

Annual Impact Report 2014/15



U K R E G I S T E R E D C H A R I T Y N U M B E R 1 1 0 3 8 5 9



What did we do over the last year?

Together with our beneficiaries we highlighted difficult issues preventing access to their education. We addressed these problems using traditional, innovative and creative methods, resulting in positive whole community changes. Our 3 fold approach involves:

WELFARE

Generating access to psychosocial support, healthcare, nutrition and clean water

1

EDUCATION

Ensuring better access to, and quality of, education in Nepali State Schools

2

COMMUNITY

Making a local state school a central heartbeat of the community it serves

3

The Earthquakes of April and May 2015 were devastating for every FtL community. Many children witnessed terrifying devastation, were trapped in collapsed buildings, some lost friends and relatives. Our team were on the ground facilitating emergency relief in the worst hit FtL school communities. Despite these challenges there is real hope for the future, and these 3 approaches are at the heart of creating positive and lasting change.



13 schools participating = 260 young leaders making their voices heard and directing positive change



406 families participated in outreach work, and family welfare 87% children now feel more welcome at school than in 2012



More than 1600 children in quality education, with improved learning environments, their teacher's trained.

What have we done? What has changed? What have we learned?



Welfare

Using creative and informal techniques our **weekly drama workshops in 13 schools** included careful monitoring of each student's situation at home, school and work, and tailored the various services they need accordingly. *272 children who otherwise would have had no support were supported by care groups.* In the next step we need to ensure that the service is better equipped and trained.



We provide **monthly Art Therapy sessions** to young students who are experiencing emotional difficulties, we use drama to build communication skills and confidence in each student. *98% of participating children said they felt happier after attending than before.* More workshops would have had a larger impact. Qualified Art Therapists are a rarity in Nepal so we need to secure further training for staff to lead therapeutic sessions.

Nutrition: We provide **daily school lunch** for 116 children, and ensure that available resources enable *100% of Act on Education students have access to a daily lunch.* Children who are hungry do not work as well, teachers report categorically that the children display better concentration now they all have lunch.

Clean water: in 2015 we ensured the 67 families in the catchment of Mendho School had a **clean safe drinking water system.** We provided *2 schools with funds for purchasing daily clean safe water for students.* We facilitated 2 schools to access clean water systems from local safe water organisations. Some of the 13 schools have no water supply at all, we aim to apply for further funding to ensure a clean water supply to all our students.



“Lunch is always with dhal and vegetables, now we have proper food every day, it had been very difficult to concentrate when so hungry all the time”

Community

One of the major barriers we have found in every government school is the lack of value of a school within a community. Parents and employers all too often find it necessary to keep children working and earning as opposed to going to school and participating in education. Shifting this perception has been a challenging process.



Veard Thapa's wife and family

“Without Freedom to Learn we were alone. You were the first that came and worked with us. Our homes and our school are together now”
Veard Thapa

Whilst many NGOs and donors have attempted to address problems through capital projects and opening private schools, these are not long term sustainable solutions, and do not address the structural problems evident in the Nepali education system.

In contrast our pilot project in 2013 ‘Act on Education’, a creative community building programme, has explicitly demonstrated that an approach which empowers young people and gives them the skills and platform to articulate their concerns with a **whole community approach** changes school structures from the inside out. It enables school personnel, students and staff to build relationships with parents, guardians, employers, educators and service providers, proves an effective catalyst for addressing many of the problems the children face on a daily basis, improving disadvantaged children’s lives and well-being.

Work of this nature is proven to have a direct impact on support for attendance; school facilities; children’s working hours; appreciation of the importance of education; and ultimately access to, and quality of primary education for children.

