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Lha Charitable Trust



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ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Tashi Delek!

I want to take this opportunity to yet thank you again for everything that you have done for the people of Tibet and for the community here in Dharamshala!

22 years ago, our founders started Lha Charitable Trust with the only aim to help and assist Tibetan refugees who had left everything and came to India with a hope for freedom and one day go back home. Today Lha is one of the largest Tibetan social work institutes, benefiting thousands of people through various programs focusing on education, health, environment, creating awareness about Tibet, social work initiatives, and preservation and promotion of the Tibetan language and cultural heritage.

I feel overwhelmed with gratitude when I look back on the journey our founders and predecessors have made. Extremely thankful for the faith that our supporters and partners placed in us, for the kindness and generosity of our donors and volunteers. It would not have been possible to come this far if it wasn't for kind souls like YOU.

Year 2019 has been a great year for Lha with several new project initiatives, we worked with 13 partner institutes and more than 300 volunteers helped us in our programs throughout the year.

Once again I thank you for standing by us every step of the way and I hope that you will continue your support and give us blessings in the years to come.



With gratitude

Dorji Kyi

Executive Director, Lha Charitable Trust



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## OUR VISION

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Generate an atmosphere of harmony and co-operation within the community by meeting to the needs of the impoverished and underprivileged.

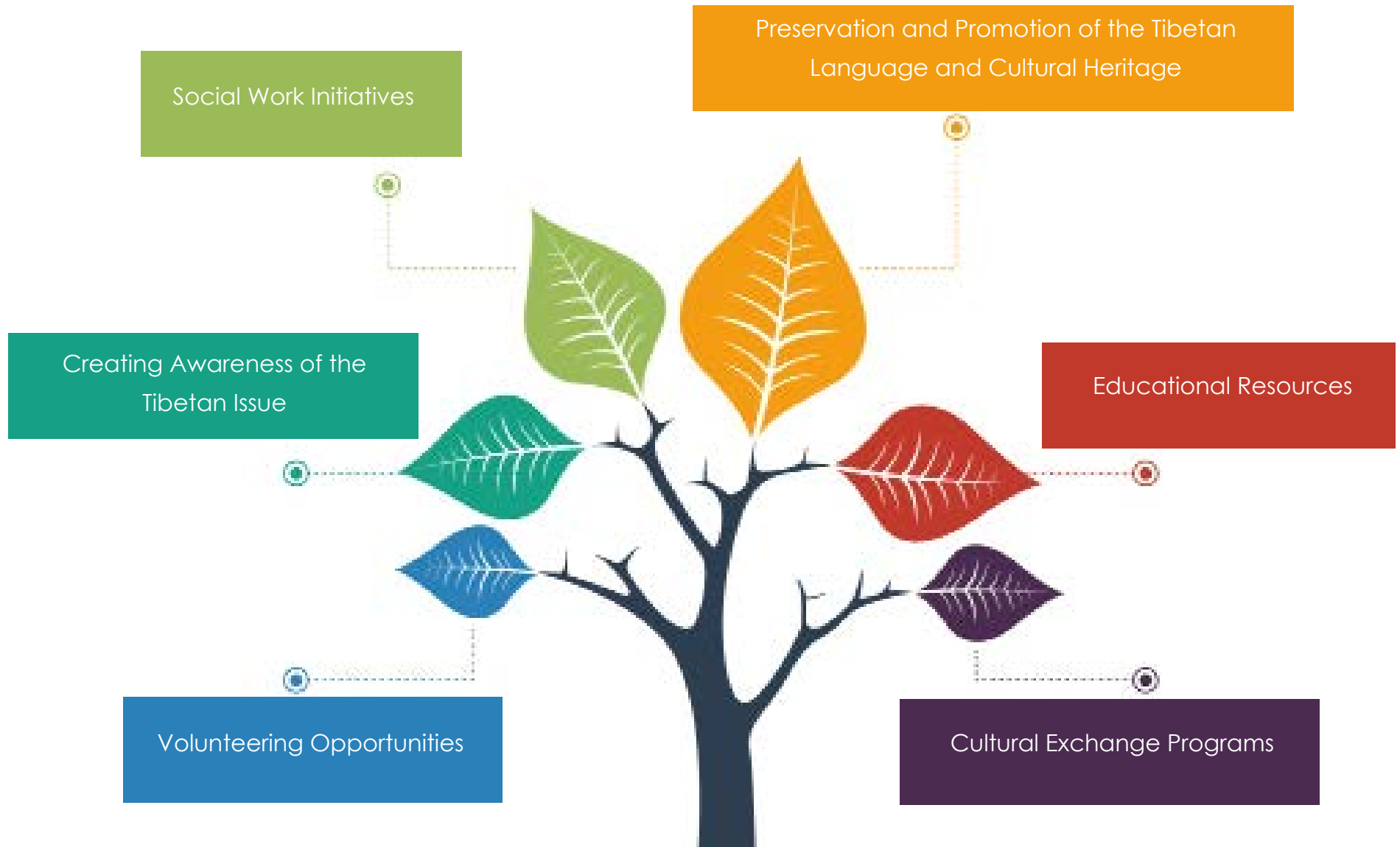
## OUR MISSION

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- To provide a wide range of social services to Tibetan refugees, local Indians and other people from the Himalayan region.
- To provide Tibetan refugees with health care and educational services, as well as the skills and assistance needed to build a new life in exile.
- To facilitate meaningful mutual learning and cultural exchange experiences among Tibetans, volunteers and students who visit from other countries.
- To increase awareness of the Tibetan refugee situation and preserve the endangered culture of Tibet.

# AREAS OF FOCUS

The Trust focuses its efforts on six areas



