



## Books, Books and More Books!



What could be a better gift for a child than a book! Thanks to the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation, books are currently flying off the shelves of Delhi bookstores and into the eager hands of children in 16 Himalayan mountain villages in India and Nepal.

A while ago, it was suggested to TRAS that we should concentrate on computers and digital trainings – but the pendulum has swung and educators are realizing that, for children, holding a book in their hands and turning the pages to discover the world through pictures and words is a much deeper learning experience. Sweden, following other Nordic countries, has just reversed its education policy and has replaced computers in their schools with textbooks for some subjects. So we are on the right track with these gifts of books!



**In Nepal**, the Subrawati School in the earthquake-damaged area of Dolakha now has a top-up of more books in the library which TRAS helped establish last year. In the very poor Dang region, two more large village schools are able to buy quantities of books and the girls in particular are being encouraged to read widely and open their minds to new possibilities – this in a region where girl children are still ‘sold’ as maids to rich families. In a huge step forward one school now has a baccalaureate program for which TRAS has supplied the text books.

**In Tibetan settlements** TRAS has supplied many schools with books over the years and now, with this new donation, funds have been sent to the Tibetan Nehru Memorial Foundation School (TNMF) in Dehradun. In Ladakh, two schools near the Tibetan border are also buying books for their students – though this entails an arduous three-day journey to New Delhi to buy them.

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Climate change hits school hard – see Page 7

## Books, Books and More Books! (cont'd)

And **in nine Indian villages** in the Himalayan foothills, the tiny village libraries are being augmented with new books along with newspapers. Here, women are following their children and learning to read and men come to find out what's going on beyond their hilly world.

### \$18,000 is bringing a lot of learning to some unexpected places!

Here's what some of our partners are telling us.

#### TNMF School writes:

We are happy to report that the books funded by TRAS last year made a visible and immediate difference. Book borrowing from the TNMF School library increased noticeably, and we observed something that truly delighted us — students were coming in on their own initiative. For children who had little prior reading habit, seeing them choose a book for themselves and settle in to read was a small but meaningful shift.

As you may know, our Tibetan settlement houses Kyitsel-ling — a boarding home honoured with its name by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama — which provides residential care for poor and needy students from Tibetan, Himalayan, and Indian families. All of our boarding students attend TNMF School, and so the school's library is a resource that directly serves our most vulnerable children. We are deeply invested in helping this community school grow.

With this in mind, we would like to create a dedicated junior reading corner at TNMF School. English is the medium of instruction from middle school onward, and giving younger children a comfortable, well-stocked reading space from an early age builds the language confidence they need to succeed.

The improved reading corner will benefit approximately 170 students — Tibetan, Himalayan, and Indian children alike — and the books and furniture will serve the school for many years to come.



Please thank the donor warmly on behalf of our students, teachers, and the entire community. We are truly grateful for TRAS' generous and sustained support.

#### CP Nepal writes:

The project is needed in rural and semi-rural communities of Bhojpur and Dang, where schools and a campus serve students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, mostly from low-income farming families. These areas face limited access to quality educational resources, outdated or insufficient library materials, and weak reading culture due to lack of proper library facilities. The communities also face economic constraints that prevent students from purchasing books or accessing external libraries. Therefore, there is a strong need to strengthen school libraries to improve learning opportunities and educational quality.

#### Subrawati Basic School in Nepal writes:

I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude for the support provided by TRAS in managing the library over the past year.

I have submitted this request to continue stocking the book corners in the classrooms and to facilitate the provision of necessary books for the coming year as well. I deeply appreciate your continued support, trust, and goodwill, and I look forward to your kind cooperation in the future.

**A book nook in each classroom sounds enticing and conducive to more reading and learning!**

# Sponsor A Child!

by Joanne MacLeod



Through the TRAS sponsorship program, you can support the education of a child in the Himalayan region, one of the poorest in the world. TRAS members currently sponsor 110 children in Nepal and northern India. This year 15 sponsored children will have successfully completed their schooling and graduated. More are waiting for a friendly helping hand.