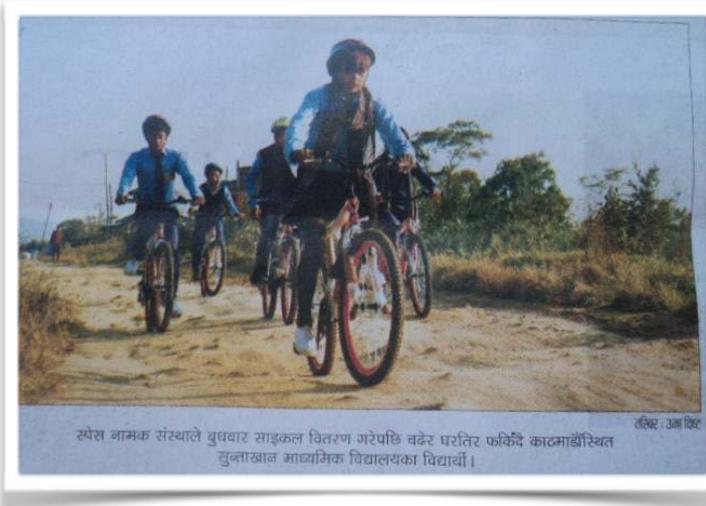
“Our approaches to education within the school were very different back in 2012. Many of the teachers would spend much of the working week away from class without guidance and monitoring, we had an attendance rate of 67%, young girls regularly dropping out at age 13. Alongside FtL, the young leaders and our staff have worked together to turn this around, the better communication with families mean girls attendance over 13 yrs is up to 89%, as well as overall attendance significantly higher. Our staff work together now and their morale is high, the ethos of the school has changed positively and productively. And last year for the first time we had 100% SLC pass rate. The reputation of our school is very different now, word has spread we are a good school.”

Mukesh Sapkota, *Headteacher, Suntakhan School*



Education

Ride for Life: The **50 distributed bicycles** have been maintained and training workshops for staff and students have taken place to ensure it is a sustainable programme. Teacher Menuka Battchan says "The bikes have put our school on the map, local newspapers have reported the programme, there is **increased kudos of the school** here now." We have learned that the bicycles are difficult to maintain without more staff involved and young people need more incentives to keep the bikes going independently, without relying on school and project staff.



We have employed 1 **full time Spoken English teacher** for Sunitakhan school, each class engages in an hours lesson per day: **247 children practice spoken English daily**. The top 2 year groups were able to conduct assessments with our UK PM in English, last year this would have been impossible.



We have facilitated more than **62 mediation meetings** between staff, unravelling existing political conflicts, increasing morale within each school staff team, resulting in **better classroom ethos** and more a relaxed teaching atmosphere. These meetings need to be more regular, so we will fund more staff in order to make this possible.



Improving school facilities: We have ensured that 6 classrooms to date have carpets, plastered and painted walls, work displayed, and more to **improve learning environments** for more than 130 students. We have rebuilt **2 school toilet blocks**, we have tiled 6 existing toilets, and set up cleaning systems for 2 schools. We have provided **217 children with essential school materials** - books, stationery and school bags.



Act on Education: A training resource for Creative Community Building in Schools

Despite substantial foreign aid for post-conflict peacebuilding, there remains significant barriers for children from disadvantaged backgrounds to participating in an acceptable standard of education. Continuing political instability and corruption means government schools are extensively under resourced. The lack of adequate toilet facilities particularly for girls, poor or no access to drinking water and inadequate nutrition all have a direct impact on school access, performance and attendance. More complex problems include gender and caste discrimination, instances of sexual harassment and violence by teachers and employers, and children being prevented from going to school as they are delivered by parents to employers in the domestic labour industry.

To address this The Erach and Roshin Sadri Foundation has funded FtL to develop **a schools community engagement model to enhance access to, and quality of, education** for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds; low caste/tribal groups and poor migrant families in particular. Alongside teachers, parents and young participants we produced a 100 page Resource Guide supported by short films on DVD and a two day training programme, information online, an ongoing advocacy campaign, and a telephone support line. The resource illustrates an accessible model and practice for increasing the participation in and quality of education for some of the most disadvantaged young people in Nepali government schools.

“Act on Education is changing schools using grass roots holistic approaches and resources that already exist within each community. Significant positive changes can and have been therefore made without the need for large funding grants” Joey Owen, UK Project Manager, FtL

“Act on Education is creating wonderful opportunities for grass root level Nepali children through their different programs. The FtL AoE team presence has been working as a burning candle, giving light to a number of Nepali children and local people. They are inspiring and encouraging young students to face the challenges of everyday life through attaining better education. ” - Shree Krishna Thapa, Co-Founder/Executive Director, Rural Community Foundation Nepal





“Act on Education is an excellent document to engage facilitators and makes us think of every and each aspect we should consider as teachers while teaching. Colours and pictures make it much more understandable and states a proven way to approach teachers as possible leaders. It is not easy to prove how this way to educate provides good results, by transforming the way we are in classrooms, we are removing the roots of the stale banking education system. Step by step this document will awaken many changes in each school! Children and teenagers are open to listening, to start thinking, and be more creative. It is time to provide as many tools as we can to make that possible. There is not only one door to choose in a school setting, and with this document you are opening as many doors as [the participants] can imagine.” Miquel Zamora, Teacher and Facilitator at Edulift, Kathmandu.

