

# Winterschool Saldang „GIVE CHILDREN A FUTURE“



HUMAN  
STIFTUNG

in cooperation with



In 2016, the founders of the German based ‘**HUMAN Foundation**’ and the ‘**Dolpo Tulku Charitable Foundation**’ (DTCF) in Nepal signed an agreement with the aim to strengthen education in the Dolpo region.

As a consequence, we decided to finance the ‘Winterschool in Saldang’ which is located at 4.053 meters altitude. In order to understand the relevance and impact, it helps to know the project environment. The project is fully in line with HUMAN-Foundation’s vision: **‘Give Children A Future’**

Up to the 18th century, the Dolpo region belonged to West Tibetan Royal and Princes dynasties. Until 1993, the Upper Dolpo was a restricted area and foreigners are only allowed to visit it since then. In the north, Dolpo is neighboring to Tibet and it is one out of 77 districts in Nepal, even the largest district with roughly 8,000 square kilometers and around 36,000 inhabitants, whereas in the Upper Dolpo live about 8,000 people.

All villages are located above 3,700 meters. More than 600 people live in Saldang and you can only reach it after 8 days hiking from Juphal. Besides Humla, Dolpo is the only district without roads and even without a road

link to other areas. To reach the Upper Dolpo you need to walk 7-8 days from the closest airport in Juphal and to cross passes above 5,000 meters. The Dolpo area is one of the remotest populated mountainous regions in the world and is known for its wilderness and loneliness. Dunai is the seat of the district magistrate and has 3,000 inhabitants. Our familiar Infrastructure like electricity, internet and (mobile) phone is not available.

Many people recognize the Upper Dolpo now as the real preserver of the Tibetan culture, as the Chinese Government attempts to destroy Buddhism and the Tibetan culture in Tibet. Immerse yourself into the wonderful scenery of the Dolpo area.



## The way to Saldang

The climate in Upper Dolpo is very arid with sparse vegetation. The name Dolpo comes from the Tibetan „dol“, which means abundance. This refers to the natural and mineral resources and the manifestation of the religious tradition.

The Dolpo-pa - as the inhabitants in Upper Dolpo are called - are predominantly active in agriculture. People in the Dolpo grows potatoes, corn, wheat, millet, Tibetan barley and local crops. **Local agriculture is vital to having enough food over the long winter,** although it is not said to last every winter.



Throughout Dolpo the path is marked by constant ups and downs. Up to the higher mountain villages there are actually only two routes from Juphal, both of which **are in the Shey Phoksundo National Park.**

As these are the only connections, remarkable gradual climbs are built with significant effort along the way with some steep cliffs. After 5 days, at 4,000 meters altitude, you will reach the wonderfully located Dho Tarap valley.



Here is also the Jampa Gompa and the house where **Dolpo Tulku Rinpoche lived and grew up until his 10th birthday.** Today his brother lives there with his family and their aim is to preserve the gompa and to completely rebuild the Chorten over the years in front of the Gompa.

The further way from Dho Tarap to Saldang becomes steeper and the area more lonely. It takes almost two days to reach the next village and you need to cross the first pass over 5,000 meters with a magnificent view of the Daulaghiri massif.

One comes then into areas, in which there are many Himalayan blue sheeps and very isolated also snow leopards, which however, can only be watched with good luck.

**The houses of Saldang, which are terraced on the mountainside,** can be seen from far away. It is a 45 minutes walk from the river very steeply up to reach the place where the **„Shel Ri Drugdra‘ school** is located. The village of Saldang is only 23 kilometers from Tibet. The location of the school area and the view of the mountain are awesome.





**The Samye Choeling Gompa** is the heart of Saldang. Next to it is the ‚clinic‘ of the Amchi Dhondup Lama, which heals people almost exclusively with herbs, as well as the nervous systems on the fingers, eyes, ears and tongue.

**The school in Saldang exists since 1999 and was built by Lama Karma Dhondup** with the great support of ‚Friends of Nepal‘.

The **School Coordinator Pema Wangyal** and his staff members teach at the school with great dedication in this very remote area. As in all mountainous regions of Nepal, this school would not exist without any foreign support.



Lama Karma Dhondup



Lama Pema Wangyal

In eight small rooms, the children from Saldang can attend classes 1-6 beside the ‚kindergarten / play group‘ and the ‚preschool‘.



## Saldang and the school



**In total, 80-90 children attend the school.** In winter there are 60-70 children, as some families leave the region. There is a formal „compulsory education“ of 5 years, but no control over it.

**The winter times in Upper Dolpo are very cold and life in the villages is extremely hard.** People are cut off from the lower-lying regions for months.

**70% of the inhabitants stay in the village over the winter, 30% go with their yaks into deeper areas** or try to find work. The yaks are allowed to return to the village only after the harvest, because they would destroy the seed. On the way back the yaks bring heating material, such as collected wood, which is used beside dung and local shrubs for heating during the winter. It is not possible to send a letter to Saldang by postal mail.

**Karma Dhondup is „Head of Municipality Saldang“.** Nepal was always centrally governed. A stronger decentralization of responsibility has been prevailed in the last year’s elections. There are now two representatives of the Dolpo in the Nepalese parliament.





The HUMAN-Foundation funds all expenses for the winter school period, which always lasts from November to April: the teachers and the kitchen staff, a daily meal as well as some teaching material and 50% of the maintenance cost. By chance, the Government will share the maintenance cost of the building.

At the end of class six, the children have to pass an exam. If successful, they are allowed to go to Kathmandu into the (higher) Secondary school. These schools and hostels are also funded by private organizations. So far, all children from Saldang successfully passed the exam, which is also a result of the winter school. Four students from Saldang can go to Kathmandu every year. In case of need we will sponsor one additional child.

**How can we now exactly influence children's and people's life in this region with our project?**

**The children learn to read, write and math, learn to speak and read the Tibetan, Nepali**

and partially the English language.

**They get general knowledge** and a deeper understanding of Tibetan culture. **They get a choice how and where they want to live their life.**

The young adults are able to **organize living conditions in the village and to manage their farming more effective.** They get a much **better relation to money** and live a conscious life. **Women dare to ask for help at birth, children** give their parents support when they are facing problems. They are prepared to manage daily life in the village.

Children, who start school in the cities, return less often back to home compared to those children, beginning school in the villages. They have a much stronger relationship and responsibility for their families and are more open for Tibetan culture.

**The interaction amongst children is very peaceful and no violence occurs at school.**

We strongly believe that we are on the right path with our support of the school in Saldang, setting the right main points. Together with the teachers in Saldang and our administrative partner DTCF, we enable many children to live a self-determined life. The last visit in 2018 was a great success and a clear confirmation of our involvement.

Moreover, as a pleasant side effect, a journey to Saldang is an unforgettable experience in a fantastic mountainous scenery.

Since 2019 we support another winter school in Nyisal, one hiking day north of Saldang.

**Edith und Karlheinz Neumann** initiated HUMAN Foundation in order to support poor and needy people, in particular children.

**'GIVE CHILDREN A FUTURE'** is our vision.

**We allocate 100% of all donations to our projects**

**Bank Account:** HUMAN-Stiftung,

**IBAN:** DE59 7025 0150 0027 9484 70

**[www.human-stiftung.org](http://www.human-stiftung.org)**



Our administrative partner in Nepal is the Dolpo Tulku Charitable Foundation, **founded by Dolpo Tulku Rinpoche.**

The DTCF is aimed at supporting people in the Dolpo region in all aspects of their life, either by education, medical care or improving their living conditions.

**[www.dolpotulku.org](http://www.dolpotulku.org)**

