



“You need to count the real cost of emergency aid. It changes local economies, self-reliance, control; it has the power to change more than the disaster itself did.”

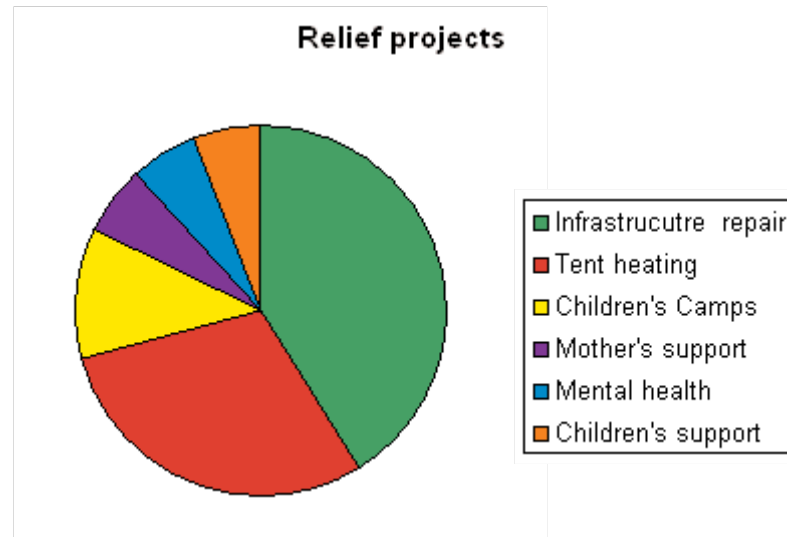


As autumn turned to winter in Ladakh, villagers noted many changes, some good and some bad. The rains had stopped and slowly the fear of them returning receded. People finished digging out much of what needed salvaging. Water canals were reconnected and temporary shelters delivered to most villages.

But as the snows came, people began discussing the long-term and permanent changes. Many fields and orchards are lost: What are the implications for an agricultural economy? Will schools be rebuilt in remote villages or will children have to move away to attend school? Does the anxiety stay inside you for ever?

While most international disaster relief agencies had long since left, Ladakh Relief is there, working with people on these long-term questions. Funds donated go directly to our partners in the villages.. While construction work stopped when temps fell below freezing, much was accomplished through the winter.

Here's a summary of what partners are doing in the winter of 2010-2011.





Partner requests

In August and September, HEATH Inc members organised or attended assessments in 14 partner villages and with 3 partner government departments. Each village focused on one area of need and is implementing the rehabilitation work themselves. The government-HI partnerships decided on 2 district-wide projects.

Here's a list of the projects:

- ❖ Tent heating at 3 locations serving 4 washed-away schools.
- ❖ Replacing the micro-hydro at one village.
- ❖ Rebuilding community centres at 2 locations.
- ❖ Rebuilding 1 school compound serving 3 villages.
- ❖ Rebuilding the community commons ground at 2 locations.
- ❖ Operating a Children's Winter Camp serving 3 villages.

And two district-wide projects operated through the Departments of Health and Education offering trauma counselling (18 villages covered thus far) and ARV-Immunoglobulin access to pregnant women (especially helping families affected by the floods).



Tent heating projects

Schools serving 5 villages that lost their buildings to the floods bought heaters for the tents and temporary shelters that will serve as schools until at least June 2011.

This is helping over 100 students and 30 teachers as they sit exams and start the new school year. When new buildings are completed, we hope to help replace materials. The heating equipment will remain as a resource in villages.



If your group wants to directly support rebuilding a government school, please contact us and we'll link you with the Department of Education.



Micro hydro Domkhar

The village rebuilt the micro-hydro generator house before the winter freeze. The turbine was repaired and returned to the village. The control panel was destroyed and will not be replaced until spring 2011. It means a long, dark winter in the village, but 2011 should be better.

The generator house after the floods and now rebuilt.





**That's what they built?
It doesn't look like much...**

Many of the Sham villages affected by the floods didn't have good infrastructure to start with. What they are rebuilding might not look like the fanciest structure, but it means so very much to them.

The school serving several Hanu villages had struggled with high drop out rates, poor facilities and even poorer exam scores. Recently that was turning around. The kids even started a garden and plantation in the school compound. Then the floods hit and the compound was destroyed.

By leveling the compound and rebuilding their wall, the sheep and goats can be out and the kids can replant. It's not only symbolic, it's good science and the kids are so very proud.



That small leveled area in the centre of the picture is the rebuilt picnic ground and ice rink for the Domkhar valley. Hockey is the draw for an annual Winter Camp where children work on all the skills needed to excel in school and life. Mother's hauled baskets-full of dirt, voluntarily, day after day: That's how important this project was to them. And for the first time ever, a group of remote village kids (Domkhar) won the All-Ladakh Hockey Tournament.



Hanu School just after the floods (top) and spring 2011 with the school compound thriving.



The women here don't have a cooperative.

Over the past 20 years, HEALTH Inc. has seen a huge change in remote villages when women start getting together. Giving them a place to meet, learn and work together starts a chain of change that benefits everyone.

The Achina valley was one of the worst hit in Ladakh. With so very much to rebuild, what one thing should villagers choose? They decided to rebuild their community centre. If people had a place gather and work together...who knows what the future holds?

If you'd like to help, there are volunteer opportunities for skilled carpenters in summer 2011 and 2012. Please contact us.



*What happened to us?
It will never be the same.*

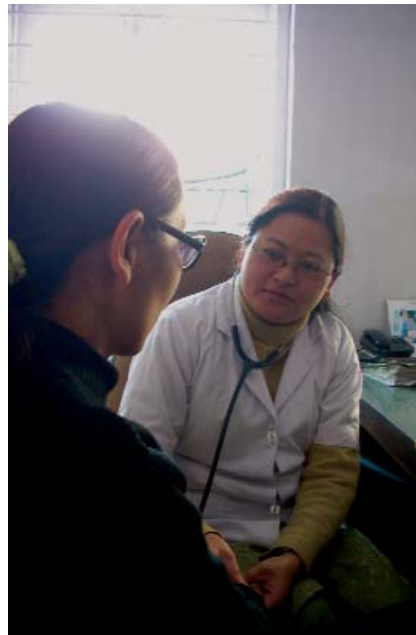
Mental health and support programmes

It *won't* ever be the same. Our work is addressing the many kinds of human injuries along with the environmental and infrastructure damage.

Building on a 3-year HI mental health project, member-volunteers are operating trauma counselling (for victims, for school children and their teachers, for village leaders and youth), mental health training for village health workers and providing access to psycho-tropic medicines to anyone who needs them.

Village youth continue the work by helping kids tell their stories by making their own books and movies and sharing them with other villages.

All this work continues through the winter.



The support projects are operating residential camps for kids and one-day school sessions allowing children and youth to talk about their experiences, ask questions of trained professionals and then express themselves in a variety of ways.

The Trauma Team has visited 18 villages over the past 10 months. And working with the District Hospital, there is now a permanent counselling unit there, freely available to everyone. We also fund a counselling and meds programme for expecting mothers who test HIV and hep B positive. Counselling is offered to everyone and subsidised ARVs and immunoglobulin to those who need it.



THE FLOODS AT DOMKHAR BARMA
Book and Movie by the Children of Domkhar Barma Middle School



We are looking for a funder willing to offer continued support to mental health services for all in Ladakh. Please contact us if you can help.