How we have grown



In 2011
 1 facilitator
 1 teacher trained
 18 young leaders



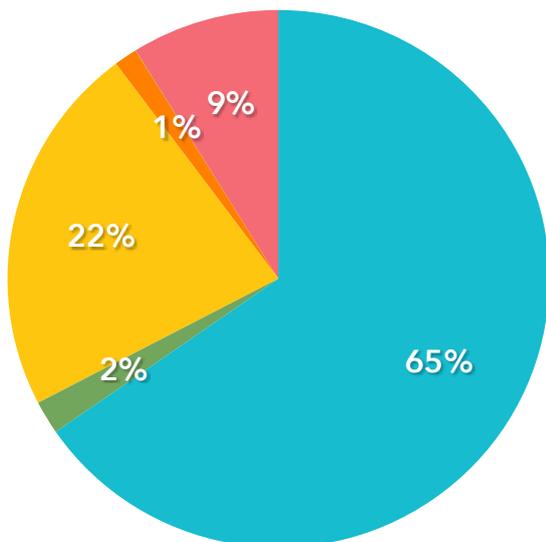
In 2013
 3 facilitators
 5 teachers trained
 124 young leaders



In 2015
 5 facilitators
 13 teachers trained
 1530 young leaders

Income 2014/15

- Public fundraising
- Grants
- Bank interest
- Regular donations
- General donations
- In kind

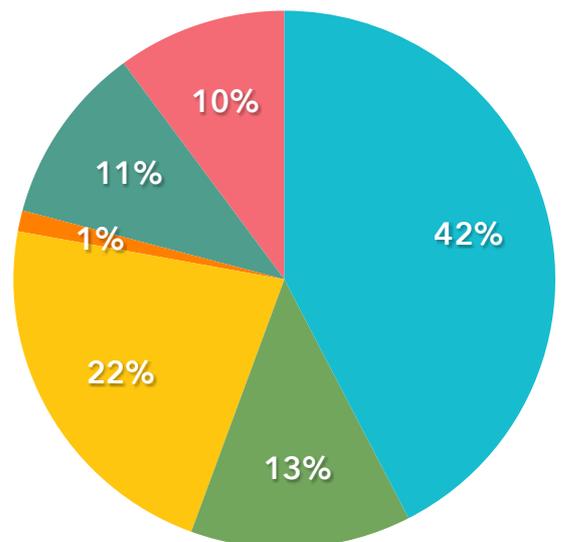


Total monetary Income: £48,836.58

Total in kind: £4,730

Expenditure 2014/15

- Earthquake Relief
- Act on Education
- student sponsorship
- Education projects
- Core running costs
- In kind



Total Expenditure: £42,033.02

Total in kind: £4,730

Earthquake Relief May-August 2015



For 8 weeks after the earthquake **250 children** in the village of Kushadevi, Kavre, had somewhere safe to be every day. The club supported the young students through traumatic times in a welcoming, safe and creative environment, with clean safe drinking water and a daily meal. There was Art and Drama Therapy workshops, health support, sports clubs, music and dance lessons with various experts in their field coming in from the city and beyond. Not only were the children able to confront their fears in a nurturing and safe environment, but their parents were able to take more time to begin re-building their homes and livelihoods.



FtL were able to supply **406 families** with enough **food and shelter** to survive the Monsoon.



Freedom to Learn team built semi- permanent shelters for more than **20 families** these homes will last for more than 5 years, are water tight, warm, cosy and safe against the tremors that are still being felt on a regular basis.



FtL's team of UK volunteer builders to and an experienced WASH expert built 2 Temporary Learning Centres enabling over **300 children** to go back to school. These will last for well over 5years. The FtL team also have supplied safe drinking water to more than **70 of those school families.**



As our staff presented one to father Ramesh he said that **"every knot is made with love"** - we agree!

Not only do monetary gifts make a difference: A knitting group created a woolly selection of blankets and hats for children living through the winter in shelters.

