

Annual Report Year 2022



Lha Charitable Trust

Institute for Social Work and Education

Director's Message



Tashi Delek,

First of all I want to take this opportunity to thank all the partner organizations and individuals for making this year a great success. I am proud to bring you the annual report 2022. Lha has been actively providing vital and much-needed social and educational services to Tibetan refugees, the local Indian population, and people from other Himalayan regions for the past 25 years.

Despite two years of uncertainty and struggle across the world, we are still here and our team has worked hard. We were able to resume all our projects this year following the pandemic break, as well as being able to initiate some new projects. The year has been successfully wrapped up with 25 significant programs benefiting more than a thousand people.

These past 25 years have been a successful journey; seeking to create an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation within the community by tending to the needs of the impoverished and underprivileged according to our vision. Lha has evolved and recreated numerous social and education programs to meet the ever-changing need of the community. We will continue to strive hard to keep up to this vision.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Tsering Wangdue'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Tsering Wangdue

Content

❖ Background

❖ Areas of Focus

❖ Projects

❖ Our Donors and Partners

❖ Lha Websites

❖ Social Media



Background

Since 1959, hundreds of thousands of Tibetans have chosen to leave their homeland in pursuit of the freedoms and opportunities denied under the Chinese communist occupation. Every year, new refugees arrive in India after an arduous journey, carrying only an armful of personal belongings. Countless refugees arrive with little or no education, speaking only Tibetan, and possessing no viable job skills to support themselves and their families. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult for adults and older refugees to receive an adequate education in India due to their school system requirements. Founded in 1997 and registered as a charitable trust by the Himachal Pradesh Indian Government in 2005, Lha has continuously provided vital resources to those in need for 25 years. Lha's financial accounts are audited annually by a Government-approved chartered accountant. Lha plays a crucial role in facilitating the transition of Tibetan refugees from their homeland to the Indian community by providing long-term rehabilitation and education resources. Each year, programs and projects are adjusted to meet the conditions and needs of the community, while keeping the commitment firm: to help the Tibetan people survive and prosper in their new home and to preserve their profoundly unique culture. All Lha's services are open to local Indians and people from the Himalayan regions. In addition, Lha offers volunteers and students the opportunity to engage in meaningful community service and social work.



Our Vision and Mission



Our Vision

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

Our Mission

- To provide a wide range of social services to Tibetan refugees, local Indians and 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



Projects



Livelihood Skill Training Program

The Livelihood Skill Training Program was started in 2019 to address the unemployment issue in the Tibetan community. For the last three years, we have trained around three hundred Tibetans under various short-term skill courses. In 2022, we were able to train 102 students out of the more than 300 applicants we received. The applicants are carefully filtered and selected based on their educational qualifications, aims and objectives, and matched to training plans. The preference has always been given to unemployed school dropouts, former monks and nuns, and the underprivileged section of the community.

Of the 102 students who have participated in our training courses, 25 students have secured a job after their training or started their own business.



Livelihood Skill Training Program

The following table shows the number of students who have completed the courses

	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Job secured</u>
	Special Cuisine	8	16	24	4
	Bakery	17	15	32	3
	Barista	10	10	20	10
	Tibetan Traditional Massage & Spa	3	2	5	2
	Tattoo Art	0	3	3	0
	Certified Personal Trainer	2	1	3	1
	Beautician	1	0	1	0
	Nail Art	10	2	12	5
	Bartending	0	2	2	1
	Total	51	51	102	26

International Language Courses

Lha have been providing language courses daily for past the 25 years. These courses constitute one of the most significant projects undertaken by Lha to enhance the life opportunities of students of all ages, backgrounds and proficiencies. Courses are offered in five languages: Tibetan, English, French, Chinese and German, at three expertise levels: beginner, intermediate and conversational.

In 2022, a total of 264 students participated in Lha language courses including 252 Tibetan refugees and people of other Himalayan communities, 12 from other Asian countries and 20 Indian police officers.

A total of 13,925 students have received language instruction from Lha since its inception. In addition to daily language classes, one-to-one tutoring was made available to the interested students. The English conversation class is one of the most effective and sought after classes with about 30 students engaging and participating daily to practice their English speaking with Lha volunteers. In addition to learning languages, bonds and friendships are created as students and volunteers interact and exchange their culture, religions, ideology and personal histories.



