

Dear friends,

Last fall, while walking through the mountains bordering Tibet, I was struck by the faces of the children I met. They were so poor and yet they showed the playfulness and curiosity of children everywhere. And also, behind those faces, in their eyes, there was a pleading, lost quality. It is so hard to see that in ones so young. Already lost.

Until I walked into the little village of Halji in the Limi Valley. The children in that town seemed quite different – more centered, more disciplined, healthier even. It was apparent in their bodies and faces, a sense of self-respect. I asked why this village was so distinct? Only a half -day walk away the children seemed so forlorn! In this one tiny village the town's leaders had managed to build a two-room school and wrangled a teacher from the Nepalese government. The children, both boys and girls, had been able to go to school for two years until the government payments stopped and the teacher had to leave. Without teachers or supplies, they were trying to continue, to gather the children together to learn.

I resolved to find a way to serve these children, and those in nearby villages by helping the local leaders to provide for supplies and teacher salaries. Although there were a few contacts, it was not clear how to implement this project until Michael Daube of CITTA stepped into the picture.

I have known Michael for many years and have followed the work of CITTA in India, Nepal, and Mexico. This year, while travelling with Joan Halifax and her medical team, I visited his wonderful clinic in the same area of Nepal as the Limi Valley. When I asked him about the possibility of helping with this rather modest project of schooling for the children, he agreed to investigate and came back with a detailed plan. Since CITTA is already staffed locally, we can begin quickly and with confidence.

The amazing thing is, this project will not cost very much to implement. With very little, we can make a huge difference to the lives of these children, caught in the transition of cultures. Please join me in this joint effort of the Village Zendo and CITTA to open the joys of study and discovery. Please donate to this cause through Just Give (<https://www.justgive.org/nonprofits/donate.jsp?ein=13-3922787>) with the notation: LIMI SCHOOL FUND.

Thank you, in appreciation,

Roshi



Citta Nepal and Limi Valley

Citta is a non-profit dedicated to supporting remote regions in the world suffering from poverty and lack of infrastructure. Through our experiences, we've found that through healthcare, education and economic development we can nurture better stability and opportunities to so many families in these communities.

With its ancient culture and the Himalayas as a backdrop, landlocked Nepal has a romantic image. It is nonetheless one of the world's poorest countries and is struggling to overcome the legacy of a 10-year Maoist insurrection. According to the UN, around 40% of Nepalese live in poverty. Humla District, which lies in the far northwest of Nepal, is by far the country's poorest and most remote region. The district has no roads or wheels and there isn't enough food to support its population. Basic supplies need to be transported by air, which many times doubles the cost.



In 2004, Citta Nepal opened a hospital to help provide basic healthcare to the region. The hospital was fortunate enough to receive a grant last year to increase its size and ability to provide care. As the new facility opened, Roshi Joan Halifax and Roshi Enkyo O'Hara traveled to the hospital with a team of medical professionals and others on their journey to make a sacred kora of Mount Kailash. The medical team spent 2 days at Citta Nepal's hospital, caring for almost 1000 patients! This was truly an auspicious way to christen such a facility.

With healthcare safely planted in the region, it was no surprise what was to come. As Roshi's group journeyed to Kailash, they passed through the remote Limi Valley on the border of Tibet, a precious and wonderful pocket of Humla, which still preserves the ancient Lama culture of Tibet. What Limi lacks is support for their children's education. Due to this issue, many of the Limi youth are forced to leave their families and communities in search of education in Kathmandu or India. Roshi came into contact with these villagers and felt she would be interested in supporting education for the children of Limi Valley. I felt this was a natural progression of our care for the district and a wonderful opportunity for Citta Nepal.

Michael Daube
Executive Director, Citta

To see and find out more about Citta and the Limi Valley go to the Citta website at citta.org and Michael's blog