



TARA BODONG

Help make a difference in the Himalayan region.

Tara Bodong Foundation

Activities Report 2019

As the world struggles to adjust to living with Coronavirus, it is a time of upheaval and uncertainty for us all. However, as we reflect on the Tara Bodong Foundation's work in 2019, we are heartened and encouraged by the positive impact we've been able to have on improving the lives of girls and their families in Lumla, India. As in previous years, most of our efforts were spent on finding new ways to finance our main project, the Bodong Nunnery/Girls' School and meet the daily needs of our young residents there. We are happy to report that in addition to keeping our sponsors and supporters informed and motivated, we also succeeded in meeting our financial goals! This was done thanks to the tireless efforts of our committee members and volunteers who helped plan and execute a variety of events and fundraising activities. For more information on our financial performance, please visit our 2019 Financial Report. Below, is a summary of last year's efforts divided into two areas:

1. Fundraising and outreach
2. Operations

1. Fundraising and Outreach

Sponsorship

In addition to celebrating our 8th year of operation in 2019, we also welcomed two new girls to our Lumla shelter. These girls are fully sponsored and are now happily settled with their other 'sisters' – playing games, doing household chores and most importantly - going to school every day! This brings the total number of girls housed and cared for by Tara Bodong to 21. We take this opportunity to say a big 'thank you!' to our individual sponsors who provide financial support for each of our 21 girls. Your contributions allow us to give a home and education to these children, who will be the future mothers and leaders in their community. Your contributions help purchase school uniforms, books and other school supplies. It pays for groceries, water and heating in the harsh Himalayan winters, and electricity so the girls can do their homework in the evenings. It also pays for a computer and internet service so we can receive regular reports and updates from our head house-mother. By meeting the basic needs of these children, you helping to create meaningful and long-term change for an entire village!

Partnerships

We are proud to share that 2019 brought us new partnerships with schools, organisations, and sponsors. This not only brought in much needed support, it also allowed us to share the mission of our small but powerful project with supporters



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throughout the Netherlands. In particular, we welcomed a new alliance with the British Society (BritSoc), who named Tara Bodong as their recipient charity for their 2019 Christmas Party. We also partnered with two students at the International School the Hague, who now form part of our social media team and ensure that we maintain a presence on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.

Last year, we concentrated our fundraising efforts on expanding our 'Buy a Tulip . Help a Girl' campaign to more schools. In addition to schools in Hilversum and Laren, we developed partnerships with over seven International Schools from Breda in the South to Groningen in the North. We are grateful to these students and teachers who supported our project and their valuable help in sharing the stories of our girls in person or via social media. The campaign raised a total of € 3.084.

We also deepened our relationship with the Roland Holst School College in Hilversum, which again included us in their list of preferred charities. In October 2019, the College organised its annual "Goede Doelen Markt" (Charity Market), where 11 charities engaged with the students to motivate them to carry out their own fundraising initiatives. The Tara Bodong team attended for the third time, both with a market stall and classroom workshops. We were very excited that a total of 26 students across 7 teams selected us as their charity of choice, and in March 2020, the students presented the results of their efforts. Their fundraising activities ranged from bake sales and washing cars, to music concerts at home. In the end, they raised a whopping total of €1.725. Just one group alone raised €1.233 - the highest amount ever raised by any Roland Holst team! We would like to thank the school and its dedicated students for their creative ideas and hard work. Because of your help, 21 girls living thousands of kilometres away, are getting a chance to make a better future for themselves and their communities.

In an additional effort to strengthen our relationship with students and share the Tara Bodong story, we launched a joint campaign with several schools called 'Give a Phone . Help a Girl'. This project involved schools serving as collection points for used mobile phones and similar devices which were then sold for recycling. The campaign was launched on the International Day of the Girl (11 October), and although the amount raised was not a lot, we were happy to engage with the students and play a role in getting hundreds of devices safely recycled.

Other Events

As a way of thanking our supporters and to mark our 8th anniversary, Tara Bodong hosted an 80's Party in Hilversum which also featured a silent auction. Also, in Hilversum, our team of volunteers participated in school fairs and other occasions to keep the Lumla story alive and enlist additional support.



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2. Operations

The Tara Bodong website received a much-needed renovation in the last half of 2019. With the help of some pro-bono assistance, we migrated www.tarabodong.org to a new platform and updated our information. The result in a more modern look and feel with easier navigation. Please visit the new website and email us at info@tarabodong.org to let us know what you think!

Board Changes

Towards the end of 2019, our board member, Elizabeth Fleming resigned her post after serving our Foundation for many years. She was replaced in January 2020 by Vincent van den Hurk, a native of Hilversum and long-standing Tara Bodong supporter. Vincent now serves as our Treasurer. The other board members are Christian Horn (Chairperson) and Debbie Wirtjes-Lewis (Secretary), and we thank them for their continued service.

Lumla Committee

In rounding off this year's reflection, we must not forget our dedicated team in Lumla, who are members of the Bodong Tashi Choeling Charity committee. They are our eyes and ears in the local community and the guardians of our young wards. They have been with us every step of the way and continue to report on the facility as well as the wellbeing of our young students.

The Future

In the near future, we are committed to accepting up to seven more deserving girls at the nunnery/girls' school. We will also develop a transition strategy to guide how we can best support the older girls who will soon be graduating from high school and leaving the nunnery. This will be discussed with the committee members in Lumla who will provide information and advice on the opportunities that are available in Lumla and the surrounding villages. The coming year will be an exciting new chapter for the Tara Bodong Foundation and we hope you will continue to support us and follow our progress. We promise to always keep you posted!

Thank you for your continued support in helping to educate these young girls and making their dreams come true!

Debbie Wirtjes-Lewis (Board Secretary)

On behalf of the:

Board of Directors and Committee members
The Tara Bodong Foundation (Netherlands)
www.tarabodong.org