Intensive English Language Course for Geshe and Khenpo

Lha started an Intensive English language class for the Buddhist abbots and Geshes (equivalent to Ph.D. in Buddhist philosophy) in 2019 with the aim of supporting learned monks and nuns and helping them to share their knowledge in the Nalanda tradition of Buddhism with a wider audience.

This year, there were ten applicants for the beginner level, of whom six completed the three month course. Lha employed three qualified teachers to enable the inclusion of English grammar, creative writing, comprehension, communication and general usage in the course content.

We also invited prominent guest speakers such as Professor Samdhong Rinpoche's translator, Acharya Dawa Dhondup and Ms Tenzin Palmo who has teaching experience of over 20 years. Acharya Dawa led a two-day session on Translation and Communicating Buddhism in English, and Western Etiquette. Tenzin Palmo took a three-day session on basic English phonetics and pronunciation.



Special Language Classes for Police Officers

This year, we organised Tibetan and Chinese language classes for 22 Indian police officers at the request of the Crime Investigation Department based in Shimla. Twelve of them enrolled in the Tibetan language class which was taught by our Tibetan teacher Lobsang Thachoe, and the remaining ten officers attended the Chinese class which was taken by Ms Sonam Khando who has had experience of teaching Chinese language in the community for many years.



Police team: Tibetan class students with their teacher and Lha Director on the final day of class



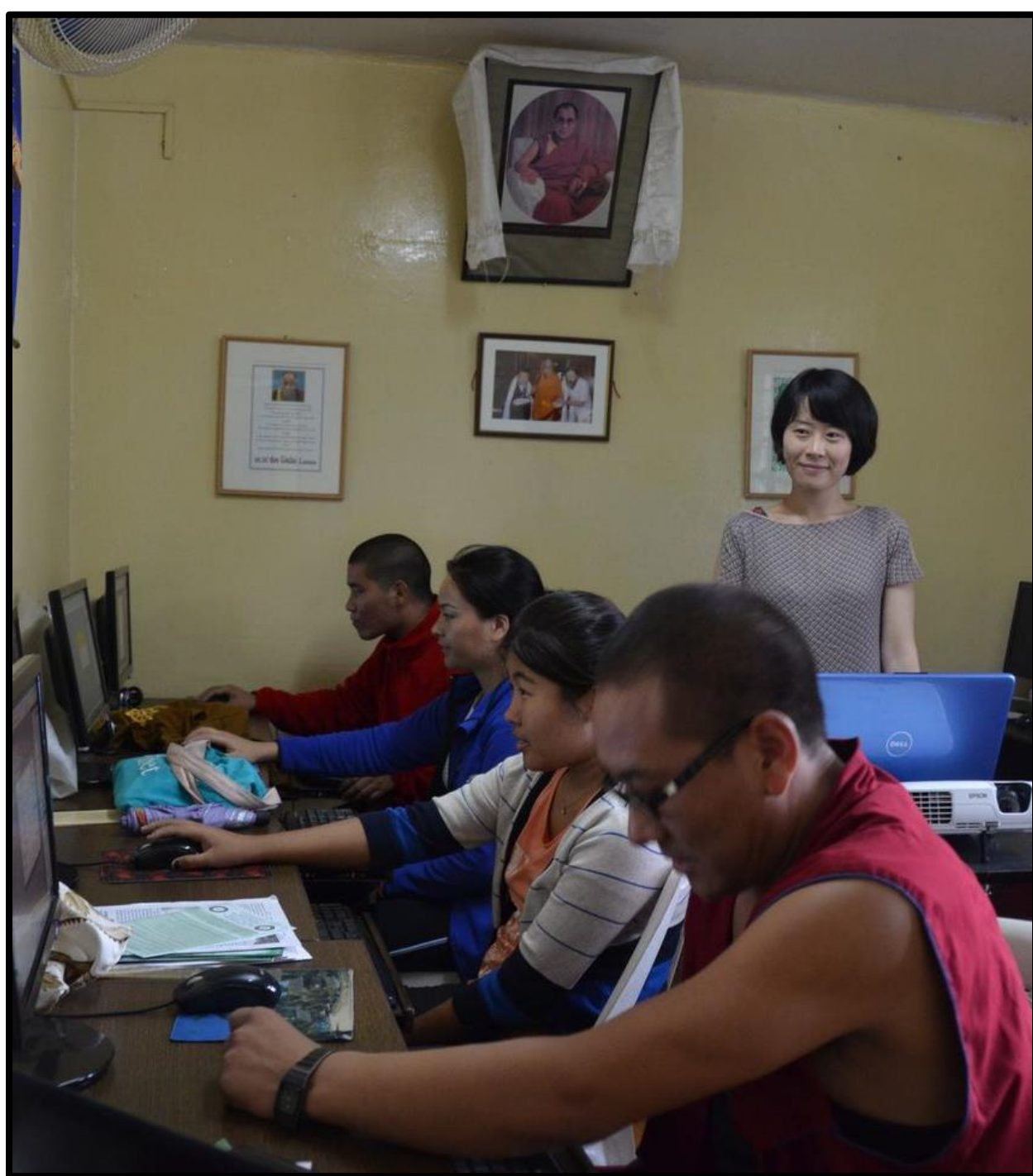
Police team: Chinese class students with their teacher and Lha Director on the final day of class

