



UK REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 103659

Overall Programming.

Freedom to Learn (FtL) was set up in 2004 as a UK based charity working to help the most vulnerable children in Nepal and India. Our main aim is to improve the access to, and quality of education for children aged 4 through to adulthood working to make each school the centre of the community. This is achieved by determining the barriers that impede education in South Asia and providing holistic responses to address these issues. To achieve this, we have implemented 7 different programmes which focus on all aspects of school life from the commute to school lunches, teacher training to career advice.

As well as supporting individual children, FtL offers resources and support to non-profit organisations with similar goals and is committed to raising public awareness about the importance of education and development work in the UK and South Asia.

Our Work



At this time Freedom to Learn works in 12 schools. These are predominately in the Indian Himalayas, the Kathmandu Valley and Northern Districts of Nepal. The children FtL work alongside are either from migrant families or low caste communities. The work done is making visible improvements to communities, and we want to continue this help, as well as expanding our projects so that more children can benefit in the future.

To fund our 7 Programmes we need to raise a minimum £86,773 each year. We are applying to Trusts and Foundations for support for 2018, including the Erach and Roshin Sadri foundation who have helped to fund many of our projects in the past. We will also be focusing on our individual supporters and various fundraising events which are held throughout the year.

1. Act on Education

Working in conjunction with Rural Community Foundation Nepal (RCF), Act on Education (AoE) is our leading programme enabling school staff, project workers, and local and national leaders to develop a fuller understanding of the difficulties that millions of children in Nepal face every day.

By going into schools and helping young people to communicate the problems they experience through creative drama and film methods, we have come up with clear and positive solutions that not only benefit the students and teachers, but also the wider communities. This new understanding has led to attitude and policy change at ground and government levels, ensuring better quality education for thousands of children.

This programme has resulted in thousands of children benefiting from it's work either directly through core training programmes, or indirectly through the resources and training FtL has delivered. The workshops and events have achieved some magnificent results including 3 Parents and Teachers Associations being set up and sustained, hiring a school cleaner, and money being raised locally for school meals, and building school toilets.

Since 2012 the work has been continued by RCF and FtL staff, our Creative Youth Volunteers, and local community leaders. A key element to this programme has been the training of local young leaders and teachers, with an essential step by step guide to our Creative Community Building Model for public schools in Nepal. ***This programme costs around £9,000 per annum.***



2. Ride for Life

Ride for Life is a scheme to provide bikes for disadvantaged school children. Not only does this speed up journeys to and from school but it also frees up more time for study, completing homework, helping with family chores, and socialising with friends; a very important part of childhood development and happiness.

Recipients are taught how to ride and maintain their bikes as well as road safety. A wide range of workshops and education sessions are arranged to introduce children to the advantages and socio-economic benefits of learning to cycle, as well as a series of fun inter-school events.

Owning a bike in Nepal can have a wealth of educational, social and health benefits:

Pupils state that they felt more confident and that the added independence and access to education increased self-esteem.

Cycling helps with cognitive and perceptual development including better vision, estimating distance and multi-tasking.

Bikes are being used for topic based learning and used as the subject matter for Maths, Science and English school work.

Cycling is becoming increasingly popular both for Nepali citizens and as part of the tourist industry. This has opened up a range of opportunities for potential employment including bicycle sales, servicing and maintenance or working as a cycle guide for tourists.

The range of people participating in mountain biking clubs and events is challenging the traditionally strict social divisions in Nepali society and enhancing social mobility.

This project is currently running in 4 schools in Nepal with hundreds of children having better access to education. So far this has been a successful programme with significant scope for expansion. *Ride for Life costs around £18,000 each year.*



3. EduLift

EduLift is dedicated to transforming and empowering the lives of young people through holistic and experiential-based education. Youth unemployment is a huge problem in Nepal due to few employment opportunities, the lack of programmes to prepare young people for work, and the poor quality and prescriptive nature of education in Nepal. With EduLift FTL are working to combat this problem.