# NEW INITIATIVES OF 2019

## LIVELIHOOD TRAINING PROGRAM

Lha started a series of short term vocational courses which aims to help Tibetans to equip themselves with relevant skills for employment to support their livelihood. Through this program Lha organized four different courses namely Tibetan Traditional Massage and Spa, Cookery, Bartender and Bakery. The courses also included side classes as such as personality development, financial literacy and Basic English language. Totally 85 students participated in these courses. Since most of the participants do not have a formal education, courses provided by Lha are designed to accommodate their needs and qualifications. Through the courses, students learnt appropriate job skills, and get internship and placement opportunities. The project is supported by The Tibet Fund and Lha will be continuing this project in 2020.







## Workshop for Tibetan Journalists and Media

Lha in collaboration with the Association of Tibetan Journalists held a four-day workshop, Data, Investigate and Online Research to provide intensive training in journalism and reporting for Tibetan journalists and other interested individuals. The course took place at Lha's Ahimsa House from May 21 – 24 and was led by Mr. Siddhartha Roy, a foreign correspondent at The Diplomat magazine and a Pulitzer Grantee. The 19 participants received training in optimizing content for the web, creating content for social media and increasing engagement, researching and investigating using social media together with an introduction to investigative and data journalism and privacy for journalists. As part of this initiative, Lha was able to facilitate a similar two-day workshop for Central Tibetan Administration staff, working with Mr. Siddhartha, at the Department of Information and International Relations.





# CONFERENCE FOR TIBETAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSO)







## STRENGTHENING TIBETAN CIVIL SOCIETY

Understanding the common challenges faced by Tibetan NGOs in Exile, Lha organized a Conference for Tibetan CSOs from 30 September to 2 October 2019 at Sarah, Dharamshala. The three days conference was attended by 36 representatives from 29 Tibetan NGOs based in India and Nepal. The participating CSOs are run and led by Tibetans who are implementing development projects within the areas of education, health, livelihood, community development, gender issues etc. The conference provided training on strengthening fundraising capacity, conducting project needs assessment, understanding legal and financial

compliances and finding ways to collaborate and network. Lha believes that the conference has provided a platform for Tibetan CSOs to network, exchange ideas, share experiences and learn from the experts. The forum was co-sponsored by three institutions who have been involved in supporting Tibetans since the very first groups of Tibetans reached exile: The Tibet Fund, Tibet Relief Fund and Swedish Organization for Individual Relief (SOIR-IM). This conference is the second of its kind. The first Strengthening Tibetan Civil Society training was co-hosted in April 2016 in Dehradun by the Tibet Fund, Tibet Relief Fund and SOIR-IM.

