

GOLDEN BAY FRIENDS OF NEPAL

FY 2018

Annual Report





Word from Chairperson

BY THOMAS (TAJ) RABOSKY

Namaste!

We are excited and pleased to present to you the Second Annual Report for Golden Bay Friends of Nepal (New Zealand Registered Charity C53344). What started in April 2015 as a compassionate reaction to a natural disaster (the 2015 Nepali earthquakes) has evolved into a series of projects to build friendship, offer knowledge and provide opportunity for our friends in Nepal still challenged to quite literally rebuild their lives. Golden Bay Friends of Nepal is providing knowledge, resources and materials in and around Bhumlutar village in Kavre district. We aim to create intellectual opportunity for the students and younger generation to learn, create and flourish at the Golden Bay Friendship Academy. We are also aiming to create income opportunity for interested and motivated adults through higher-value agriculture (mushrooms, turkeys, coffee, etc), sustainable tourism (local homestays) and local enterprise (agricultural cooperative, soap making, etc).

The students and villagers of Bhumlutar and the surrounding villages thank us (the organisers) and you (the donors) for the love, light, inspiration and generosity we are sharing across the world. Without your generous gifts from the heart, we could not continue on so we want to take this opportunity to THANK YOU (dhanyabad) for your support and donations. We encourage you and your families to get involved - either make a donation, go visit Bhumlutar and start a project, or both!

Dhanyabad (Thank You),
Thomas (Taj) Rabosky
Chairperson - Golden Bay Friends of Nepal

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Rural Nepal is currently booming with construction projects. Roads are congested with trucks, brick factories around Kathmandu Valley are running around the clock, and villages are busy with teams of builders. Nepal is getting rebuilt and that is a step in the right direction. Government reconstruction grants of NPR300,000 (about USD\$3,000 or NZD\$4,500) are being disbursed. But the NPR300,000 government grant can only build a 1 room house suitable for a widow or single person. A 4-room family home costs between NPR 600,000-1,000,000 (USD\$6-10,000, or NZ\$9-15,000).

So a local subsistence farming family needs to earn several thousand dollars to pay off their construction bill or their bank loan (mortgage rates can be as high as 32% in Nepal). Currently income is generated mostly outside the village, in cities like Kathmandu, Dubai or Kuala Lumpur where young Nepali men can get jobs as labourers, security staff, garbage men, etc and repatriate funds back to Nepal. Golden Bay Friends of Nepal is providing training, knowledge and education (and some materials where required) to empower locals to generate local village income while remaining in the beautiful, rural, clean, natural environment they want to call home.



Organic agriculture potential

Golden Bay Friends of Nepal is developing several projects and programs to generate income from higher-value agriculture (mushroom farming, bee keeping, coffee production, medicinal herbs, etc) and hospitality (organic, local homestays). We are also researching proposals to distribute pairs of breeding turkeys, coffee seedlings, and mango seedlings (for consumption and eventual income generation). In the coming months, Golden Bay Friends of Nepal plans to offer free, on-site winter vegetable training to teach seed bed and biodynamic vegetable bed preparation. Attendees will receive free, non-hybridized winter vegetable seeds (carrots, radishes, broccoli, leek, chard, mizuna, kale, peas, beans, etc) to take home and put in the family garden. We've met with the leading organic fruit and vegetable buyer in Kathmandu and will begin trying to sell our organically produced fruit and vegetables outside Bhumlutar (Kathmandu is a much larger and wealthier market). We will begin with pineapples and capsicums (peppers) as we should have a good harvest this season. Here are our first apples - in just 2 years!