Edulift helps equip school leavers with the necessary skills to work. It uses experiential and problem-solving methods and innovative learning techniques to enable them to become more confident and rounded individuals, with the necessary skills to contribute to the Nepalese economic and social development.



Based on three key principles (exposure, explore and experiment) the programme aims to introduce students to specialists so they may build up relationships, be introduced to prospective job opportunities, receive advice on career and further education opportunities, and develop skills which will be vital in the work place.

The project will take place over 32 weeks and includes:

- Regular counselling sessions from personal growth counsellors, and guidance to consider specific career paths

- Training on effective writing skills, CV development, etc.

- Role play workshops and discussions to develop presentation and interviewing skills.

- Instructions on how to research well and use online tools more effectively to advance your academic and career pursuits.

- Carrying out regular challenges that will train students in research, planning, problem-solving, implementation and presentation skills.

- Feedback and exposure from a distinguished person of their related fields in the 'Guest Speaker Series', and partake in field visits to potential work destinations.

Many of the activities and opportunities described above are currently only available to the elite class in Nepal. FtL works with many of the poorest and most marginalised communities in Nepal opening up opportunities for more school leavers. This is fundamental to developing a more equitable and balanced economy and society. So far this programme has helped around 640 students in 4 different schools in Nepal. ***This programme costs approximately £14,000 a year.***

4. Teacher Training

To make sure that all the students we work with are receiving the best possible education FtL offers teacher training in a variety of forms.

Finding out the problems faced by Nepali children through AoE is not enough; these problems need to be addressed. To this aim, we have tried to ensure that teachers and working environments are the best they can be. On top of the training for our Edulift and Ride for Life programmes, we have been to several primary schools training teachers on effective and creative classroom techniques, how to write and utilise a syllabus, how to generate better resources and maximise the use of what is available. We have also funded teachers on external courses.

ICT is not a common subject in Nepal, and even if there is a computer literate teacher, most schools do not have computers, generators or access to the internet. By addressing these needs and training staff and pupils how to use laptops that are integrated into the schools, students have access to more information, learning resources, and have learnt a new essential skill for later life.

Our biggest success is our English Teaching Project (ETP). School staff, students, families and management committees have expressed that English, especially spoken English, is a failing subject and a key priority across the Nepali state education sector. English is vital for students to access and participate in further and higher education, and significantly increases the chances of gaining sustainable and profitable employment. Spoken English also enables students to more easily access legal provision and build international contacts and networks as they grow to adulthood. Mastering English can also raise self-esteem and social standing. This English training for teachers and children also increases interest from the wider community and families encouraging parents to send their children to school.

As well as training the teachers and supplying them with teaching materials, we will also focus on:

- Making sure the teachers we employ are right for the students, asking newly employed teachers to do a series of demonstration classes to evaluate their teaching skills and rapport with young people.

- Retaining the teachers we employ. In July 2016 all Nepali teachers wages increased by 27% and received a bonus month's salary. This is something that we need to budget into our work to keep teachers and make our employment fair.

Using media such as the internet, DVDs and a projector to help with pronunciation.

Holding regular workshops for teachers and project leaders to discuss and exchange ideas on teaching methods and challenges faced.

Our aim is to increase this programme and hire another 5 English teachers. **£9,700 covers 48 days of training costs, including materials and transport.**

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5. Materials, Running Costs and Meals

We employ 5 full-time highly qualified English teachers, with a successful track record to in rural schools in Nepal. These teachers are responsible for teaching all ages in each school. The schools allocate one hour per day per class. This continuity is very important if students are to progress. We also pay the annual salary of 14 primary school staff; 8 teachers and 6 classroom assistants and who work full time in Kavre District.

We provide nutritious 'tiffin' school meals to children who often go without food from dawn until dusk. We set up libraries including decorating, furnishing, and buying the books. We develop engaging learning environments in classrooms, with furniture, posters and engaging displays of children's work and topics.

