

# A Piece of Dharamsala, Lha Charitable Trust





**Lha Charitable Trust**  
**Institute for Social Work & Education**

**Lha** is a resource of education and knowledge that provides meaningful, multi-leveled social and educational services for the benefit of others.



## WHO WE ARE

- Lha Charitable Trust (Lha) is a grassroots non-governmental social work organization based in Dharamsala, India. Lha aims to provide vital resources for Tibetan refugees, the local Indian population, and people from the Himalayan regions.
- Founded in 1997 and registered as a charitable trust by the H.P. Indian Government in 2005, Lha has continuously provided community services to those in need for over fourteen years.

**Lha** is a sacred Tibetan word that means awakened state of mind and the fundamental nature of goodness.



## OBJECTIVES

- To provide Tibetan refugees with educational and health services, as well as the skills and assistance needed to build a new life in exile.
- To facilitate meaningful mutual learning and cultural exchange experience between Tibetans, volunteers and groups of students who visit from countries around the world.
- To create awareness about the Tibetan refugee situation and preserve the endangered Tibetan culture.
- To generate an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation within the community.



**Lha** is unique in the range and quality of programs and services it provides on a daily basis to over 250 people, while hosting 15-25 volunteers every month.



# LHA'S PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## Free Community Programs & Services

- Language Classes
- Community Newspaper
- Computer Classes & IT Workshops
- Community Libraries
- Vocational Training
- Clothing & Book Distribution
- Health & Hygiene Initiatives
- Eye Exams & Glasses
- Environmental Awareness & Aid Initiatives
- Community Soup Kitchen & Clean Water

## Services for Foreign Visitors

- Tibetan Language
- Tibetan Art
- Massage Treatment & Course
- Tibetan Cooking
- Tibetan Home-Stay



# LHA'S FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- **Language Classes**

- Five English, three Chinese, three French and Tibetan classes at varying ability levels are taught daily, servicing around 150 students. We also provide tutoring in Spanish and German.



- **Free Community Newspaper**

- Contact Magazine provides tourists and locals with information on current Tibetan issues, local events, volunteer opportunities and more.





# LHA'S FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- Computer Classes & IT Workshops

- Basic and advanced computer training courses are taught, aiming to provide refugees with viable job skills for the future.



- Community Libraries

- Lha runs a library in McLeod Ganj allowing students, volunteers, tourists, and the public to borrow books free of cost.



# LHA'S FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- Vocational Training

- Lha provides free vocational training (IT, photography, yoga & massage therapy courses).



- Clothing & Book Distribution

- Lha collects clothing, books and other donations, which the Dharamsala Rotary Club distributes to approximately 100 needy individuals per month.



# LHA'S FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- Health & Hygiene Initiatives

- Lha facilitates different initiatives to improve the health and hygiene of the McLeod Ganj community. Some examples include HIV/AIDS workshops, medical donations, and providing water pumps which provide clean water to slum areas.

- Eye Exam & Glasses

- In 2009 and 2011 Lha provided 191 members of the community with eye examinations, of which 146 were provided with glasses, free of charge.





# LHA'S FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- Environmental Awareness & Aid Initiatives
  - Lha initiates activities such as community clean-ups, trash collection and education about wildlife conservation. Lha also created [www.tibetnature.com](http://www.tibetnature.com) about environmental issues within Tibet.



- Community Soup Kitchen & Clean Water
  - In 2011, Lha opened a community soup kitchen to serve between 40 and 50 people daily, with the goals to both provide food to the financially disadvantaged and to provide nutritional education.



# LHA'S FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## Clean Water Project

The filter system is an RO+UV+ UF and TTS, considered one of the best filtered water systems available in the area. This filtration system has a 500-liter capacity steel tank and can provide more than 100 liters of clean and safe drinking and cooking water for Tibetan refugees. We have installed four water filter systems in three schools in Dharamsala and are planning to do more.....



## Social Service Booth

Lha's social services and information booth was set up during H.H. the Dalai Lama's teaching. We provide secure storage of personal items such as cameras and phones which are not allowed inside the teaching; we also provide vital information, free distribution of Contact Magazine, as well as pamphlets and fliers regarding the environment and health and most importantly the Tibetan issues.





## GET INVOLVED

Lha offers a wide range of long-term, short-term and drop-in volunteer opportunities at no cost for individuals or groups. While taking part as a volunteer with Lha, you will be immersed in the fascinating culture of the people you are serving, develop friendships, learn about issues facing the Tibetan refugee community and create positive change in someone else's life.

Ways to share your knowledge and skills:

- Language, computers, yoga and massage instructors
- Fundraisers and grant writers
- Computer and IT professionals
- Human rights, legal, environmental, medical and healthcare professionals
- Journalists, librarians and web designers
- Chefs and cooks



**Lha's commitment remains constant:  
*to help the Tibetan people survive and  
prosper in their new home and to preserve  
their profoundly unique culture.***



# LHA'S VOLUNTEER RECEPTION & ORIENTATION

## Volunteer Reception

- Lha's Reception service helps volunteers with their arrival in New Delhi and the onward travel to Dharamsala.

### Reception service includes:

- Meeting on arrival in Delhi airport
- Taxi transfer to Majnu Ka Tilla
- 1 night hotel stay in Majnu Ka Tilla
- Information about restaurants, money exchange and internet
- Buss ticket to Mcleod Ganj



## Volunteer Orientation

- Lha's Orientation service helps volunteers with cultural awareness and specific subtleties of Tibetan communication.