Organic agriculture success

The addition of Laxmi as our agricultural coordinator and 3rd member of our team in Bhumlutar has created very encouraging results on (and in) the ground. Laxmi recently gave birth to her 2nd child, and she has now returned after a couple of well deserved months of rest and recovery. With combined teamwork from Bhupal and Kopila, here is what is currently growing around Golden Bay Friendship Academy:

- Fruits: Guava 7, Avocado 2, Plum 6, Peach 1, Pineapple 381, Seedless lime 1, Japanese pear 1, Pomegranate 10, Banana 5, Lemon 2, Apple 1, Orange 87 small, Orange 24 big, Lychee 4, Mango 5, Tomato 30, Pear 1

- Nuts: Macadamia 1, Almond (all-in-one) 1

- Vegetables: Pumpkin 11, Eggplant 21, Capsicum/pepper (long green) 55, Capsicum/pepper (round/green) 83

- Spices/masala/herbs/other: Timur 1, Khurshani (hot peppers) 16, Rosemary 2, Dhanya 9, Oregano 5, Stevia 4, Sage 1, Tulasi (tulsi) 2, Lemon balm 2, Thyme 3, Cardamom 2, Mint, Coffee 7, Rudraksha 3, Bhuddachata 5



Volunteer program

Siti and Jyoti were Golden Bay Friends of Nepal's first official volunteers from Golden Bay to visit Bhumlutar. They spent about 8 days in the village, meeting the children and contributing to various projects around Bhumlutar. They offered the students afternoon Yoga and Pranayama (breathing) classes, helped to dig seed beds for the students (see below) and set-up the second badminton field - to the delight of the local students. We hope this will be the beginning of a regular flow of visitors and volunteers to Bhumlutar to contribute, share, teach and also learn.

If anyone would like to visit Bhumlutar, volunteer, and get involved please contact us (gbfriendsofnepal@gmail.com). We will soon have a homestay set-up in the village (see below) and we welcome your ideas, energy and inspiration. We want to continue developing constructive friendships between Bhumlutar and the rest of the world, so get in touch if you want to help!