TRAS started its sponsorship program more than 50 years ago. When George and Inge Woodcock (TRAS founders) met the Dalai Lama in exile in 1962, his main concern was for the children, many orphaned or semi-orphaned, who arrived in India with the flood of refugees from Tibet. "These are our future," he said, "without them there will be no future; they need a secure place to live, food and education."

There are some families whose children need a helping hand today. Would you give a child a chance to grow up healthy and with enough education to improve their lives and those of their families and communities?

**Please contact the TRAS office at [info@tras.ca](mailto:info@tras.ca) to learn more about sponsoring a child through our sponsorship program.**

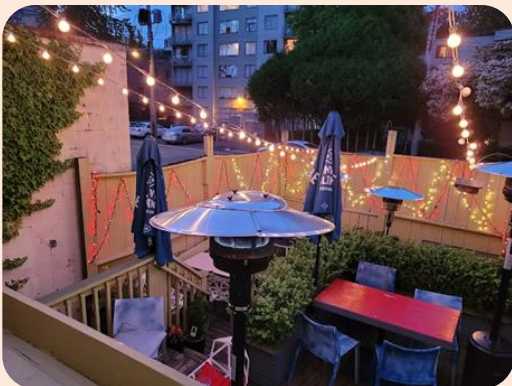
Thank you for making a difference in a child's life!



## Rooftop Dining, Anyone?

**Wednesday, June 17, 2026**

Join TRAS directors and friends for rooftop dining at  
**Gurkha Kitchen, 1141 Davie Street, Vancouver**



Doors open at 6pm | Buffet dinner at 7pm

Tickets \$45 per person

Tickets may be purchased by credit card:  
P 604-224-5133 | E-transfer [info@tras.ca](mailto:info@tras.ca)

TRAS directors will share highlights & reports on current projects

Those who have visited Kathmandu tell us this restaurant is reminiscent of dining there, so let's recreate the scene in downtown Vancouver!

**SPACE IS LIMITED – BOOK NOW!**  
Reservations close June 12, 2026

## IDEA Is Back on Track!

As you may recall from our fall and winter newsletters, in September 2025, large-scale anti-corruption protests and demonstrations took place across Nepal. In several places, unexpected massive destruction and looting resulted in individual houses, organizations, and private business properties being vandalized and set on fire. The office of IDEA (Innovative Development Education Academy), a local charity based in Pokhara that TRAS supports, was damaged, the computers stolen, and Mr. Devkota, its founder, injured.

We are pleased to report that Mr. Devkota has fully recovered, the five computers have been replaced thanks to generous TRAS donors, and IDEA is back on track.

IDEA does great work in training young Nepalis in a variety of fields (teaching, maternal/child care, veterinary, farming, etc), helping them gain employment in their own country and improve life for many in rural regions. The office computers were vital to the management of all these trainings, and Mr. Devkota writes:

“Thanks to TRAS’ meaningful support, we are able to care for our on-going programs efficiently. **We were able to purchase five computers** and the staff are happy to receive the laptops for their individual responsibilities for effective program operations, monitoring, planning and reporting.”

TRAS’ main project with IDEA is the **Skilled Birth Attendant (SBA)** training for auxiliary health workers. Currently, the fourth round of this training, which accepts 15 new students each time, is underway and due to finish at the end of June. This is a three-month course based in a teaching hospital, with a two-month residential course followed by a month’s internship.

The lack of maternal and baby care generally and the shortage of health facilities in rural regions has led to shockingly high rates of maternal mortality in Nepal. Although there has been some improvement, the mortality rate is still more than double the global target. This is where the SBAs come in. Living in the villages, they can assess pregnant women frequently, catch problems early on, and arrange proper transportation to the nearest health facility when needed. They are literally saving lives, playing a vital role in saving both mothers and babies. The current group of 15 young women each come from a different village, some far flung, meaning that help is spreading outwards from the larger centres. They express their happiness in being able to take this SBA course.



