot (sic) of the wood was rotten and there were many problems. The earthquake easily knocked it down. I am excited and happy about the new house. I want to extend many thanks for your support. The new house would give us comfort and security for the years to come.* ”

Tsering (right) was also delighted to hear that he and his brother will soon have a permanent home and will no longer have to sleep in the cowshed.

At the time of writing, materials have been purchased, the earth bricks are being made and construction will soon be underway. We hope to have some or all of the homes finished before the monsoon and certainly by winter. We will keep you updated.



Special thanks go to our two match-funders, including Komodo the ethical fashion company. We also want to thank the Onaway Trust who generously donated the rest of the funds needed to reach our target.



Bakhang health post: new staff quarters

Thank you to Guernsey Overseas Aid for funding the new staff quarters at the Bakhang health post (right). This means the community will have access to healthcare round the clock, as healthcare staff can now stay at the health post, as well as visiting doctors.



Trusts and foundations

We would like to thank the following trusts and foundations for supporting our work this year.

Fieldrose Charitable Trust

Guernsey Overseas Aid

Onaway Trust

Paul Lunn-Rockcliffe Charitable Trust

Bridge of Hope Foundation

Cumber Family Charitable Trust

Open Gate Trust

JK Foundation

Paget Trust

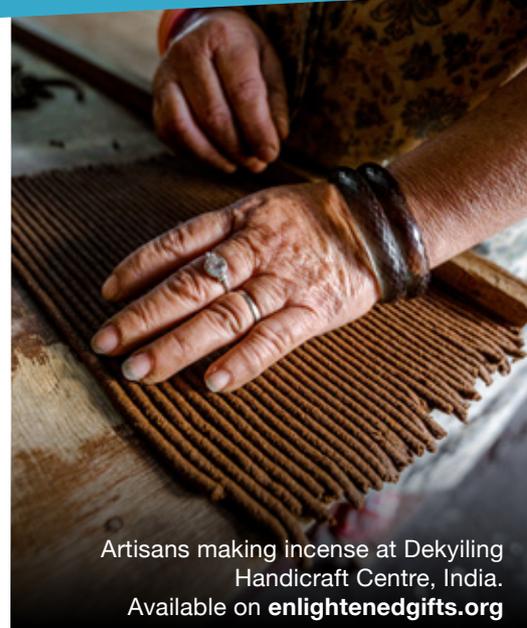
Himbleton Charitable Trust

Pennycress Trust

Bellack Charitable Foundation

Enlightened Gifts

Did you know you can buy unique homeware and gifts from India and Nepal through enlightenedgifts.org, most of which are provided by Tibetan-run businesses or Tibetan social enterprises, and support our work at the same time? Our online shop supports these small businesses and makers, while reaching a wider audience of people who might not know much about Tibet.



Artisans making incense at Delying Handicraft Centre, India. Available on enlightenedgifts.org

All profits from Enlightened Gifts go towards our vital work with Tibetan communities. It is extremely generous that over half of you who shop with us leave a donation at checkout. The kindness of our supporters is also illustrated by the number of Gifts of Hope we sold last year, thank you.

Do visit enlightenedgifts.org to see our full range. Also keep a look out for our catalogue in October, which will feature many new and unique products, as well as new ways to gift a donation.

Have you visited our print on demand shop yet?

Here you can buy a wide range of Tibet-themed mugs and clothing. We are excited to have Tibetan designers involved. Tsaluma has created some striking designs specially for us, including this “freedom” design written in Tibetan (above). We hope to get more Tibetan artists involved, as well as add more designs, so be sure to check back regularly!



shop.tibetrelieffund.co.uk

Gifts of Hope

Our Gifts of Hope are a wonderful way for you to buy a gift for the person who has everything, or someone who has a passion for Tibet. Available all year in our online shop and catalogue, you can make a real difference by choosing a Gift of Hope.

Here we wanted to update you on the impact of the Gifts of Hope you have bought over the past year!

Care & Comfort for Elders

Thanks to you, elderly Tibetan refugees in Rajpur and Mussoorie celebrated Losar (new year) with special meals of chowmein, momos, fried rice, fruit, paneer and spring rolls. On the first day, they had traditional sweet rice, Tibetan cookies and butter tea, before shopping for new clothes and receiving altar gifts, which are so important to them. On the third day, the elders spent the day together dancing the traditional Tibetan Goshay! After so long in lockdown, it meant so much to them to celebrate in style.