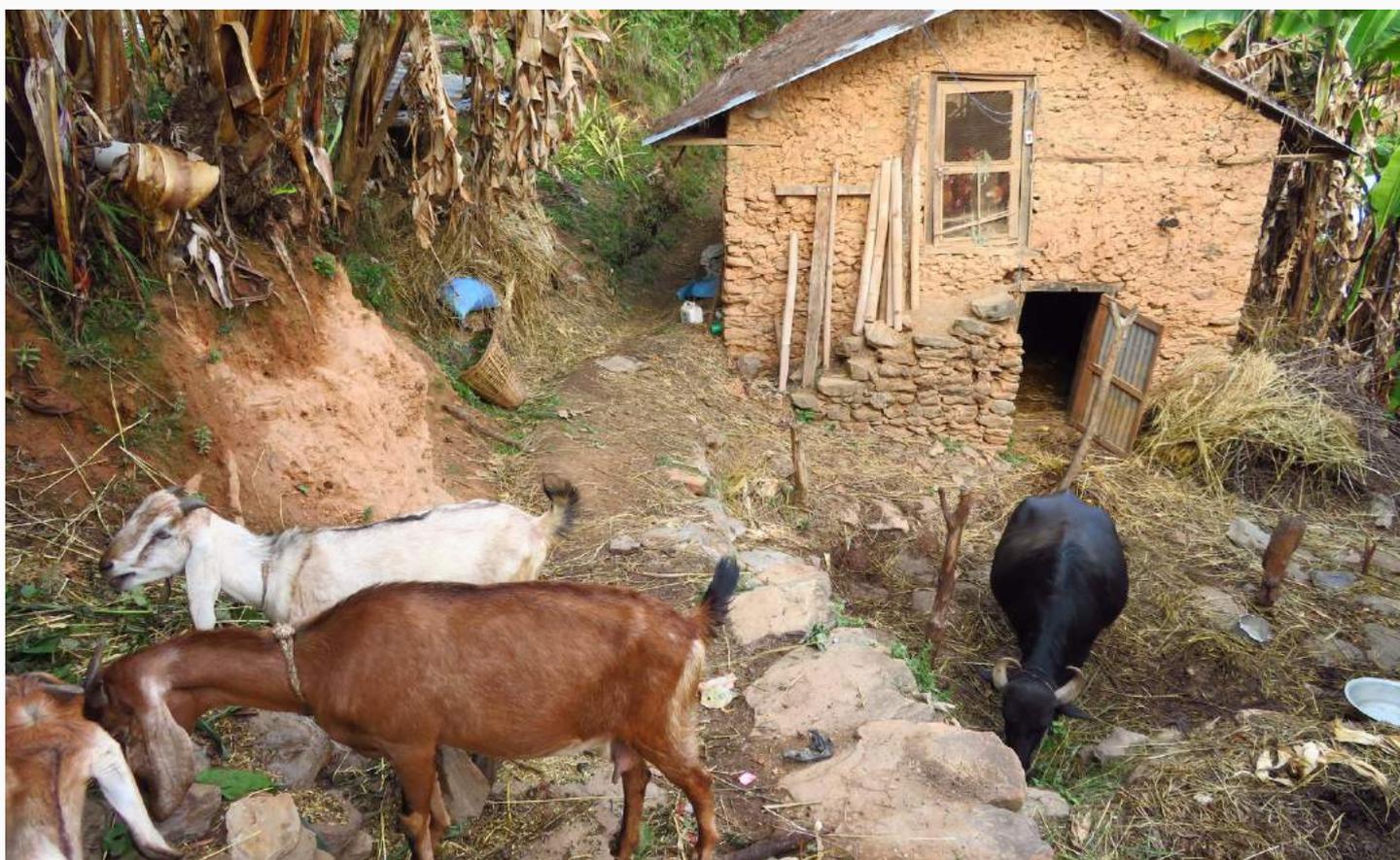


Establishing an Organic Homestay in Bhumlutar

Staying with Bhupal (Achni Dev) and his family is a magical, rural Nepali experience. The food all comes from the village (including the rice) and is all organically grown. Kopila is a fantastic cook and every dal bhat is a delicious experience of locally available flavours. The family makes a wide variety of achar (fermented “pickle”) which accompanies any good dal bhat in Nepal. There is also an endless, fresh supply of buffalo milk and curd.

Around the house hangs garlic, onions, and ears of corn drying from their recent harvests. Goats and a buffalo (soon to be 2!) graze all day on freshly cut greens. Food is prepared on the outdoor wood stove. We want to provide access to this relaxing, organic, rural experience for volunteers, travellers and anyone seeking to slow down and enjoy a taste of rural Nepali life.

GBFON has offered to furnish one room in Bhupal’s new family house (currently under construction) with 2 beds, mattresses, sheets, blankets, pillows and curtains. Visitors will be requested to make a donation to the family of NPR1,000/USD\$10 (or more, if they choose) and this will include sleeping, 3 meals a day and all hot drinks. If successful, we will encourage (and potentially sponsor) other families in the village to establish Organic Homestays if they have an extra room at least some time. This will generate much needed income for local villagers.



Golden Bay Friendship Academy update

On average, Golden Bay Friendship Academy gets about 50-60 local children each morning from 6-9AM and afternoon from 3-6PM. The primary focus is teaching the students English, Computers and Organic Agriculture, but it is also a community centre where the kids can come and get exercise playing football or badminton, challenge their brains doing puzzles and playing chess, study yoga and meditation, draw, colour, be creative and express themselves. The Friendship Academy was born out of necessity (all the local schools were severely damaged in 2015) but as the government schools have re-opened, our Friendship Academy has re-invented itself to become a secondary learning (and playing) centre for local children.