# Hope for Children Update

by Shelley Guardia

Now in its third year, the Hope for Children project has been successfully implemented in nine villages in the northern mountainous area of Uttarakhand, India.



Jointly run by local charities, AMAN and VIMARSH, this project continues its strong commitment to child rights, education, and community empowerment and awareness. For many living in extreme poverty in remote areas this project is their only source of hope and opportunity.

## Education Support

The Education Support Centres provide spaces in the villages where children receive academic support. Participation in various recreational and scholastic activities enhances their development beyond regular school hours. All nine support centres are currently operational, engaging almost 250 children.



## Digital Skills Development

Students are learning not only basic computer knowledge and keyboarding, but also how to work in the most popular software applications (such as MS Word). They are taught communication skills and navigating the web. Learning English plays a big part. The program is currently host to over 50 students.



## Education for All (Children Fellowship Programme)

Under the Fellowship Program, notebooks and educational materials were distributed to needy students throughout several class levels.

## Adolescent Girls' Groups

Monthly meetings provided adolescent girls with information on gender issues and child marriage. They learned about The POCSO Act (*The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences*). Discussion also pushed the importance of nutrition as well as personal hygiene, menstruation and education opportunities.

One such case study was on Menstrual Health Awareness and Services. Menstruation is surrounded by myths, silence, and discrimination. Adolescent girls and women generally have limited access to proper health information, hygiene products, and healthcare services. At these meetings, girls and women were encouraged to speak about their health concerns. Families and community members were made aware of how to reduce discriminatory practices. The project also raised the issues of irregular doctor availability and shortage of medicines in the local hospital.

“The Hope for Children project helped us understand that menstrual hygiene is not only a health issue but also a matter of rights and dignity. We are now more aware and are also helping other women and girls become aware of their rights.”

## Village Gender and Education Resource Centre (VGERC)

The VGERC raises awareness about women's rights, gender equality, child-related issues, and how to access essential social services. The team provided information to many villagers at community gatherings, and specifically assisted 51 women to secure essential services including labour cards, maternity kits, disability pension and counselling in cases of domestic violence and on-line crime.



## Hope for Children Update (cont'd)



### Monthly meetings

AMAN and VIMARSH can credit their success to the large number of monthly meetings conducted with parents, teachers, healthcare workers, village representatives, and all age groups in each community. These meetings focus on raising awareness of all social issues and work on strengthening support networks. As well, staff meetings are conducted to assess progress and strengthen staff capabilities. The children are also introduced to wider world issues through participation in various international and national events and special 'days'.

\$30,000 a year provides Hope for Children services to well over 300 children and improves village life on many fronts. Will you help TRAS continue this endeavour?

The full report for the past six months can be found on the TRAS website ([www.tras.ca](http://www.tras.ca)).



## TRAS Scholarship Fund: The Latest

by Shelley Guardia

The TRAS Scholarship Fund announces more winning candidates for Hope for Children. These two young women were chosen by TRAS partner VIMARSH.

Both of the VIMARSH winners hail from Uttarakhand, a mountainous region of north India known for its hill stations and incredible mountain scenery amid the foothills of the Himalaya. The two young women are both active members of the VIMARSH Kishori (adolescent girls) Youth Group which does so much to inspire self-confidence and community spirit in the members.

### Lakshita Kanwal

21-year-old Lakshita comes from a humble, small farming family. Presently, Lakshita is pursuing a four-year Paramedical Course at Sushila Tiwari Hospital. Her dream is to continue her studies so she can help others in need. Her family is unable to help her achieve this financially but thanks to the VIMARSH scholarship, Lakshita can continue her studies.