Chenga Lhamo (right), 71, was delighted with her new clothing and altar gifts. Chenga has no family and was a roadside sweater seller before moving to the old people's home. The home looks after her basic needs, but your Gifts of Hope give her the joy and happiness she deserves after a hard life.



Happy Holidays

You gave some joy to Tibetan children who can't go home for the school holidays. Over 600 children got to share special meals and make momos together (right).

Dorjee Khandu lost his parents when he was 12 and has nowhere to go during the holidays. He said, "I would like to thank you for the care and love".

Help for Hepatitis

You provided essential hepatitis medication to 17 Tibetans in India this year. Thank you so much for ensuring they can stay healthy and manage their condition.



You can buy a Gift of Hope at enlightenedgifts.org or by calling 020 3119 0041, or simply look out for our catalogue in October.

Get Involved

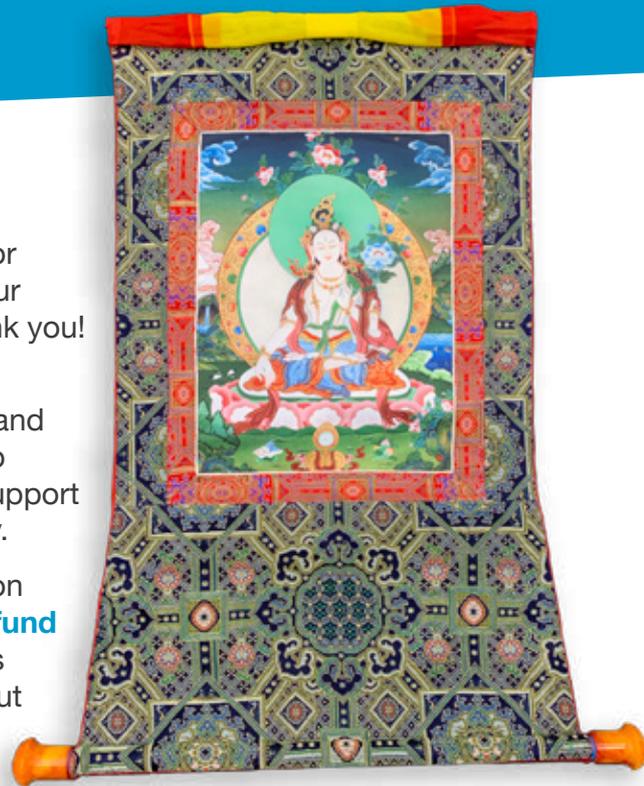


Tibet Bazaar

Your bids raised £2,000 for Tibetan communities in our March Tibet Bazaar - thank you!

Our special auction for Bakhang has just closed and we were so glad to see so many of you bidding to support this wonderful community.

Make sure you follow us on social media [@tibetrelieffund](https://twitter.com/tibetrelieffund) and sign up for our emails to be the first to hear about our online auctions.



Leave a gift in your will to support Tibetan communities

Did you know gifts in wills are essential to our work? Leaving a gift in your will to Tibet Relief Fund ensures your support and love for Tibet can live on. Your gift could fund schools, medical care, elderly homes and a bright future for Tibetan communities.

You can make a simple will online for free with us at makeawillonline.co.uk/tibetrelieffund or write in to request a free information pack with no obligation to leave us a gift. Our charity number is 1061834.

Greg Bruno runs the London Marathon

Tibet Relief Fund trustee Greg Bruno (right) is running the London Marathon in October!

Support him at: bit.ly/TRFMarathon22



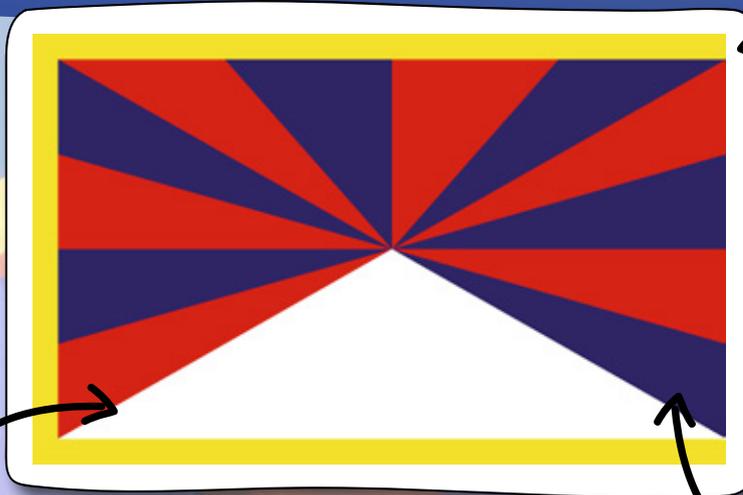
Raffle winners announced

We're delighted to announce the winners of our 2022 raffle. A huge thank you to all of you who entered or gave a donation, and to the companies who generously donated these fantastic prizes. You helped raise over £5,000 for Tibetan communities.

