







AHF takes care of people in the Himalaya who are in need and have no one else.

We have found that the difference between what exists now and what can be done is enormous, and often costs very little.

We are committed to improving lives — for 300,000 Sherpas, Tibetans, Nepalis — and making change happen every day.

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A photograph of a young girl with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and a patterned scarf, carrying a baby on her back. The baby is wearing a blue jacket and a colorful striped beanie. They are in a dirt path in a village with simple buildings and trees in the background. The text 'Making change happen' is overlaid on the image.

Making change happen

What makes our work significant is the change we make on the ground, for individuals. Nima lost her sister to slavery, she is now safe with us. Deepak couldn't walk for six years, he now plays soccer. Tsering was seeing his culture die around him, he is now learning how he can keep it alive. In order to make great change happen, we never lose sight of the one person who at that moment in time needs our help. That person then becomes an agent of change.

How we do what we do

- Bet on people
- Do the homework
- Look for leverage
- Build community
- Create change
- Care for the most vulnerable
- Stay committed



The more we care for
the happiness of others,
the greater is our own
sense of well-being.

I always appreciate the
American Himalayan
Foundation's help — it is
immense contribution.

— His Holiness, the Dalai Lama



Bet on people



Dr. Ashok Banskota, change agent, visionary

Dr. Banskota has a kind face and the brisk manner of a surgeon, which is what he is. He was born in Kathmandu — in a cowshed — did well at his studies, went on to his orthopedic training in the US and returned home to practice. And then something happened.

“I returned to Nepal where I came to the stark realization of the immense chasms in health care. The hospitals were not worth the name. The patients who came for help and treatment however stole my heart.

The enormous difficulties they faced to receive very basic and primitive care was hard to stomach. The children suffered so much.”

Their suffering set him on a mission: to give the poorest disabled children in Nepal the quality care they needed. He started a tiny hospital in a rented house in Kathmandu where we first met him – and were impressed. Two decades later, the hospital has its own buildings, a whole team of young surgeons and is a recognized center of excellence. We’re still partners, and he is still dedicated to Nepal’s children in need — 38,000 of them owe their young lives to his caring.

38,000 patients





“ People like the AHF team who have so much confidence in us and what we do provides me with added strength and determination. Without this kind of support, this work could not go on.”



Do your homework

Education, education. Nothing else has its power to lift people out of poverty. For Tibetans, for Sherpas, for village girls, it is their best shot at a decent life. So a lot of our time and energy is spent getting kids in school. But there are obstacles.

Usually the schools exist, in some form. But to make them into places where children can come and learn takes, well, homework. Otherwise schools remain out of reach to those who need them most.

Children in remote areas often live far away from the nearest school; they need somewhere to stay during the school week, or year. So, we

build a hostel, and find housemothers and cooks. (Cooks important!) Chances are a school is too small — we add classrooms. And solar lights. Sometimes teachers need more training, or salaries — or both. Often the parents are so poor that providing school uniforms, books and lunch becomes an essential part of getting a child into school.

If we do our homework right, this happens: *“I study very hard and finish my homework on time. After graduate, I will help people with all my might as you do. Thank you.”* The students succeed. And for us, that rocks.

15,500 children in school





Thinking caps? Maybe. This school is at 11,000' near the Annapurna range so the classroom could be a little chilly. These kids don't mind though. They are first generation students — their parents are Tibetan refugees who herd yaks — and they love their lessons, even if this one requires extra concentration.

Look for leverage

What do noodles, cows, greenhouses, incense, tractors and an internet café have in common?

They're all results of Tibetan entrepreneurial spirit. Tibetans in exile yearn to be self-sufficient but their status as refugees means finding capital for good business ideas is very difficult. AHF has long brought shelter, education and medical care to Tibetan settlements; it was time to take our commitment a step further and start the Tibetan Enterprise Fund to help grow those good ideas.

The camp cooperative societies are our partners; they propose the investments — which must bring benefit to the camp — and each

is carefully vetted. Results? All the ventures launched thus far are successful; several have even surpassed their revenue projections. Repayments go back into the fund to help the next prospect. Income, independence, and as one Tibetan put it, “standing up on their own feet.” Pretty good leverage.

Enterprise stars: a mini-dairy in Ravangla that produces revenue for the camp and milk for the school children; the famous Jampaling tractor that has doubled wheat and rice production; an agricultural revolving fund in Tezu that brings the farmers best prices for their crops. Next on deck: an internet café in Sonada near Darjeeling.

100,000 Tibetan refugees





Noodles! The Herbertpur Tibetan elders, brave veterans of the Indo-Tibetan border force, and now, master noodle makers. AHF has been helping out the camp — pensions are only \$5 a month — but when we asked what else they needed, they said, a working noodle machine. OK! Old Men Noodles — famous around Dehra Dun for their quality and taste.

Build community

Sometimes you have to take the long view.

When, fifteen years ago, AHF was invited into Mustang, we found it breathtaking, but so isolated and poor that the soul of the place was as parched as the desert around it. Still, given all their needs, the people's request for help in bringing back Mustang's spirit was unexpected — reviving their languishing gompas and monastic school.

So, with a team of conservators, local young people eager to learn to preserve their heritage, and huge timbers dragged by men and horses from Tibet, we started. A lot of hard work and dust and revelations later — twelve long years' worth — the gompas are rebuilt and restored, magnificent beyond anyone's expectations. The monastic schools are

plural now — and one for nuns — and ably guiding spiritual practice.

As a sense of possibility grew alongside the restoration, we worked with the community on what else was important to them. A way to keep young children out of harm's way while their parents worked in the fields has grown into 14 daycares — one in each village. Renewed pride in their culture has brought Tibetan language teachers into schools. Derelict clinics are now staffed with local medics and stocked with medicines. Youth groups take initiative for building bridges, irrigation canals, and water systems.

