



Pipal Tree/Lily's Leaves/Mithila Wildlife Trust education programme 2023 - 2024

1. Introduction

Pipal Tree's open-ended Mission is:

"We empower the most disadvantaged people in Nepal towards living productive, fulfilling, and healthy lives through improving education, offering training opportunities and by the restoration of their natural environment. We focus primarily on women and girls, the lowest castes, marginalised ethnic groups, and disabled people."

We operate mainly in Madhesh Province which is one of seven Provinces in Nepal, comprising eight of the country's 77 Districts. Despite being Nepal's most populous Province, it has been historically neglected with a range of factors feeding into grinding poverty, marginalisation/exclusion and a lack of opportunity for social or economic progress.

In general, we take a holistic, community-based approach to our projects with, for example, our education projects being conducted in the same areas where we are implementing reforestation and rewilding activities. We implement our projects through two local organisations: The Janakpur-based NGO The Mithila Wildlife Trust (MWT) and the Kathmandu-based social enterprise "Lily's Leaves". These two organisations coordinate very closely on the ground with, for example, Lily's Leaves providing training and employment to young women from Madhesh Province alongside distributing school rucksacks and dignity pads (reusable sanitary pads) made at Lily's Leaves to schools in the same area.

This document outlines our educational provision since we began operating in Madhesh Province in February 2020 and our plans for how these will be extended and funded sustainably.

2. Educational provision to date

Pipal Tree is prepared to fund capital and revenue projects that support the education of children from the poorest communities; these can be from Hindu Dalit (untouchable) caste groups such as Musahar ("rat-eater"), Dom or Paman, Janjati groups (hill and indigenous people from ethnic minorities) or from the Muslim community (which is generally considered to be even more disadvantaged than the Hindu untouchables).

Financial support can be for community schools or for Community Learning Centres (CLCs) based upon a model developed by MWT (note that we do **not** provide funding to private schools). A CLC offers educational support that may represent an entry point for children to join mainstream education or support children who are already attending school. Helping the latter category with their homework and extra tuition – support that they cannot get at home from illiterate parents – reduces the risk of drop-out and, in turn, child marriage. The tutors are college students from the same low-caste groups who receive modest salaries that allow them to complete their studies. Upon completing college, the students must move on to allow other students the same opportunity. Of course, these tutors also act as role models for the children.



In 2020, using grant funding from the McGough Foundation, we built a new CLC at Dhanushadham which has already reached full capacity, with 250 children attending daily, before and after their classes at the local school. Anecdotally, we are told that “the children attend our CLC to get their education and only attend school to qualify for educational certificates”. Four years ago, a former CLC tutor and his brother were the first two members of the Musahar community from Dhanusha to be enlisted into the Nepal army.

In respect of mainstream education, we have funded capital projects at two schools. Grant funding from Guy’s Trust enabled us to construct a computer room at Bhatighadi school in 2021 and in 2023 a gift of £60,000 from a major donor has allowed work to begin on building a new classroom block. In addition, we have funded an extra support teacher, Jina Sherpa. This school provides education to children from the local community which has been involved in our highly successful reforestation programme. The Chairman of the local Community Forest Users Group (CFUG) is also the Chairman of the school committee, and he is committed to ensuring that all the children from his community will attend a revitalised school. In August 2021, the Prime Minister of Nepal presented this Chairman with a national award for the top CFUG in Nepal (placed first out of 22,000).



Bhatighadi school computer room

The second school that we have helped is a Madrasa where we funded the construction of an additional floor in return for the school undertaking to also send the children to the local school that follows the national curriculum. We do not anticipate further developments at this school.

In 2023, we completed the building of a new CLC at Saghara (again funded by Guy’s Trust) and at Pasman Tol (funded by Eleos Compliance and the Allen and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust). Both of these communities border the Kamala River in Dhanusha District and suffered badly through floods and latterly during COVID lockdowns and there was no educational provision for children.



As part of the local collaboration between Lily’s Leaves and MWT, Lily Katuwal (the Founder of Lily’s Leaves) has distributed free school rucksacks and dignity pads to community schools in Madhesh Province. Lily uses these visits as an opportunity to speak to girls about menstrual health and to boys about the need to respect girls while they are having their periods. We have also distributed purchased warm clothing for schoolchildren to encourage attendance in winter months.

3. Future Educational Needs

These may be summarised as follows:

Capital projects:

- a. New CLC at Babbargunj, Sarlahi District

In 2024 we plan to open a new CLC collocated with a new Lily's Leaves production centre at Babbargunj in Sarlahi District. This will involve construction of a second floor on an existing community-owned building at an estimated cost of £11,200. We aim to fund this through our Big Give Christmas Challenge 2023.

b. An extension CLC building at Dhanushadham

Our first CLC built at Dhanushadham has been a victim of its own success with classes having to be conducted in shifts according to age of students. We require grant funding to build an extension at a cost of £25,200.

Revenue projects:

c. CLC operating costs

We will aim to raise £20,000 through a Big Give Women and Girls appeal in October 2023, for which £15,000 is already in place as pledges. This fund will support paying of female CLC tutors for the coming 2-3 years, and can be topped up as the need arises. Aside from that we require funding support for the operation of the existing CLC at Dhanushadham and for the new CLCs at Pasma Tol, Saghara and Babbargunj. The budget for each for 2023/2024 is:

- Dhanushadham: £5,650
- Pasma Tol/Saghara: £5,955
- Babbargunj: £3,850

f. Support teacher costs

We have been funding an additional teacher at Bhatighadi School since late 2020. The budget for this teacher for 2023 is £5,500. We wish to build upon our CLC tutor programme by offering former tutors the chance of further employment as support teachers at other schools, ideally within the same community areas. The budget for this in 2024 would be £7,630, rising to £8,400 in 2025. We hope that this revenue expenditure can be met by a sister charity using an approach that will resemble the [Teach for Nepal](#) support teacher programme.

g. Bursary scheme

As a new initiative, from the start of the 2023 academic year (April), we will provide bursaries to children (mainly girls) who have proven academic ability that will allow them to continue in school. The budget for 2024 is £3,200. Again, hopefully this can be met by a sister operational charity.

h. Material support

Lily's Leaves will continue to produce school rucksacks and dignity pads for free distribution to children at the poorest schools in 2023. Production will shift from Kathmandu to the new production centre at Babbargunj, thereby reducing overheads. Funds for this will arise from our Big Give Christmas Challenge appeals in December 2023. The budget is £40,000.

4. Fundraising and sustainability

We meet budget, and can do so sustainably, by adopting a broad approach to fundraising:

- Collaboration with other **operational** charities in Joint Ventures.
- Through applications to **grant-making Trusts** e.g. Guy's Trust
- Through three Big Give appeals per year (Christmas for Lily's Leaves, spring for Education and autumn for Women and Girls) where we use pledges from corporates/Foundations/major donors to incentivise (match) online public donations during one-week- long appeals. We may operate on the basis of reciprocal pledges to partner charities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Holmes'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'P' and a distinct 'H'.

Philip Holmes
Lt Col (retd)
Founder/CEO
6th August 2023