The full employment cost is approximately £14,000 per annum for primary school staff wages and will be £20,000 for 5 English teachers in 2018. To set up 2 more libraries and effectively run the 2 we already initiated will cost £2,700 and learning materials around £3,500.



6. Clean Water and Sanitation Programme

Freedom to Learn trustee John Vallis, Regional Compliance Manager at Southern Water, has expertise in sanitation and safe drinking water in developing countries. In 2015-2017 we successfully completed 1 toilet block of 6 girls and 6 boys toilets with running water at Kushadevi School, Kavre and a smaller toilet block with 4 toilets and a washing area at Nayapati Conscience Primary, Gorkhana. We have completed safe clean water pipelines from natural springs for 3 villages in the remote district of Rasuwa, supplying 67 families

with consistent safe drinking water.

In 2015/16 we facilitated much needed sanitation workshops in the earthquake camps close to our school communities contributing to the prevention of the spread of harmful virus' and bacteria. In 2018 we will use the creative skills of our team to carry out sanitation workshops in each of the schools to instil safe habitual sanitation practice amongst the younger children and the teaching staff. There will also be theatre performances in the village centre for the wider community.

In 2018 we aim to work in 7 schools with the sanitation programme including infrastructure and community sanitation programmes.

It costs £2,100 for a small toilet block of 4 toilets, around £1,280 for piped water supply and taps to 1 small school.

For 7 schools in Kavre, including toilet building and water supply, school workshops and a community performance in each on sanitation and health will cost FtL just over £18,300



7. Sister Schools Programme

The Sister Schools has been piloted over the past 18 months between a UK and Nepali School, with an aim to foster significant and meaningful global friendships between students and teachers from two very different cultures. This programme has given teachers an opportunity to exchange knowledge and skills, as well as enhancing the schools' ethos, outlook and educational approaches in both countries. Teachers and students communicate regularly via live internet links, letters and exchanging gifts generating lasting memories of mutual understanding and positive cross cultural relations.

The project includes:

Student ambassadors in both schools lead monthly Skype meetings between students and staff to discuss particular topics and catch up on recent activities in each community.

3 child led projects on particular subjects including religious beliefs, festival rituals, daily routines and family life.

3 students led assemblies about what each groups has learned about the other.

A 4 week teacher exchange including two weeks in each country. The exchange involves teacher training, knowledge exchange workshops, and team building with an aim of breaking down the cultural and geographical barriers between the two school communities.

Both schools deeply benefit from the friendships made in this programme. Schools in the UK are taught about other cultures and the ways of living in countries less fortunate than their own, as well as offering them a wealth of opportunities for events and subject matter for classes, not to mention addressing the prejudice and apparent racism often apparent in UK rural schools. Still reeling from the decade long civil war the rural community of our Nepali schools face a complex maelstrom of difficulties. Schools are chronically underfunded, teachers are under-resourced and there is a lack of adequate training. This programme addresses all these issues with the support of teachers, students and parents in the UK.

Our aim now is to progress the current ongoing partnership and to develop a project 'model' and resource guide for expanding the programme into more UK and Nepali Schools. ***Each Sister School Programme costs just under £8,000 a year.***

Impact

The most noticeable impact that FtL has achieved is increasing school attendance. In the last 2 years, this has increased on average 23.2%, with more students passing their School Leavers Certificate each year. The girls drop out rate has decreased from an average of 21.7% for over 12s, to 9%. After working in Suntakhan for two years introducing AoE and Ride for Life, the school achieved a 100% pass rate for the first time on record.

Our AoE programme has not only increase attendance, but improved life for students both at home and at school. 92% of parents attended School meetings and parents' evenings in 2015/16 compared to previous years where attendance was only 4 people. Violence has decreased in every school we work and we have implemented new safeguarding policies and trained staff in Child Protection and Safeguarding. 62% of children now participate in extracurricular activities, and student/staff relations have improved with more children eating lunch together, attending school outings and play learning games in the afternoons.

