

Society for Health, Environment and Women's Development



Helping is our Goal!

The Society for Health, Environment and Women's Development (SHEWD) is a non-governmental not-for-profit grassroots organization working in the rural Lalitpur district of Nepal. The people of the Lalitpur district are among the poorest in the whole country. The majority are farmers and craftspeople with an average annual income of less than 250 USD. This income clearly falls below the UN's poverty line of 1 USD per day.

Malnutrition, inadequate housing, illiteracy, lack of educational and vocational training for young people, unemployment, and lack of proper healthcare are just some of the problems residents face.

There had been only little not-for-profit intervention in the area until 1998, when local villagers decided it was time to take action to combat the poverty. Since its founding, SHEWD has been dedicated to working for the interests of the poor on issues of health, income-generation, environment and women's empowerment. Today, our NGO has a board of 8 and over 60 local volunteers. Our entire staff works on a voluntary basis, meaning all funding flows directly into our projects.

The Society for Health, Environment and Women's Development, GPO 8975 EPC 2121 Kathmandu, +977-9841299009, shewd@hipkmit.com, www.hipkmit.com

Healthcare Programme

Only a healthy society is productive!

We strongly believe that only a healthy society can be productive enough to develop. This is why SHEWD emphasizes on providing basic medical care to people in remote areas deprived of medical facilities.

Key achievements of this programme have been two successful "Eye Camps". Eye problems were a key healthcare concern for the villagers of the rural Lalitpur district.

SHEWD, therefore, organized two free "Eye Camps", where over a 1000 villagers had their eyes checked and were given medication. A total of 26 villagers underwent successful eye surgeries. Due to these much-needed surgeries these patients were spared from blindness and a life in isolation.

Our experience from the two "Eye Camps" has shown that there is an urgent need for a "Women's Health Camp" in the region. Many local women suffer from gynecological problems but lack the means of consulting specialized medical care. SHEWD is, therefore, organizing a "Women's Health Camp", for spring 2008. Though, the Nepalese Government has promised free medical healthcare for the poor, we strongly doubt that free gynecological healthcare will soon be available in the rural Lalitpur district. If you'd like to learn more about how you can support our "Women's Health Camp", please do not hesitate to contact us.



Environment Programme

We like a save environment!

The main objective of the environmental programme is twofold. Firstly, our projects aim to raise awareness among villagers of the impact of their actions on the environment and second, to inform villagers how a healthy environment is closely linked to the general health of the villagers.

Key achievements of this programme have been different awareness raising and teaching camps for the villagers in the rural Lalitpur district. Also, SHEWD held a conference with 30 participants of three Village Development Committees on the problem of safe rubbish disposal and encouraged habitants to clean unhealthy sites and households to reuse, recycle, and reduce refuse. SHEWD organized also an Environment Day, where a group of 200 students and 130 members of various local organizations passed through 3 different villages raising awareness of the need to combat deforestation and tackle pollution and carbon dioxide emissions.

As a result of our projects, the villages are now significantly cleaner and both sewage and rubbish disposals have improved and health risks have diminished.



Mother Earns, Daughter Learns

We knit the way you like it!

The biggest burden of poverty clearly falls on women. Most of them are illiterate and unskilled, spend their lives isolated, are often abused, and have only little access to power and decision making in their families and community.

Hipknit is SHEWDs micro-credit programme providing free training for women in knitting, cross-knitting and weaving. The project aims to empower, raise living standards, and help create a network for the women, breaking them free of social and economic isolation.

So far, 30 women from rural areas knit sweaters, hats, and scarves amongst other products, using organic wool, cotton and hemp. The only investment the women make is 40 NR (0.60 USD) for two knitting needles. SHEWD strictly applies fair trade principles: the women earn 150 NR (around 2 USD) a day - significantly more than what is paid by other buyers. The increased income has enhanced the women's socioeconomic status and is being used to send their children to school. Our aim is to increase this project to 60 women within the next two years by selling our products to Fairtrade Stores in Europe and the United States.



You can directly support these women by buying their handicrafts on www.hipknit.com.

IT Programme

Technology is the Future!

Nepal suffers from severe brain drain, with educated youth leaving the country to search for jobs abroad. Current statistics suggest that a total of 20'000 young Nepalis are leaving the country every month. In doing so, they face the risk of exploitation, while Nepal loses a major resource. At SHEWD we believe that one of the solutions could be in technology, which is why we early set up an IT Programme.

Our first project started in 1999, with the establishment of the Oracle Computer School for poor youth in order to increase their employability through basic computer skills. Approximately 200 students successfully graduated from the Oracle Computer School. With the increase in the number of competent computer schools in the area, the need for computer training has become less pressing, which is why SHEWD is looking into other projects related to employment and technology.



SHEWD is currently looking for BPO contracts for Data Entry and Processing Services in order to create jobs in our area. Unfortunately most contracts are outsourced to India, even though Nepal has over 20'000 recently graduated IT professionals. Our aim is to employ within the next two years over 50 young professionals on a full-time basis with a minimum monthly salary of 3500 NR (around 55 USD).

Support us

It is easy!

Buy our products on Hipknit:

SHEWD believes in sustainable development through steady income generation. By buying high quality knitwear and beautiful Pashminas from www.hipknit.com you support directly the women involved in our micro-credit programme. You can also help by letting your friends, family and local fair trade stores know about our *hipknit* products and referring them to our website.

Volunteer with SHEWD

We happily accept applications from people that are willing to donate their time to our projects. We are especially looking for volunteers with skills and experience in the following fields: Fundraising, Marketing, Healthcare, Teaching, Financing, IT, Agriculture and Retail.

You can also support us directly from your home. We are often in need for translators, and SHEWD members that represent us at local trade shows and conventions in order to increase our global network.

For volunteer opportunities please contact us via e-mail: shewd@hipknit.com or shewd2001@yahoo.com. You can also directly apply online on www.hipknit.com.

Donating

All donations are gladly accepted. Unfortunately it is very complicated to make credit card payments to Nepal. If you do wish to donate, please to so by bank transfer to the following account:

A/c Name: SHEWD – Hipknit
Bank Name: Bank of Kathmandu Ltd.
Address: Kathmandu, Nepal
Account No: 010000043239