

Our Projects

Lha's primary goal is to provide meaningful social services, such as free education, computer skills courses, vocational training, health and environmental education and service, volunteer coordination, cultural exchanges, free books, medicine and clothing distribution. The services of Lha are open to Tibetan refugees as well as the local Indian population and people from the Himalayan regions.

Lha offers courses, training programs, and services to the local community of Dharamsala, India. These include:

- ✓ Language Classes – English (5 levels), Chinese (3 levels), French (2 levels) and a daily English conversation classes
- ✓ Computer training (3 levels)
- ✓ Cultural exchange
- ✓ Vocational training - Photography and massage courses
- ✓ Health and environmental training, services, and programs
- ✓ Community soup kitchen
- ✓ Medicine, book and clothing distribution.

Every year the number of new students and variety of classes and social services increase. New additions to our services this past year were the community soup kitchen and the dental care project. Lectures and projects addressing environmental and health issues are also offered at Lha.

At Lha courses and services on offer to tourists include:

- ✓ Volunteer Opportunities
- ✓ Tibetan language class
- ✓ Tibetan cooking class
- ✓ Traditional Tibetan art class
- ✓ Cultural exchange
- ✓ Massage treatments/courses.
- ✓ Meditation and yoga

At Lha there are many volunteer opportunities for people traveling from abroad. Each month we work with 15-20 volunteers, and over 4000 people from 37 different countries have worked with Lha since its creation.

1) Cultural Exchange

Our Cultural Exchange Program continues to grow, and this year we had nine schools and universities from the United States and France participate. Our goal for the program is to help the foreign exchange students learn about Tibetan culture and life in exile in a meaningful and interactive way. Our program matches the foreign exchange students with a cultural exchange partner from our Tibetan community, usually a language student at Lha. The program also includes lectures, volunteer opportunities and tours for the foreign exchange students.

2) Vocational Training

Vocational training courses for Massage and Photography were offered this year. These courses are run by industry professionals who volunteer their time to provide meaningful skills to a group of Tibetans. The individuals who receive these courses receive a certificate, and skills to practice on their own.

3) Community Soup Kitchen

This year Lha opened the first community soup kitchen in McLeod Ganj. The grand opening was on July 6th, and commemorated the 76th birthday of H.H. Dalai Lama. Our goals for the soup kitchen are to provide healthy meals for those in financial need, and also to provide information about nutritious eating habits in our new living environment. Every day between forty and fifty Tibetans in need receive a nutritious meal for free, or for 15rps if they can afford it. The soup kitchen is run out of our new building, the Ahimsa House.

4) Health Care Provision

Due to the success of the health care program in 2009, Lha has continued and expanded its services this year, and provided over 100 individuals with dental or eye health care. We continue to provide an optometrist appointment, eye drops and glasses for those in financial need. Our new program this year allowed Tibetans to visit the dentist and also receive dental health education.

5) Clothing Distribution

This year Lha has accepted thousands of donations from tourists and other donors. In conjunction with the Dharamsala Rotary Club, Lha has distributed over 2000 articles of clothing, medicine and other donated items, in lower Dharamsala to the financially disadvantaged Indian community. Lha also distributed a further 2000 articles of clothing, winter coats and footwear to the Tibetan community.

6) Language Classes

Everyday hundreds of students study many languages through Lha's language education programs. Lha provides the Tibetan community with six free different levels of English classes daily, a beginner and intermediate French class, as well as three levels of Chinese classes. Our courses are supplemented with individual tutoring. Tutoring can also be provided for Spanish and German languages.

7) Computer Class

Students interested in gaining or improving their computer skills can participate in one of three different levels of computer classes. They range from basic skills, like using how to use a keyboard and use the internet, to more advanced skills, like how to use different software programs.

8) Environmental Programs

Every year Lha initiates environmental awareness activities and provides environmental services to our community. In the past we have organized environmental clean-ups, garbage collection, installed garbage bins and provided wildlife conservation education. In anticipation of the Dalai Lama's teachings in December 2011, we cleaned around the temple grounds. We also manage a Tibetan language environmental website, located at www.tibetnature.net.

9) Contact Magazine

Lha also partners with Dharamsala's monthly community newspaper, Contact. Contact provides information about Tibetan issues including news on the current situation in Tibet, H. H. The Dalai Lama's teaching dates and events, and also services and volunteer opportunities available in the Dharamsala region. The Contact newspaper is published monthly with 500 to 600 copies and is distributed for free.

10) Volunteer opportunities

Every year Lha works with volunteers from around the world, with many different skill sets. Since Lha's creation it has worked with over 4000 volunteers from 37 countries. Lha welcomes all volunteers with all skill sets, and also particularly appreciates individuals who are: language, computer, yoga or massage instructors; fundraiser and grant writers; computer and IT professionals; human rights, legal, environmental, medical and healthcare professionals; chefs and cooks; and journalists, librarians and web designers.

All programs offered at Lha are free and aim to directly benefit the community of Dharamsala. Brief Reports