At this time we run 170 classes a week, each having an significant impact on the students, teachers and parents in each community. Students can now hold English conversations which 2 years ago, was impossible. 86% of children from Grade 1 and above can read to the expected standard, from grade 3 English reading has improved from 7% to 52%. We have also employed 10 young college students who were part of our AoE programme to work in their communities continuing our work and helping more and more children.



Case Study: Kushadevi Model School

Situated in a rural area 40 km from Kathmandu, Kushadevi Model School is an interactive and child centred learning environment, based specifically on the lessons learned from AoE. This government run school had traditionally low educational attainment and so was the perfect candidate for improvements. Working in close partnership with the Kushadevi School Management Committee (SMC) and the local community, this project aims to transform the school into an educational environment equal of any private Nepalese school, illustrating that young people in Nepal do not have to accept that a sub-standard education as inevitable.

Our aim has been to develop a creative, child centred teaching-learning environment, with professional well- trained teachers, and a supportive and well-informed community network. Teachers are supported by skilled and experienced professionals from other areas such as child psychology and arts therapy, which was particularly relevant after the recent earthquakes.

Kushadevi is the perfect example of all our programmes at work. It has one of our English teachers employed full time, we have nearly completed two toilet blocks for the primary and secondary school departments and we provide school lunches to the primary department. The school fully participates in Ride for Life with 40 bikes for the students to utilise. The Edulift Arts and Language course also operates here every Friday.

All the Primary staff are trained on our courses. Last year modest improvements were made to the school with impressive results: Average dropout rates across age groups reduced by 42% and around 47% of students passed their School Leaving Certificates (SLC) compared to an average of 33% in the neighbouring schools. 96% of parents came to staff/parent meetings compared to 25% the year before. The school now operates a daily library service. Kushadevi is an example of how well our programmes work, and the huge benefits that FtL's holistic approach can give to Nepali Schools.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation is at the core of our work, and is an essential element to informing all that we do. We carry out regular Monitoring and Evaluation throughout all our collaborations and programmes. This is facilitated by our Project Manager in Nepal, our partner organisations, staff assessments and through our UK Project Manager and trustees who undertake bi-annual visits to the projects in Nepal.

Ongoing monitoring is carried out in collaboration with young people, school management, and teachers. On top of the creative evaluation workshops that are carried out at each school as part of our 'Act on Education' programme, we have employed more traditional methods of questionnaires, interviews and collecting school data. Teachers are required to submit a brief monthly report to our Nepali Project Manager to evaluate progress and identify problems or barriers to successful teaching. The School Management are also required to submit an informal monthly report on progress and teacher attendance, with a written report being submitted quarterly. Both UK and Nepali Project Managers make several spot checks throughout the year, speaking directly to the young people and the teachers to check their progress and experience.

All of the collated information and data is discussed at our monthly collaboration meetings and any workable and relevant solutions are put in place. We have a record of flexibility and response to necessary changes, and are proud to sustain this as one of the core values to our practice.

Finance

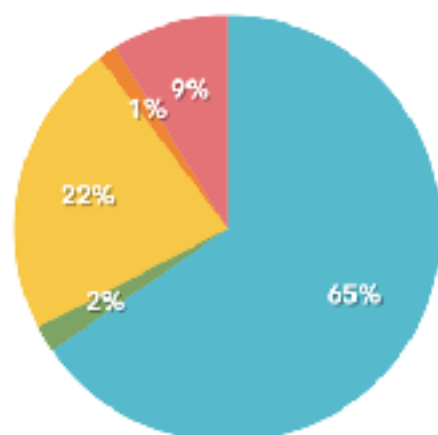
Freedom to Learn board of trustees are currently completing the year's accounts ending June 2017. Attached here are the most recent accounts.

Our 2014/2015 income and expenditure does not show a 'regular' year due to the earthquake and related fundraising activities, which provided a boost to our regular income. However it does demonstrate the potential of fundraising from local public appeals. In 2015/16 the value of trust and foundation grants is clearly high.