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# PROJECT IMPACT

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## Scholarships Programs

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With access to many Tibetan youth through Lha's educational programs, we were able to identify the needs for financial support in pursuing further studies by many school or college dropouts. Hence in 2019 Lha provided scholarship to 3 young Tibetans boys. Supplementary scholarship to one boy for his college tuition fee and full scholarship for vocational diploma course for 2 boys. Lha will be supporting more youngsters in the coming year as we continue this project since 2018 Tibetan Women's Nursing scholarship.



Tsering Choedon: 3rd Year at B G S International Foundation for Health Sciences, Mysore

Tsering Dolma: 2nd Year, Mata Sahib Kaur College of Nursing, Chandigarh





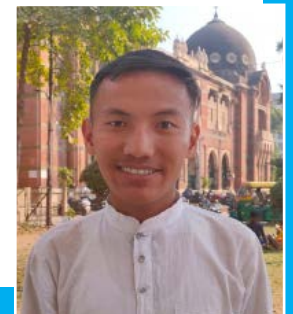
Tenzin Khechok: Diploma in Graphic Designing Course at TGC Multimedia School, Delhi.



Buchung Tsering: Diploma in Hotel Management course at New Era Institute of Hotel Management, Dharamshala



Tenzin Nordon: 2nd Year, Apollo School of Nursing, Delhi



Tsering Dawa: MA in Political Science, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

## Language Courses

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Since last past twenty two years, Iha has focused on international language training as a tool to develop necessary language skills for newly arrived Tibetan refugees for easier rehabilitation process and it continues to remain a well received service in the community. The language classes are also attended by local Indians and other people from the Himalayan regions. Iha offers classes of five different languages which include 4 levels of English, 2 levels each of Chinese and French, and basic level each of German and Tibetan. On a daily basis, 13 different classes are held and the classes are taught by volunteer teachers. 13,307 students have participated in these classes since 2006. In 2019, Iha's language classes are attended by total student of 1391 among which 525 students are newly registered and 55 individual tutoring sessions were held.







## Computer Courses

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Believing computer knowledge as one of the most important skill sets for employability in today's world, Iha has continued to give free computer class to Tibetan refugees and people from the Himalayan region since the inception of the organization. The computer class is given by professional teachers and intake for the computer course is monthly. In 2019 alone, Iha has trained 72 students in introductory computer and complex skills of Adobe Photoshop, Indesign and illustrator.

## Lha Community Soup Kitchen

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Lha's Community Soup Kitchen Project is one of the few projects that is committed only to benefit the Tibetan refugees. In 2019 alone, the Community Soup Kitchen saw new 74 beneficiaries and since its foundation in 2011, the project has benefited 597 people. The beneficiaries vary from monks and nuns to lay people who are struggling to find their livelihood in the exile. The oldest of the beneficiary is 84 years old with knee problems who lives with his wife and both are unable to walk the stairs to come down to the community kitchen. Understanding the critical condition of the couple, Lha has been delivering the lunch to their home for quite a sometime. With Community Soup Kitchen Project, Lha endeavors to provide healthy and nutritious meals to these vulnerable people in the community.

Former political prisoner Ngawang Gelek, who has been one of the beneficiaries for many years says, "I have been eating lunch here for around three-four years and it has definitely made my survival easier. They provide very good nutritious food including fresh fruits".