Still challenges? Yes, many. But the soul of Mustang is coming alive again, and so is a reborn sense of community.





Bringing the past to life under the watchful gaze of Maitreya, the Buddha of the Future. An accident of history made the kingdom of Mustang part of Nepal — so its extraordinary treasures of fifteenth century Tibetan Buddhist art were damaged but not destroyed.



8,500 girls

Create change

Does it matter that a ten year old girl gets to go to school instead of being sold to a brothel in India?

We think it does.

There's her young life, wasted and twisted with suffering if she's made a slave. But there's more. If, instead, she goes to school, she learns things that give her value in the eyes of her family — she can read and count. She can understand what a trafficker is, and when one comes to her village she can warn other girls. She can graduate, become a teacher and bring hundreds more girls away from illiteracy and towards being valued and productive members of their community. Her own children will be better off. Doors open, not shut.

Sometimes simple things can open doors. A backpack, a uniform, books, some kind words and support can make all the difference. With our partner, Dr. Aruna Uprety, and RHEST we will have 8,500 girls in school this year. 8,500 young lives going in the right direction. Making change happen every day — this is what it looks like.



From there to here. Each year over 15,000 girls from the poorest parts of Nepal are trafficked to India where they are enslaved in brothels. We're putting them in school instead, where they learn and thrive. And smile. Cost to save a girl's life for a year: \$100.



Care for the most vulnerable

Abandoned children live on the streets of Lhasa and Kathmandu. Tibetan elders come into the twilight of their lives destitute and alone. Disabled kids are left alone in dark rooms. Fourteen-year-olds arrive from a harrowing escape out of Tibet penniless and wounded.

Some people are in desperate need of help and have no one. Their circumstances are heartbreaking and sometimes complicated, but their immediate needs are simple: safety, shelter, something to eat, warmth, kindness. We touch the lives of 300,000 Tibetans, Sherpas and Nepalis each year, and all are vulnerable. But those we take out of danger and misery, for whom our help makes all the difference — they speak to the heart of what we do.

A fast response to the Yushu earthquake

On April 14, a series of powerful earthquakes shattered Yushu; thousands of Tibetans died and tens of thousands were left injured and homeless. AHF's partner there survived, thankfully, and made contact within 24 hours. An urgent appeal to AHF's big family raised \$157,000 for disaster relief and rebuilding. It's tough work, with difficulties compounded by bad weather and heightened scrutiny, but our partner and his team are dedicated, and getting it done.





Nomads in Tibet have been marginalized, forced off their grazing lands and made to feel like strangers in their own country. They have so little, and yet, and yet, their spirit and humanity still shine through.



Stay committed

Dear Friends,

A field trip to Tibetan refugee settlements in India this fall began with a moving Tashi Delek salute by 103 Tibetan elders — with flowers. We had traveled all day and it was nearly dark when we reached the Veteran Old People's Home in Herbertpur. But the enthusiasm of our greeting from these retired frontier-force soldiers banished tiredness. They read out a letter thanking AHF for arriving at a critical time in 2003, when they had no money for meals, clothes, blankets or shoes.

The Tibetans in the south, in Byallakuppe, told us how they struggled for years to carve farmland out of the jungle and ate papayas because there was nothing else. Even now they have to dig elephant trenches to protect their crops from tusked marauders. Tibetans and elephants — this was new for me.

Both in north and south, Tibetans have the hard lives of refugees. But their spirit is inspiring. Our commitment to them, and to all of our project partners, is to work with them to give the best expression to their hopes for a better life. Our commitment to you is to work hard, and smart. We need your support, and we want to be worthy of it.

Best personal regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dick', written in a cursive style.

*Richard C. Blum
Chairman*



This chorten, on the trail between Namche and Tengboche, is dedicated to the memory of Tenzing Norgay, the first Sherpa hero.



It is not enough to be compassionate. You must act.

– His Holiness, the Dalai Lama

Help make change happen. You can bring hope and opportunity to people in the Himalayas. Please, join us!

– Erica Stone, President



\$100 **Keep a girl safe in school:** \$100 takes care of a whole year. **\$1,000** pays for her entire education.

\$151 **Help a child walk again:** \$151 gives life-changing surgery to a poor disabled Nepali child.

\$68 **Bring a doctor to Tibetan refugees:** \$68 pays for four weekly doctor's visits in Tashiling. **\$810** pays for the whole year.

\$74 **Be there for a Tibetan who has no one else:** \$74 gives an elder food and clothes for a year.

\$108 **Make an investment in the Tibetan Enterprise Fund.** \$108 brings auspicious returns for them and for you.

\$138 **Make education possible for a disabled child:** \$138 pays for their educational expenses for a year.

\$208 **ABC, 123, Thuche che:** \$208 keeps a Loba child in a safe and happy day care center for a year.

\$330 **Support an orphan in Lhasa:** \$330 covers all they need for a year.

\$556 **Send a medical team to a remote health camp** for poor Nepali women – some of whom have never seen a doctor – for only \$556.

\$1,715 **Keep Tibetan culture alive:** \$1,715 employs a Tibetan teacher in Upper Mustang for a year.

\$2,439 **Span the distance to a better life:** \$2,439 builds a much-needed bridge in Upper Mustang.

\$8,000 **Grrreat idea!** \$8,000 helps protect Nepal's tigers from poachers for a whole year. Only room for one kitty? Make a difference for **\$52**.



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Two icons of wildness: Mt. Everest from the Tibet side, on the cover, and the magnificent tiger of Nepal's jungles. AHF partners with The Fund for the Tiger to help to protect this lovely and endangered creature.