



Jamyang Foundation



Aids Education

Jamyang Foundation is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization founded to promote education among women, especially women in the Indian Himalayan border region. Jamyang Foundation began in Dharamsala in 1987 as a literacy program for eight nuns who had recently walked out of Tibet.

Since then, this educational initiative has grown into a network of full-time teacher training programs for women over a vast range of the Indian Himalayas, a variety of outreach programs in the Himalayas. The most recent project is a primary school for Marma tribal girls in Bandarban district in Bangladesh.

Jamyang Foundation is registered as a non-profit organization in the State of California. The Foundation sponsors six study programs in the Himalayas, with a total of 115 students ranging in age from 7 to 63. The students come from remote Himalayan villages in Zaskar, Spiti, and Kinnaur. Although most students enter with little or no schooling, they are enthusiastic in their studies and anxious to compensate for their educational disadvantages. Owing to their diligence over the past 12 years, they have become models for other women in their homelands. Many young girls would like to join the programs, but space is restricted due to limited funding.

The projects sponsored by Jamyang Foundation rely entirely upon contributions from friends and well-wishers around the world. Some projects, such as the educational programs, are on-going. Other projects, such as the AIDS education project, the literacy project, and the water project, are designed to meet special needs. Please click on the projects that interest you!

The incidence of HIV/AIDS in India has reached epidemic proportions. In 2002, four million people in India were found to be infected with HIV/AIDS and the numbers are growing rapidly. It is estimated that 80% of the truck drivers are HIV-positive. Residents in remote regions of the Himalayas are especially vulnerable to infections, due to a lack of information about the virus. The region has only been open to foreign visitors since 1991. With a increased influx of people moving in and out of the region, and minimal healthcare available, the indigenous peoples are at high risk for newly introduced communicable diseases. This project is designed to address the inadequacy of education on health and community welfare available in Himalayan border region by providing education on AIDS and other health-related issues to villagers in the Spiti Valley.

Project Setting

The Spiti Valley is a remote high-altitude desert region located in Himachal Pradesh, northern India, about three-days journey from Delhi. Spiti is mountainous, with small villages located in narrow snow-covered valleys at heights of 12,000-18,000 feet. The villages of Spiti, with a population of 20,000 people, are linked by a meager network of unpaved roads. As a result, basic human services, such as health and education, are rudimentary and often lacking altogether. Health care education is even more rare. Although HIV/AIDS is rampant and quickly spreading in India, few people in Spiti have even heard of the disease. This project aims to address this serious and dangerous threat.

Agriculture, animal husbandry, and dairy farming are the main occupations of the people in Spiti. Due to long, harsh winters, these occupations cannot adequately meet the people's basic needs. Women do a large share of agricultural and animal husbandry operations. In spite of their unending labor, however, the high-altitude fields are not producing enough to meet the needs of their families and inclement weather reduces the planting and harvesting opportunities. Under the circumstances, young men often leave Spiti in search of cash incomes, migrating to cities in the plains. Many women labor alone, under great stress, to provide sustenance for their family.

Traditional values are still strong in this area, which has been home to a unique Buddhist culture for over 1000 years. Loving kindness and care for the young, old, and infirm has been the core of women's spiritual practice over the centuries. Rarely, however, have women emerged as community leaders, due to a lack of educational opportunities. With the Tibetan border now sealed and access to their cultural heartland denied, the threat of cultural extinction in Spiti looms large. Social and economic changes seriously endanger traditional values. It is now more urgent than ever that women be granted equal social and educational opportunities.

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Sponsoring Organization

The project will be staffed by students and advisors from Jamyang Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation registered in the State of California in 1988. The basic aim and objective of Jamyang Foundation is to provide education programs especially for women, and to help them develop as teachers, counselors, community workers, and spiritual guides to others, especially women. Emphasis is on enabling women to progress spiritually and intellectually, and helping them gain all the practical skills required for self-sufficiency.

The Jamyang Foundation Programs

Jamyang Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization registered in the State of California that is dedicated to improving the status and quality of life for women and girls in developing countries. Jamyang Foundation has established innovative study programs at eight locations in the Indian Himalayas, conducts educational outreach in eight other Himalayan locations, and has recently established a school for Marma tribal girls in Bangladesh.. The students in these programs come from diverse ethnic backgrounds: Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, Mongolia, and various regions of India. Some of the students walked out of Tibet to escape religious persecution in their homeland, arriving in India penniless and illiterate.

Students in the Jamyang Foundation programs have a rare opportunity to study philosophy, Tibetan, English, Hindi, history, healthcare, ethics, and a variety of vocational skills. These education and training programs enable women to initiate similar programs in various Himalayan localities. The programs empower indigenous women to help preserve their distinctive and endangered Buddhist cultures. Training in health care, environmental protection, weaving, knitting, subsistence agriculture, and marketing and administrative skills equip the students to contribute badly needed expertise to their communities.

In 1985, a group of courageous young women from Pangmo village took the initiative to establish Yangchen Choling, the first school for traditional and contemporary learning especially for women. Originally located in caves above the village, the students struggled to build teachers' quarters, classrooms, and student housing with their own hands, funded by donations provided by Jamyang Foundation. Sherab Choling Institute, the second school for women in Spiti, was established in 1993.