C Borrell (£1,000) / L Reese (Arc'teryx Atom LT Hoody) / W Dixon (£100 ethicalWARES voucher) / A Suleiman (Norbulingka shawl) / Mr & Mrs Smith (Basket Room KUSI basket) / J Toulmin (£50 Ethical Superstore voucher) / R Flaherty (Ocelot Chocolate bars) / B Knibbs (Birdsong t-shirt) / S Hall (Norbulingka mala beads) / D Hudson (Social Stories Club Conscious Collection gift box)

Did you know?

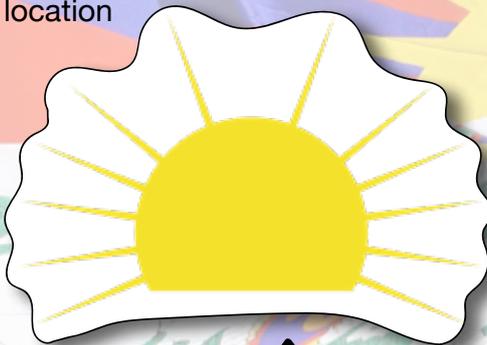
The **Tibetan flag** is one of the most contentious and dangerous images in occupied Tibet. Adopted by the 13th Dalai Lama in 1916, the flag was used in Tibet until 1959. It is now an emblem of unity and protest for Tibetans around the world. In this issue we explain the iconography that makes up this important symbol ...



Open golden border: the spread of the “golden ideals of Buddhism” unbounded by space and time

12 rays: the six red rays on the dark blue sky symbolise the six ancestors of the Tibetan people from whom the 12 descendants were born. The two colours also refer to the two guardian deities who protect the flag and Tibet.

Central white triangle: a snow covered mountain, alluding to Tibet’s location in the Himalayas



Sun: symbol of freedom, happiness and prosperity. The 12 rays again refer to the 12 descendants of the six aboriginal Tibetan tribes.



Two snow lions: the harmony between Tibet’s secular and spiritual life

Swirling jewel held between the snow lions: the Tibetan people’s commitment to ethical Buddhist behaviour



Three coloured flaming jewel held above the snow lions: Buddha (God), Dharma (the Doctrine), and Sangha (the saints - guardians of the doctrine)



Tag us in your photos flying the Tibetan flag on social media @tibetrelieffund and show the world your support for Tibet! #RaiseTheTibetanFlag

Sponsorship

Everyone should have access to education and healthcare. As we move on from the Covid-19 pandemic, the exiled Tibetan community in India and Nepal need sponsors more than ever. Through sponsorship, you can ensure a Tibetan child, little monk, nun or elder has security, comfort and hope for a brighter future. Sponsorship costs **£30 a month or £360 a year (just under one pound a day)**.

Tenzin Y.

Tenzin is six years old and lives in a Tibetan settlement near Pokhara in Nepal. She loves her colouring books and playing with her friends. Her dad makes and sells handicrafts popular with tourists. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, his trade has been hit hard and the family is really struggling. Sponsorship would give Tenzin's family peace of mind, knowing she can stay in school while they get back on their feet.



Tenzin N.

Tenzin is 11 years old and goes to school in south India, far away from her family in Pokhara, Nepal. She dreams of becoming a lawyer and works hard at her studies, but her parents struggle to support her education: Tenzin's dad is a retired serviceman, so her mum, a health worker, is the family's sole earner. You can sponsor Tenzin today and help make her dreams come true.



Community sponsorship

Would you prefer to sponsor a community rather than an individual? **From as little as £5 a month** you can sponsor a school or monastic school in Nepal, or an elders' home in India.

To find out more and start your silent sponsorship go to tibetrelieffund.co.uk/silent-sponsorship or get in touch with our Sponsorship Coordinator, Amber.

How to sponsor

If you would like to sponsor Tenzin N or Tenzin Y, please email our Sponsorship Coordinator, Amber, at sponsorship@tibetrelieffund.co.uk or write to **Sponsorship Coordinator, Tibet Relief Fund, 99 Kentish Town Road, London, NW1 8PB**

To find out more visit:
tibetrelieffund.co.uk/be-a-sponsor

Thank you.



Patron: Tenzin Gyatso, 14th Dalai Lama
CEO: Philippa Carrick
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