Teacher salaries

Golden Bay Friendship Academy now employs 3 amazing staff - Bhupal (head teacher), Kopila (teacher for younger students) and Laxmi (agriculture and teacher for younger students). They are the heart and soul of the Golden Bay Friendship Academy and they bring the necessary love, care and happiness to encourage the students to come every day. We voted this year to give our awesome staff a 10% pay increase to keep up with the rising cost of life in Nepal. Teacher salaries (3 teachers) are as follows:

Per month (NZD) *11 months

Bhupal: NPR 22,000 (\$293) \$3226/year

Kopila: NPR 11,000 (\$147) \$1613/year

Laxmi: NPR 11,000 (\$147) \$1613/year

Total: NZD\$6,453.00 per year

Thank you (dhanyabad) Bhupal, Kopila and Laxmi! :)



Takaka Primary School

The students in Bhumlutar had a very fun, enjoyable and interesting connection with students from Takaka Primary School in Golden Bay, New Zealand with the LED projector purchased with your kind donations. We had a packed Academy and the excitement was noticeable. Each school sung 2 songs and then a handful of students introduced themselves and their environment. The students in Bhumlutar then made Pen Pal letters for their new friends in Golden Bay - hopefully the beginning of some meaningful, long-term friendships! Thanks to the students and teachers of Takaka Primary!



Student Art Swap

We also purchased some Nepali themed colouring books for the students to have some fun and be creative. The masterpieces and the Pen Pal letters have made their way back to Golden Bay with Rita to be incorporated into an art swap with the students at Takaka Primary School.



Teaching materials and games for exercise

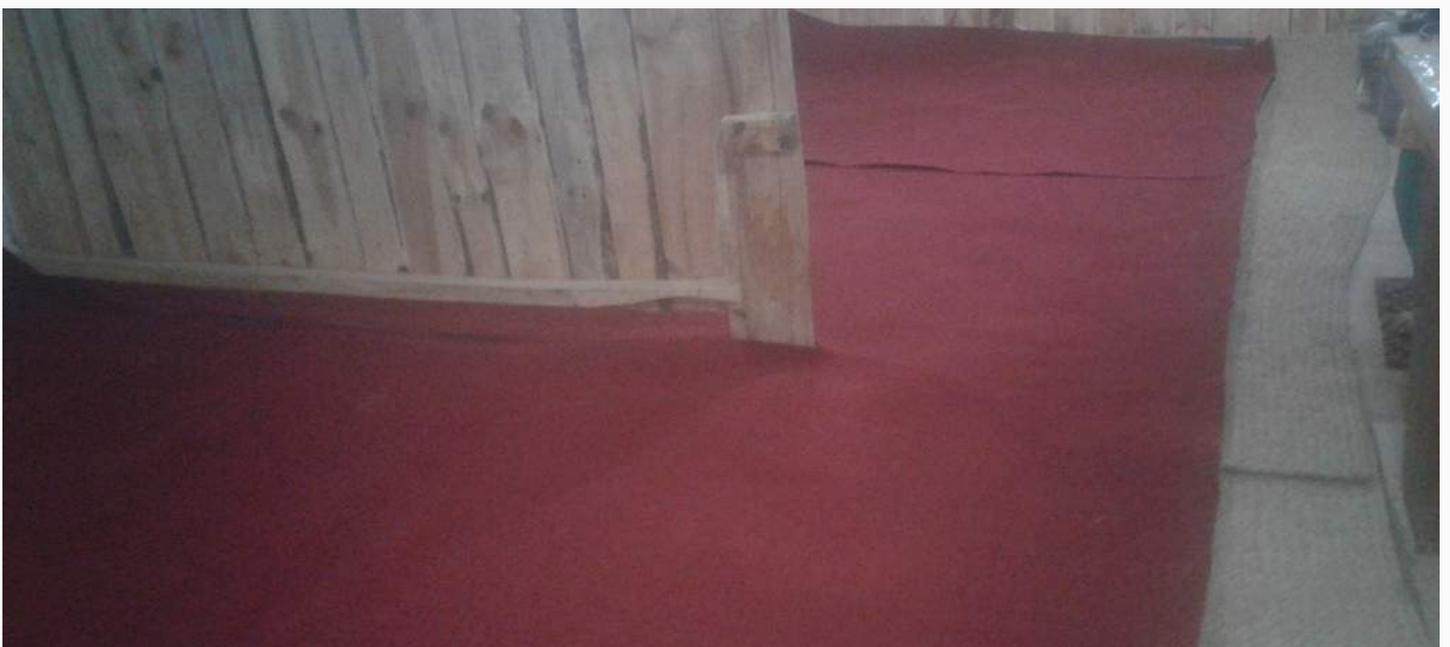
Cost: NPR 17,000 (NZD\$209)

Your donations purchased new textbooks, pens, drawing materials, teaching aids and 5 badminton sets & nets for exercise. We are also planning to purchase more art supplies and musical instruments.

