

Supporting the health  
and education of children  
and youth in northern  
India, Nepal and Tibet  
since 1962



## **TRAS Annual Projects Report for the year April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.**

This has been a fairly quiet year for TRAS projects, and we were able to tidy up several outstanding projects where payments had been delayed because of the slow renewals of FCRA certification. Several NGOs received a further five years of certification, allowing them to receive donations from abroad, and others received an extension to September 30 this year. It remains to be seen what happens next.

We were able to finish paying for:

- **Project #332** - 68 rocket stoves at Munsel-Ling School in the Spiti Valley.
- **Projects #333 and #339** - the final two projects in memory of Ray Yee - refurbishing the senior block of one school and supplementing the diet over the winter months for the students at two remote schools in Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Project # 331** - A final \$2,000 was sent to the Snow Lion Foundation for medical supplies for a Tibetan settlement in Nepal.

Five further projects were completed during the year.

- **Project #300** - The last 9 students graduated with excellent marks through the READI Nepal Education project, so the hostel has been closed, the students have all moved on, and READI's efforts are concentrated on putting the final touches on the new school they have built. We await further word as to what comes next.
- **Project #340** - The Voice of Children remote libraries project in the villages around Nainital and Almora in north India had been approved last year and the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation had agreed to pay to upgrade the 12 current libraries with new floor matting and a supply of new books and also to open 10 even more remote libraries, providing them with shelves, books, periodicals, and a desk and chair for the local volunteer village librarian. All of this was completed over the year and the libraries are in full swing.
- **Project #341** - Munsel-Ling School solar passive wall for the Girls' Dormitory Block was approved last year and completed during the current year. To augment the rocket stoves heating the dormitory block at night, a wall of mainly large windows was added to the long side of the building, creating a warm space 8 feet wide and 100 feet long where the girls can study during breaks, eat, dry their laundry and generally keep warm in the freezing winter months. Utilizing the ever-present sunshine is a sensible solution in those frigid mountain regions!

- **Projects #342 and #343** - Manjushri Library and Tibetan Alphabet blocks. These two projects were also approved at the end of the last fiscal year, paid for by the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation, and in the current fiscal year the goals were achieved. The library in Dharamsala now has 900 more children's books, with 400 in Tibetan, and it caters to all Himalayan children in the region. The lovely, sturdy, colourful wooden alphabet blocks, each with a Tibetan letter on it, have been produced and distributed, with sets going to each of the pre-schools, kindergartens and primary schools run by and for the Tibetan populations in India, Nepal, and Bhutan, with sets available at cost for parents in the diaspora.

Of our main ongoing projects, two are doing very well, and two are on hold.

- **Project #293** - CTA Nurses Training is a steady winner, with 8 student nurses paid for each year. Two graduated during 2022, one unfortunately had to leave the course and 5 were going into their second or third year. 3 more were selected in August 2022, and we received cheerful Christmas cards from all 8, with lovely messages of thanks to TRAS and descriptions of the varied skills they were learning. One sweet photo shows one of 'our' students working with blind children in a school for the blind.
- **Project #297** - Voice of Children Education project. This multi-layered project, run by a small staff and many volunteers out of tiny offices in Nainital and Almora, continues to amaze us, with its dedication and vigorous, innovative work in many villages in the foothills of the Himalaya. The staff and volunteers run after-school classes, computer classes, driving school lessons, sewing classes. They hold monthly meetings for women, for teenaged girls, for parents and for children. They run health camps touching on many otherwise taboo subjects. They tackle all sorts of issues, bombarding the local government for better health care, pensions, agricultural handouts, support against violence against women and against child marriage and child labour. And they celebrate every 'world' and 'national' day you can think of and hold annual children's fairs and outings to make life meaningful and fun for the over 350 kids they serve.
- **Project #344** - Kunphen Centre workshops on addiction are still on hold, awaiting FCRA certification.
- **Project #345** - the IDEA Skilled Birth Attendant training, has hit another roadblock. IDEA had worked around the closure of its midwifery training and had received permission to start an advanced three-month accelerated training course for medically trained people to help them cope with the many emergencies that can occur during childbirth. TRAS agreed in the summer of 2022 to pay for a pilot project for 15 students and this was very successfully completed. All 15 students had previously done the 18-month midwifery course, and this new training added to their skills. All fifteen were promptly hired in their own villages and towns with the promise that their positions would become permanent as soon as the slow-moving Ministry of Health gave them accreditation. IDEA then applied to TRAS for a four-year extension to this project, with 15 students a year. TRAS approved this in March 2023, at the end of the fiscal year covered in this report. (But to bring you up to date - another roadblock. An election was

called, a government installed - and months later they are still arguing over the country's budget. And they will not give IDEA the go-ahead until the budget for the Ministry of Health is approved.)

A total of \$99,401.79 was allocated to projects during the 2022-23 year.

We thank, as always, our generous donors who keep these projects going for the benefit of the children of the Himalayan region, one of the world's most beautiful and yet one of the poorest. My personal thanks for their help to directors Megha Shakya (Nepal projects), Sanjeev Singh (Voice of Children projects), Videsh Kapoor (Munsel-ling projects) and Raheesa Jina (Snow Lion project). And a huge thank you to Joanne McLeod at the office for her help which goes way beyond her official office hours!

Respectfully submitted,

Daphne Hales,

Projects Director, TRAS

September 20, 2023.