The work of establishing these schools has not been easy for the women of Spiti. Plagued by poverty, they face many obstacles. Gradually, through sheer determination, these obstacles are being overcome and the women are overcoming their educational and social disadvantages. As they gain education, training, and confidence through the Jamyang Foundation programs, the women are becoming community leaders, making valuable contributions toward cultural preservation, environmental protection, health, and community development.

Methodology

The Jamyang Foundation HIV/AIDS Education Project in August 2003 will use a variety of methods to encourage health awareness among the people in Spiti. First, using a video projector, powered by a solar panel, the project staff will screen videos on HIV/AIDS and other topics onto a large screen outdoors in 22 villages in the region. Next, the project will facilitate dialogues between healthcare professionals, students from Yangchen Choling and Sherab Choling, community organizers, and the villagers to answer questions and clarify the information provided in the videos. In addition, it will provide publications, resources, and local contacts for obtaining further healthcare information. Finally, it will train local staff members to conduct follow-up programs and to provide health education programs for the villagers in neighboring areas.

Information about HIV/AIDS is so prevalent in western countries that people are often unaware that, in the absence of education, many people in the world today are still unaware of the current global AIDS crisis and many have never even heard of AIDS. The need that will be addressed by this project is to design health education programs that are culturally relevant, engaging, sustainable, and self-perpetuating.

Project Objectives

The goal of Jamyang Foundation and the students trained and educated through its programs is to serve the community. Currently they provide counseling, secular and religious education, and cultural literacy programs for the benefit of their local villages. The critical need now is to provide education in urgent health problems threatening the area. These programs would inform the residents of the villages about the existence, causes, and communicability, and prevention of HIV/AIDS. In addition, the project will provide information and consultation about other urgent issues: substance abuse, domestic violence, and dental hygiene. The project will also provide resources for other health-related issues.

The short-term goal of the project is to create awareness of the dangers of HIV/AIDS and other health-related issues. The long-range goal is to provide resources for ongoing training and education projects and to train women to disseminate information and organize healthcare seminars for the benefits of the people of the region.

Staff

Project Manager:	Karma Lekshe Tsomo
Teaching Specialists:	Jennifer Lane, Robyn Maloise
Health Consultants:	Suzan Koa, Erica Linderberger
Interpreters:	Tsering Dolma Mullens, Dorje Tsering
Interns:	Pema Chukit, Dolma Tsering
Transportation:	Norbu Dhondup
Video Dubbing:	Miles Johnston

Information

For further information on how you can support this project, contact:

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Website: <http://www.jamyang.org>

Budget for Aids Education Project
03/24/03

Category	Item	Estimated Cost	Notes
Equipment			
	Video Projector	1950	NTSC format (Voice & Audio Sales)
	Screen	570	5' x 7'6" (B&H)
	VCR	120	NTSC format (Voice & Audio Sales)
	Solar Energy System	600	Solar panel, battery pack, cables (Brian)
	Health Subject Videos	350	Dental, AIDS, reproductive health, substance abuse, domestic violence 10 tapes (5 topics 2 copies) x \$35 (tapes and postage) Visual Aids 90 White boards(2 x \$15=\$30), dry_erase pens (20x \$1.50=\$30), poster board (10 x \$1=\$10) and marking pens (20 x \$1=\$20)
Transportation			
	Delhi	400	Delhi_Spiti=2 days x 2 jeeps @ \$100 a day per Jeep (\$400) Spiti 1430 2 Jeeps (1 in kind donation, rent other) 22 villages= Jeep rental with driver and gas \$1100, gas for in kind Jeep (\$15 a day)=\$330
	International Travel	in kind donation	Tsering (Canada) \$1600, Robyn (Hawaii) \$1200, Erica (Hawaii) \$1200, Jennifer (California) \$1350, Tsomo (California) \$1350, Suzan (Singapore) \$800 *Other Health Consultant (California) \$1400
Translation Services			
	Translations of Videos	400	Tsering Dolma Mullens 40 hours @ \$10 hour Interpretation of Presentations 440 Tsering Dolma Mullens, Dorje Tsering (22 days x \$10 a day x 2 people =\$440)
Housing			
	Delhi	80	1 night stay=4 hotel rooms @ \$20 (\$80)
	Shimla	80	1 night stay=4 hotel rooms @ \$20 (\$80)
	Spiti	in kind donation	22 nights stay=4 hotel rooms @ \$2 a day (\$176)

Food		
Delhi_Spiti	288	8 people x 3 days (2 days traveling) x \$12 (\$288)
Spiti	880	8 people x 22 days x \$5 (\$880)
Staff		
Health Consultants (2)	in kind donation	Suzan Koa, Erica Linderberger
Project Manager (1)	in kind donation	Karma Lekshe Tsomo
Driver (1)	155	Norbu Dhondup, (Within Spiti) \$45 a month, meals=\$5 x 22 days=\$110
Interns (2)	in kind donation	Pema Chukit, Dolma Tsering
Teaching Specialists (2)	in kind donation	Jennifer Lane and Robyn Maloise
Video		
Dubbing of Videos	160	Miles Johnston (16 hours x \$10/hr.= \$160)
Duplication of Videos	290	PAL system 10 videos x original copy \$13 (\$130) 10 videos x 2 subsequent copies \$8 each (\$160)
Blank Tapes for Production (Digital and VHS)	250	10 tapes x \$25 =\$250
TOTAL	8533	
US\$1 = 48 Indian rupees		