Soft carpets for students

Cost: NPR 10,000 (NZD\$141)

The children sit and learn on the floor in Nepal, and we decided to purchase a soft floor mat to make learning and sitting more comfortable for the children. It will also be used for yoga classes.



Mushroom farming

Cost: NPR 20,000 (NZD\$281)

GBFON wants to provide income potential to local farmers. Growing mushrooms in dark rooms can provide a way for local farmers to produce a cash crop. Now that Bhupal, Kopila, Laxmi and the students have successfully grown mushrooms, we can start teaching others in the village.



21 new trees for local propagation

Cost: NPR 14,600 (NZD\$185.77)

We purchased the following varieties of organically grown and (where possible) grafted trees from Everything Organic Nursery: Thai melon (pepino), Grape (seedless Himrod), Fig, Macadamia, Peach, Apple (Chenango, Dorsett Golden, and Anna) Almond (Shalimar), Pecan, Nectarine

These plants and trees will be added to our growing collection in our Fruit Forest around Golden Bay Friendship Academy to feed the students and teach the locals. Once the trees are big enough, we will use grafting and air layering techniques learned at Everything Organic Nursery to begin distributing these new varieties around the village.



Organic Agriculture Sponsorship Program

Golden Bay Friends of Nepal sponsored 3 keen, motivated, green-fingered locals from Bhumlutar to attend introductory training at Everything Organic Nursery in Patlekhet. They visited the nursery to see all that can be successfully grown in Nepal, learn how to plant trees biodynamically, and to meet the team at Everything Organic Nursery (Judith, Binod and Shyam). Bhupal, Kopila and Laxmi are teaching villagers and students on-site about compost production, tree care, pest management, and more. We plan to provide free monthly training workshops for interested locals to learn new skills like constructing a small greenhouse or making natural pesticides.

In the coming year, Golden Bay Friends of Nepal will sponsor free on-site training workshops in Bhumlutar where interested students and villagers can receive free, training. We plan to provide free local (in-village) training to all interested locals from surrounding villages, distribute (non-hybrid, local) seeds after training, and encourage the local students and villagers to grow new varieties for their own consumption and/or for income generation.



Seed Beds, Seed Bank & Student Grow Plots

We all had fun preparing 3 biodynamic seedbeds next to Golden Bay Friendship Academy. After digging, we added biomass, leaf litter, compost and ash, then covered them with topsoil. Soon they will be full of seeds for distribution to the students and their families. We also dug 30 plots where the students will grow their own seasonal vegetables starting with lima beans and NZ spinach. We may even have a contest to see who can grow the tallest beans! Special thanks to our first volunteers in Bhumlutar Siti and Jyoti! We also hope to establish a local village Seed Bank for trading, sharing and exchange of local (non- hybrid) seeds.



Rainwater storage ponds - Adopt a Rainwater Pond in Bhumlutar

Cost: ~USD\$225 (NZD\$300)

Water in Bhumlutar is a more precious commodity than ever, especially since the earthquakes. Most water falls during the 4 months of the annual monsoon (June-September) with dry weather prevailing the other 8 months. This presents a challenge for growing high-value fruits, nuts and vegetables in the long dry season, unless villagers live close to a water supply. A solution is to dig large retaining holes, line them with heavy PVC plastic liners, and fill them with excess rainwater during the monsoon. The 20,000 litre liner costs about \$125 USD, the labour to dig the hole about \$70 and a small pipe to collect water from a nearby roof about \$20. If you would like to sponsor one, please get in touch!