### Orientation service includes:

- Cultural orientation for awareness and sensitivity
- Background information and specifics about Lha
- What to expect from Tibetan organizations and what they expect from you
- Accommodation assistance
- Tips from previous and current volunteers
- An *Insider's Guide* to the best places to eat, shop and meet other volunteers
- Walking tour, including historical and cultural sites
- Information on places for meditation, philosophy, yoga, cooking, language and more!

# LHA'S SERVICES FOR FOREIGN VISTORS

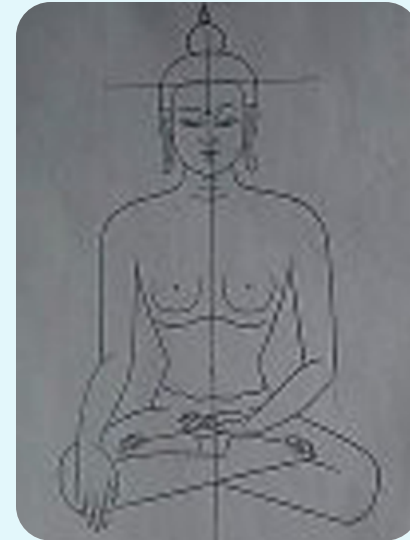
- Tibetan Language

- Tibetan Language courses at both beginner and intermediate levels.



- Tibetan Art

- Traditional Tibetan art courses taught by a local artist.



# LHA'S SERVICES FOR FOREIGN VISTORS

- **Massage Treatment & Course**

- Lha offers massage treatments by a professional therapist, as well as certification course.



- **Yoga & Meditation**

- Lha offers Ashtanga and Hattha yoga classes for visitors, Monday to Friday.





# LHA'S SERVICES FOR FOREIGN VISTORS

- Tibetan Cooking

- Tibetan Cooking classes from a qualified teacher, which teach the art of making delicious momos, thukpa and tingmos.



- Tibetan Home-stay

- Lha arranges long term or short term home-stays with refugee families, giving visitors the chance to experience the Tibetan-in-exile lifestyle.

**Lha** seeks to generate an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation within the community by tending to the needs of the impoverished and underprivileged.



## CULTURAL EXCHANGE

- The cultural exchange program involves each visiting student being paired off with a *Mutual Learning Partner* – a Tibetan English student at Lha of similar age. The students are able to share stories about their lives and experiences, while engaging in social work and other meaningful activities. Students also get to visit the homes of their partner, meet other members of their family and make friends in the Tibetan refugee community.
- In 2002 Lha's Cultural Exchange Program was born:
  - Lha has been welcoming growing numbers of visiting school groups each year
  - Every year over 75 students participate in the program
  - Lha works with student groups every summer from Tulane University, Centenary College, Loyola University, Rustic Path Way, Lifework International and other US universities and high schools
  - Student groups generally come between May-October, at this time of year students enjoy excellent weather in this beautiful region
  - Length of stay for students varies from a week to a month





## LHA'S SUMMARY REPORT 2003-2012

**30200**

Free books have been distributed to Tibetan and local Indian schools and libraries

**29031**

Articles of clothing Distributed to Indian and Tibetan Communities

**8718**

Students enrolled in Language Classes

**5187**

Total number of Volunteers from 40 different Countries

**2322**

Students Graduated from Computer Courses

**1365**

Attended Tibetan Art, Cooking and Language Classes

**789**

Students Participated in Mutual Learning Exchange

**160**

Graduated from Massage Courses

**485**

Students enrolled in Yoga Classes

**700-1000**

Contact Magazine( Monthly editions published)

**67**

Graduated from Photography Courses

## IMPORTANT INITIATIVES, REPORT FOR 2012

- 2300 Articles of Clothing Distributed to Indian & Tibetan Communities
- 2476 Students Attended Language Classes
- 699 New Students Enrolled for Language Classes
- 546 New Volunteers
- Organized Cultural Exchange Programs for 9 University and High School Groups from the USA and Mexico 112 students participated.
- Had 322 students attend Intermediate & Beginner computer classes
- Provided recommendation letters to 176 of our students. The Indian Government requires letters
- Had 120 international visitors enroll in Tibetan Cooking, Tibetan Art, Tibetan & Language classes.
- Provided an Eye and Dental Care to over 108 Tibetan Refugees
- 40-50 financially disadvantaged people receive daily lunch at soup kitchen and 105 needy have benefited since its opening in July, 2011
- Installation of three new water filtration systems in three schools, serving around 600 children, with clean water for both drinking and cooking needs
- [www.tibetnature.net](http://www.tibetnature.net) was launched (the first ever environmental website in Tibetan language)


**Lha** is made possible through the tireless dedication of our staff and volunteers that share their valuable time and energy.



## DONATE

- The generous financial support from individuals, volunteers and organizations allow Lha to provide a variety of FREE social and education services to the local community. Lha works hard to operate with minimum administrative and programmatic costs to produce the maximum output, but in order to contend with the ever-growing community, we depend on donors like you.
- By making a donation, you can support Lha's efforts to:
  - Provide free social and education services to the Tibetan refugee and local community
  - Expand and improve our programs
  - Support Tibetan refugees with educational and health services, as well as the skills and assistance needed to build a new life in exile
  - Create awareness about the Tibetan refugee situation and preserve the endangered Tibetan culture
  - Material donations are also crucial to aid and support the local community all items are accepted such as; medicine, clothing, books, new or used computers, classroom supplies, kitchen equipment and more





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