## Clean Water Project

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More than 17,710 people have access to clean drinking water, through Lha's Clean Water Project. This year we were able to install another water filtration system on July 8. Through Dharamshala Rotary Club, we came to know that Surya Uday Charitable Trust - a school cum pre-vocational center for special needs children - are looking for help in setting up a clean drinking water facility for their students and staff. The school has 89 special needs students plus 21 staff. Since 2010, Lha has installed 28 water filtration systems in monasteries, nunneries, schools, and institutions, all made possible by generous donors and supporters. Lha also provides an annual service and maintenance of the water filter machines before the monsoon every year.



## Clear Vision and Smile Dental Projects

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The medical student group from Tulane University, USA once again helped us in screening 231 people for dental, vision and medical issues at Palyul Choekorling Monastery and Gaden Choeling Nunnery. 219 people received further dental treatments including fillings, scaling, extractions, crowns, and medicines. 220 people received eye care, including additional eye examinations and the distribution of eyeglasses and necessary medicines.





## Contact Magazine

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In 2019, 11 issues of the magazine were published with 10,100 copies of the magazine this year which consisted of 164 feature articles written by 33 volunteers from across the world with a small number written by Contact staff. Contact articles focus primarily on Tibet-related issues, including news from Tibet, the exile Tibetan community, events of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the actions of the Tibetan Government-in-exile. However, Contact's top priority is to report the news on the situation of Tibetans inside Tibet to international audiences. The copies are distributed locally as well as sent to libraries, organizations and schools in different states in India and abroad. Apart from the monthly print magazine, [www.contactmagazine.net](http://www.contactmagazine.net) is regularly updated for our online readers.

## Environment Protection and Awareness

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For 2019 World Environment Day, Lha organised a drawing competition in three Tibetan schools ;Upper TCV, Lower TCV, and Petoen School on Tibetan wild animals. 112 students took part in the competition and top 10 students were given awards of INR 3,000 each as a token of appreciation. The competition was sponsored by Mr. Michael Buckley who is an environmentalist and the author of Meltdown in Tibet.

Lha also does mass cleanup drive every third Saturday with volunteers and students in an attempt to keep the town clean.





## Educational Talks

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Educational talk on Tibet's Unique Ecosystem at TCV Gopalpur school was held on March 23 with the intention of raising environmental awareness issues in Tibet. Guest speakers were Mr Tempa Gyaltzen Zamlha, Head of the Environment and Development Desk of the Tibet Policy Institute, Dr Lobsang Yangtso, Research and Campaign Assistant at Tibet Third Pole, International Tibet Network and Mr Michael Buckley, an award-winning Canadian journalist and the author of "Melt Down in Tibet".

Lha staged a talk by Dr Tsewang Tamdin, attending Physician to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Chairman of the Academic Council of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology. He spoke on General Health issues and the Benefits of Tibetan Traditional Medication. The talk was aimed to raise awareness in the Tibetan community of personal everyday health and hygiene. Both the talks were funded by The Tibet Fund.

## Preservation of the Tibetan language and culture

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One of Lha's main projects is to collect and archive the valuable teachings, writings and speeches of the Eminence Professor Samdong Rinpoche. All these resources are available in audio and video forms on the bilingual website: [samdhongrinpoche.com](http://samdhongrinpoche.com) and youtube channel. To date, we have uploaded 1,019 audio files and 208 videos of Rinpoche's teachings and speeches. YouTube uploads have received approximately 450,445 views. Rinpoche's Sound Cloud audio content currently has over 3,600 regular listeners, with a total of 151,368 listeners. 725 articles (both in Tibetan and English) were published on the website.





## Cultural Exchange Program

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Twelve international exchange groups were hosted at Lha Ahimsa House this year with total of 117 participants. Some of the groups focused on volunteer work in the community and helped Lha students to learn English Language, while other groups spent more time learning about Tibet, Buddhism, meditation and yoga. All the groups made a point to visit the Dalai Lama's Temple, Tibet Museum, Men-Tsee-Khang, Norbulingka and other institutes to learn more about Tibet. More over students from the Bedales School, England were very fortunate to receive an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama during their visit.