Donated Laptop Computers

Cost: Free

We brought 4 more free, donated computers from NZ (a very nice MacBook Pro, an iPad, an Android tablet and a Netbook). We are always looking for functional laptops and tablets (with good batteries!) to take to Nepal and we have volunteers going in October and November so get in touch if you would like to donate an old device to the kids in Nepal.



LED projector for online learning

Cost: NZD\$105

We purchased a new portable LED projector for NZD\$105 and took it to Nepal for whiteboard teaching and to encourage more online learning. As you can imagine, it has been quite a hit with the local students! We also set up Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.com) online learning accounts for 18 (more advanced) students at Golden Bay Friendship Academy. Now they can progress at their own pace in various subjects in English. We can also monitor their progress from afar in Golden Bay!



Mosquito nets

Cost: NPR 11,000 (NZD\$147)

Mosquitos can be a problem during the wet monsoon so Golden Bay Friends of Nepal purchased 55 mosquito nets (each NPR200/USD1.85/NZD2.65) and our awesome volunteers Siti and Jyoti distributed them to our regular students and to a few local widows in need. In return they received lots and lots of local flowers from the students!



Ward Chairman (Village President) visit from Mr Muti Lal Lama
We were honoured to welcome Bhumlutar Ward Chairman (village president) Mr. Muti Lal Lama to Golden Bay Friendship Academy. We hope he enjoyed his visit. The students certainly enjoyed having him visit. He thanked us for our efforts in the village so far and he looks forward to helping us expand our progress into the surrounding areas. He particularly liked our idea of establishing Bhumlutar's inaugural homestay for volunteers and visitors and would like to see the homestay concept flourish in other local villages. It can be an excellent source of income and homestays are growing quickly around Nepal.



Goals for the coming year (FY2018-19)

- Establishment of local homestay program for hosting visitors and volunteers
- Plastic and rubbish management/reduction programme
- Solar dryer for dehydrating fruit, nuts, mushrooms
- Greenhouse building workshops (including materials for small greenhouses)
- Mushroom growing workshops for locals
- "Chill Out" zone for homestay guests/volunteers (for reading and relaxing)
- Composting toilet for homestay and Golden Bay Friendship Academy
- More rainwater storage ponds to enable food production in the dry season
- Free basic health course (sanitation, nutrition, first aid, sugar risks, etc)
- Establishment of fruit garden to feed children fruit during breaks
- Creation of women's group (weaving, seed saving, handicrafts, turkeys, etc)
- Creation of village cooperative to sell organic produce in Kathmandu
- Basic yoga and meditation course on Saturdays (adults and children)
- PenPal program and art swap with local Golden Bay schools
- Provide free agricultural training and workshops to local farmers
- Volunteer program for foreign students (English, agriculture, computing, etc)



Make a Donation (100% goes to Nepal)

If you would like to make a donation to support these (and future) efforts in Nepal, we invite you to make a donation (instructions below). We receive no salaries, travel expenses or compensation for running Golden Bay Friends of Nepal and never will. We run this charity with our donated time and energy as a way of giving back to our friends in Nepal.

NBS Account (NZ fee-free bank transfer)

GB Friends of Nepal has a fee-free account at Nelson Building Society.

Our account (number is: (03-1354-0368990-000).

Please feel free to make a donation at any time. You can also stop by the branch and make a donation. Just deposit it into "Golden Bay Friends of Nepal" account.

Give A Little (credit or debit card from anywhere)

<https://givealittle.co.nz/org/goldenbayfriendsofnepal>

GB Friends of Nepal is a registered New Zealand registered charity

GB Friends of Nepal has New Zealand charitable status which provides us with more opportunity to continue fundraising for our friends in Nepal.

Our NZ Charities Services registration number: CC53344

(Please note: because the majority of our donations are sent outside NZ we cannot offer tax deductibility at this time)



Thank you everyone! (Dheri, dheri dhanyabad!)