Currently our grant funding is budgeted specifically towards project work. This leaves little if any extra funds to cover core running costs, or deal with unexpected expenditure either within the projects or involving our beneficiaries. 80% of our monthly giving is dedicated to a specific school for student sponsorship with no opportunity to spend outside that sphere. Our public fundraising however has given us more flexibility to make informed decisions about where best to focus our efforts and resources.

Income 2014/15

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

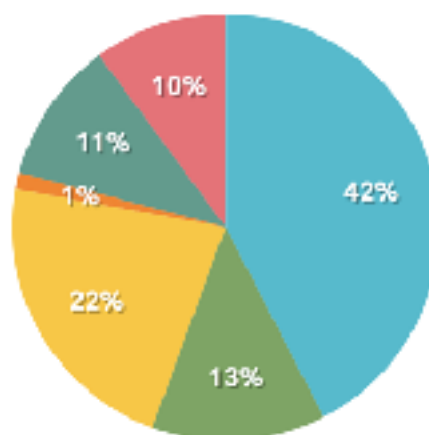


Total monetary Income: £48,836.58

Total in kind: £4,730

Expenditure 2014/15

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

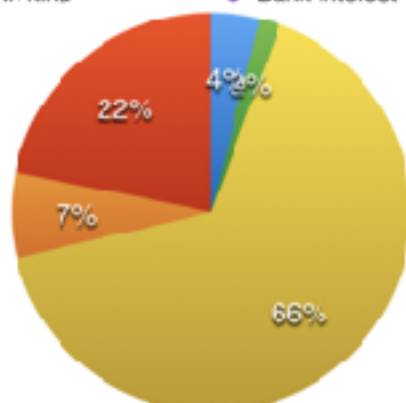


Total Expenditure: £42,033.02

Total in kind: £4,730

Income 2015/16

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

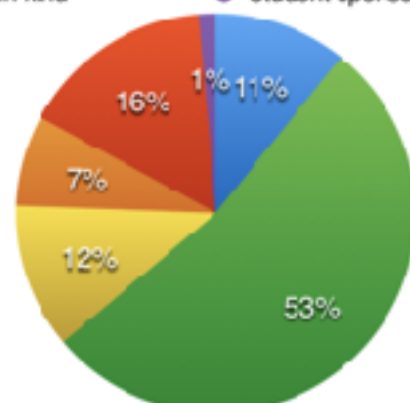


Total Monetary Income £50,357

Total in Kind: £14,070

Expenditure 2015/16

- Earthquake Relief
- Act on Education
- In kind
- Education Projects
- Core Running Costs
- Student sponsorship



Total Expenditure: £50,357

Total in Kind: £14,070



Income and Expenditure Account 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

Income		
Erach & Roshan Sadri Foundation (ERSF) Grant	£75,825.00	
The Waterloo Foundation Grant	£9,759.00	
The Jug of Oil Trust Grant	£1,000.00	
Regular Donations	£4,720.57	
General Donations	£4,251.91	
Fundraising	£1,101.08	
Bank Interest	£5.28	
		£96,662.84
Less Expenditure		
Collaboration Project		
Kushadevi Model School	£10,853.40	
Ride for Life	£4,790.00	
Act on Education	£6,142.00	
EDULift	£5,122.00	
Sister Schools Programme	£1,600.00	
Collaboration Expenses	£1,054.52	
		£29,561.92
FtL Wages	£11,310.00	
Website	£466.11	
Fundraising Expenses	£108.83	
Insurance & Professional Fees	£343.80	
Bank and Transfer Charges	£196.44	
Travel Expenses	£1,024.68	
Training & Conferences	£77.25	
Printing Expenses	£25.00	
		£43,114.03
Surplus of Income over Expenditure		£53,548.81

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2017

Current Assets		
Business Money Manager Account	£61,224.71	
Community Account	£10,983.81	£72,208.52
Current Liabilities		
		£0.00
Net Current Assets		£72,208.52
		£72,208.52
Financed by		
Accumulated Fund Brought Down on 1 July 2016		£18,659.71
Surplus of Expenditure over Income for the Year		£53,548.81
		£72,208.52