# VOLUNTEER VOICE

In 2019, Lha registered a total of 337 volunteers, both online registration and from drop-ins to the office. They have assist in different projects at lha and most of them taught at different language classes and participated in English conversation classes. The volunteers came from all over the world and Lha has placed them according to their interest, experience and time commitment. Some of the volunteers were also assigned to other Tibetan social work organizations in Dharamshala.

*"The positive energy and work that circulates in this organisation attracts the kind of volunteers that easily connect with each other and create a small family in themselves. It's a debate whether I've grown more attached to students or the staff."*

- Jailel Barr, USA

*"We have learned so much more than we taught. We got to attend teachings by His Holiness, we learned about Buddhism, we had great food at the volunteer lunches, and we were inspired by the dedication of the staff at Lha. Good luck to the students, staff, and volunteers at Lha this year and thanks for the opportunity to volunteer with such a well-run and compassionate organization."*

- Owen and Meghan, Canada

*"My time at Lha has been an eye opening experience interacting with students I have heard, seen, learned and understood that our very human nature is in the doldrums of catastrophe and that collective consciousness is really the wave of the future."*

- Firoz Mujawar, India



## SOME OF OUR ACHIEVERS IN 2019



**Jamyang Choepel**

Prior to the Massage and Spa course at Lha, he taught Yoga and sound healing at Tibet World, now he has his own business, Zamling Yoga & Massage, where he provides services like massage, sound healing, singing bowl and teach yoga.



**Chukpa**

At Lha he learned the basic computer skills and then moved to intermediate class where he learned video editing, Photoshop and InDesign. Currently he works as a photographer and film maker for his monastery – Gontse Gaden Rabgyeling Monastery at Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh.



**Ngawang Phakchok**

Currently works at Norbulingka Institute's restaurant as a Chef. He says *“Lha's cookery course taught me a skill and the certificate helped me get a job, because without any certificate, even though you say that you are a very good cook, nobody believes but if you show the certificate, then people would believe”*.



## SOME OF OUR ACHIEVERS IN 2019



**Shayrab Gyatso**

After completing the Massage and Spa course at Lha, he opened his own massage center in Goa.



**Sangay Dolma**

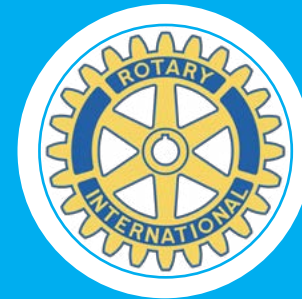
She completed Massage and Spa course and interned at Tibet Health Spalon, where she currently works as a massage therapist.



**Tenzin Wangmo**

*Tenzin Wangmo did not know how to read and write Tibetan Language; however after 3 months of taking Tibetan language class at Lha she can now read and write fluently in Tibetan language.*

# OUR FUNDERS & PARTNERS



# LHA'S ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 2003 TO 2019

<b>13,307</b>	language course students
<b>3,177</b>	Computer courses and IT workshop students.
<b>1,927</b>	International education institutes participated in the cultural exchange program
<b>8,587</b>	volunteers from over 42 different countries
<b>34,340</b>	free books distributed
<b>52,134</b>	articles of clothing collected and distributed
<b>17,710</b>	people have access to clean drinking water with 28 water filtration systems installed.
<b>1,246</b>	people benefited through Clear Vision Project
<b>1,260</b>	people benefited through Smile Dental Project
<b>111,130</b>	copies of Contact magazine distributed
<b>203</b>	people graduated from Lha's massage courses
<b>67</b>	people graduated from Lha's photography courses
<b>597</b>	benefited through Lha Community Soup Kitchen



# SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow us on social media for daily updates, news and activities.



## Website:

[www.lhasocialwork.org](http://www.lhasocialwork.org)

[www.samdhongrinpoche.com](http://www.samdhongrinpoche.com)

[www.tibetnature.net](http://www.tibetnature.net)

[www.contactmagazine.net](http://www.contactmagazine.net)

[www.tibetfairtrade.com](http://www.tibetfairtrade.com)

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THANK YOU