Computer and IT Class

Courses aimed at building computer skills is a major contribution by Lha to enhance employment opportunities for Tibetans, local Indians, and people from other Himalayan regions, in line with our mission statement. Classes are provided at the beginner and intermediate levels.

At beginner level, the focus is on typing, Microsoft word, Excel and PowerPoint, and intermediate level covers high-level programs including Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign.

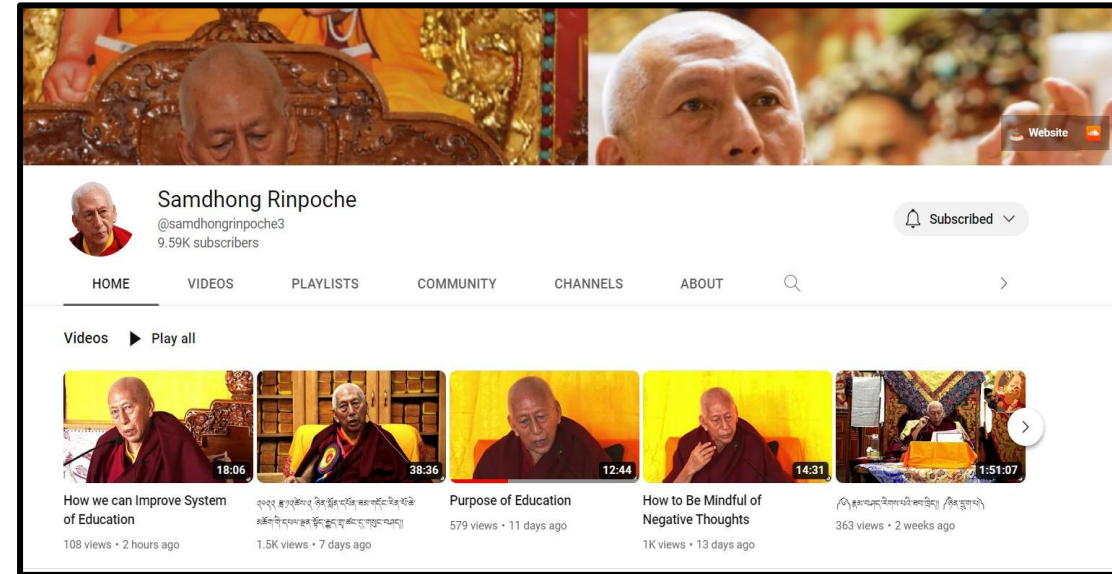
In 2022, 16 students benefited from our computer courses. In total, 3,210 people have benefitted from this program.



Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche's Website

Under the preservation and promotion of Tibetan Language and culture program, Lha maintains and publishes a collection of the writings, speeches, thoughts and teachings of Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche. Lha also manages Rinpoche's *Youtube* channel and other social media pages where his intellectual teachings are made accessible to the general public.

In 2022 Lha collected and published 80 videos of Rinpoche's teachings and speeches, together with 13 articles in Tibetan and 13 in English. 70 audio files have been uploaded onto Rinpoche's *Soudcloud* account.



Summer Immersion Program for Tibetan Students

Lha Charitable Trust organised an Educational Tour Program for 14 teenagers from Sambhota Tibetan School in Miao, Arunachal Pradesh, in June 2022. The program aims to provide students from remote Tibetan settlements in India more exposure to Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) functions and other Tibetan culture and political institutes in Dharamshala.