### Vishakha

19-year-old Vishakha is currently enrolled in the 4-year Bachelor of Computer Applications program. She comes from a small family who support themselves through farming. Money is scarce. Her family was able to secure a loan to enroll Vishakha into the Amrapali Institute, Haldwani. The Vimarsh scholarship has eased this financial burden and has allowed Vishakha to continue her studies.

The TRAS Scholarship Fund helps 24 students each year and welcomes donations.

## In the face of climate change, a school rises again in the high Himalaya!

Climate change is a reality in the Himalayas as glaciers melt, previously dry summers experience frequent torrential rains, and heavier winter snow blankets the region. This is spelling disaster for the traditional Tibetan style of building, with clay/mud walls and roofs.

**Jamyang-ling School in Zanskar, Ladakh**, has been slowly crumbling over the past few years and finally funds are being raised to shore up the building, replace damaged classrooms and add a new wing.



*Jamyang-ling School: traditional Tibetan architecture*



*Cracks in the Jamyang-ling classroom walls*

Most importantly, the new roof will be metal, saving the new walls from damp and decay. The main donor is the Tibetan Children's Education Foundation in Montana, with whom TRAS worked successfully on education projects in Sikkim a few years ago. TRAS has agreed to send \$6,000 to the project and also a further \$2,500 to furnish a school library. After much discussion as to how much of the original structure can be saved, the plans are in place and the ground has been broken for the new wing.



*Ground breaking with traditional ceremony*



*The condemned classroom*

The season for building before the winter snows arrive and Zanskar is effectively cut off from the rest of the country is short, so it's all hands on deck to get the bulk of the building completed by October! Meanwhile, the nearby community hall has offered to house classes for the 170 children during construction.

To begin with, the whole south front will be stabilized with concrete pillars and beams. The two brand new classrooms will be added to the east side.

On the second floor, three classrooms will be combined into two larger rooms. The central classroom had been abandoned because sagging beams, cracked walls and broken windows made it too dangerous to use. New bigger windows will be installed. After the completion of the two new rooms and merging three rooms into two, a new metal roof will be constructed.

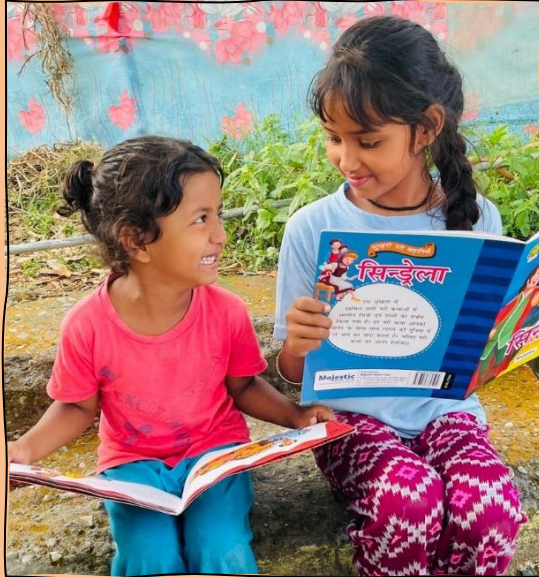
TRAS is happy to support this little school located far beyond the reach of most visitors who might offer financial help. Please donate towards making this school safe for the children from the isolated mountain villages in Zanskar.

The hostel where they board was rebuilt two years ago. Now it is time to save the school itself.

# TRAS

Supporting health and education for children and youth in the Himalayas

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Let's support the kids!

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## YES! I want to help children and youth living in the Himalayas

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Please send event information and newsletters by e-mail
- Please send me information on Planned Giving

- attached is my cheque # \_\_\_\_\_ for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (all cheques payable to TRAS)
- charge my VISA/MasterCard No. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

#### Please allocate to:

- Sponsorship \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for (name of child/youth) \_\_\_\_\_
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- TRAS Scholarship Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- General Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for wherever it is needed most

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Thank you for your generous support to TRAS!