The students were introduced to the political setup and functioning of the CTA. The visits to Tibet Museum, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archive (LTWA), Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Norbulingka Institute, Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) and Men-Tsee-Khang (Tibetan Medical & Astrological Institute) offered the students valuable insights into different aspects of Tibetan culture, identity, and history. The students also visited major Tibetan NGOs including the Tibetan Youth Congress, Tibetan Women's Association, Gu Chu Sum (A Former Political Prisoners Movement), Students for Free Tibet and Voice of Tibet, to gain awareness on activism. Furthermore, Geshe Lhakdor, director of LTWA gave a talk on Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation. The highlight of the tour was attending a two-day teaching by His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the main temple as, for most of the students, it was their first time experience of seeing His Holiness in person.

Understanding the lack of opportunities to travel and to gain knowledge of Tibetan culture, especially for children from remote settlements, we believe this educational program is of immense potential benefit for our young Tibetans. It was only with financial help from generous individuals and longtime friends of Lha that we were able to implement this program. We hope to be fortunate enough to continue it in the future.

Summer Immersion Program for Tibetan Students



*Students meeting with the Speaker of the Tibetan
Parliament-in-Exile*



*Students observing the manufacture of Tibetan traditional
medicine at Men-Tsee-Khang*

Summer Immersion Program for Tibetan Students



Geshe Lhakdor, Director of LTWA gave a talk, Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation



Students observing a Tibetan traditional Thangka painting in progress

Clean Water Project

Lha has installed two Reverse osmosis / Ultraviolet water filter systems under the Clean Water Project this year providing free access to clean drinking water, making it a total of 31. The 30th water filter was installed at Lhagyal Ri, the pathway leading to a resting place in front of several stupas behind His Holiness the Dalai Lama's residence. People coming for *kora* (circumambulation) this way can have safe drinking water available for free. Eva Shol and Apocolyse Krewe fundraised for this water filter system. The 31st water filter system was installed in Tibetan Children's Village School, Gopalpur at the request of the concerned leadership which was funded by VÔNG TAY VIỆT NAM. This system was placed outdoors near the basket court making it available for everyone in the school. We have also provided annual maintenance to all the 29 previously installed filters in various schools, monasteries and other organisations. The Clean Water Project is supported by donations from various individuals and institutions.



Contact Magazine

Lha published ten issues of *Contact* magazine in 2022. The ten issues of the magazine consisted of 105 feature articles and eight people stories, and we have worked with nine volunteer writers.

Contact focused on up-to-date news of the factual situation inside Tibet such as human rights issues, environmental issues, events and activities of the Tibetan Government-in-exile and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We have also shared the stories of the people who make up the exile Tibetan community through our People stories and introduced various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Tibetan community through NGO stories. *Contact* is a free publication by Lha Charitable Trust. The copies of the magazine are posted to various diplomatic missions in India, and to offices, schools, libraries and organisations in Tibetan communities in various parts of India. Copies are also sent to offices and individual subscribers abroad. It is freely distributed in and around the Dharamshala area. Taiwan Foundation for Democracy has been supporting the printing and postage cost of *Contact*.

This year marks the 25th year of *Contact* and we have celebrated by bringing you the story of *Contact* and the people who have made it happen in the last issue. This format of *Contact* magazine which focused on news will take a break from now onwards.



Tibetan Women's Nursing Scholarship Program

Under the Tibetan Women's Nursing Scholarship Program, Lha provided scholarships to five women pursuing higher education in nursing, aiming to empower Tibetans through access to rightful education. All the five women are from economically challenged families and are determined to achieve a higher education.

The scholarship program started in 2018, providing scholarships to three women in General Nursing. This year, we gave priority to applicants pursuing Post Basic Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSC) as scholarships are not available for this course.

In addition to the Nursing scholarship, we extended our help to another needy student from Sarah College as an exceptional case.



Tibetan Smiles (Dental) & Clear Vision Projects

Since 2014, Lha has provided free dental care and eye care services to nuns and monks in the Dharamshala and Bir region.

In 2022, Lha arranged free dental check-ups for 100 nuns. 49 nuns availed themselves of the services; including fillings, extractions, scaling and root canal treatments. Under the Clear Vision Project, 50 monks received an annual eye examination and 39 received free glasses.

Lha also arranged a dental hygiene awareness program in Gaden Choeling nunnery (Dharamshala) and Payul Chokorling monastery (Bir) and distributed 500 biodegradable bamboo tooth brushes, together with bulk supplies of toothpaste powder.

In total, 1,280 Tibetan refugees and Himalayan people have benefitted from the Smile Dental Care Project and 1,296 people have received free eye check-ups. 382 pairs of glasses have been provided under the Clear Vision Project since its inception.



Renovation of Tibetan Refugee School

Sambhota Tibetan School Ravangla is situated in the North East Indian state of Sikkim. The heavy monsoons in the region over the years have damaged the school buildings, including the classrooms and staff quarters.

The school comes under the administration of Sambhota Tibetan Schools Society (CTA). Although there is a budget for renovation and maintenance, the budget allocated according to the number of students is not enough to cover the cost of the maintenance required.

Donations from various individuals and organisations made it possible to provide financial support to renovate the school. The school has put up a new roof on its staff quarters, repaired all the damaged classrooms, provided with a fresh coat of paint and has acquired a new heavy duty brush cutter to clean the bush and weed on the school campus.



Children's Supply Distribution at Gamru Charitable School

As a way of contributing to the prayers and religious rituals for the health and well-being of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, we have distributed toys, books, paints and other presents to children at Gamru Village School in Dharamshala. These children are from underprivileged families, most of whom are migrant laborers from other Indian states whose children previously had no access to education.

Gamru Village School was founded by Mr. Phillip Adams in 2003 to support these children. The school provides free education to children from migrant laborer families and runs with donations from individuals. It was a great moment for us to witness the joy, excitement, and happiness these kids experienced during this event.



Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are the backbone of Lha, playing a major role in carrying out the day-to-day operation of the programs. The volunteers are offered a platform to explore a new culture and tradition through their direct engagement with the Tibetan Community.

In 2022 over 80 volunteers engaged with different activities, bringing the total number of volunteers from around the world for the past 25 years to 8,691 . Volunteers assist in many projects including computer teaching, writing for *Contact* magazine, teaching language courses in Tibetan, English, French and Chinese, providing one-to-one private language tutoring and assisting in our English Conversation Class.

We are immensely thankful to our volunteers for contributing to Lha and becoming more informed and engaged with the Tibetan Community.



Testimonials

“I didn't get an education when I was young. I came to Dharamshala to work as a babysitter to a Tibetan family. However, they migrated to the west and I was left with nothing, Lha's skill training gave me confidence to search for a job to make my livelihood. Therefore, I am very thankful to the organization for giving me this chance to learn bakery.” – **Dhamchoe Dolma, Bakery Course Student**

“Lha has been instrumental in serving as an agent of support for Tibetan refugees and spreading the peace and tranquility of the Tibetan culture for decades. It is an honor to play a small part in ensuring Tibetan people thrive and spread their generous and compassionate spirit around the globe while continuity to educate and build support to address the oppression and atrocities faced due to China's attempt to annihilate such a treasured culture and people”. – **Shawn Fleming , Volunteer and Donor**

“Being a volunteer at Lha has been a transformative life experience. I came to India with the aspiration to contribute to the Tibetan community. Instead, I realized Lha was contributing so much to my life by showing me what it means to be part of a community through acts of generosity and compassion on a daily basis”. – **Tenzin Pel-lha, Volunteer Teacher**

“The opportunity is precious and rare, hope more students can participate.” –**Special Cuisine Course Student**

Our Donors and Partners



Lha Charitable Trust on behalf of all the beneficiaries would like to thank all the donors, volunteers and partner organizations for all your support.

Thank you all once again!



Our Websites and Social Media Pages

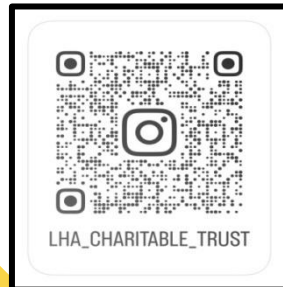
www.lhasocialwork.org

www.contactmagazine.net

www.samdhongrinpoche.com

www.tibetnature.net

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Thank You!

We are extremely grateful to your committed support and generosity over the years. And we know next year will be even better than the last.

We look forward to a successful year ahead.

