

**EDUCATE THE CHILDREN
GLOBAL GIVING PROJECT
HELP 832 WOMEN IN NEPAL START THEIR OWN BUSSINESSES**

EDUCATE THE CHILDREN:

Established in 1990, Educate the Children (ETC) is committed to working with communities in Nepal to overcome poverty and improve standards of living (including health) through adult and child education. Since 1994, ETC has employed has successfully implemented its programs in five districts of Nepal.

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world and women in Nepal routinely suffer from lack of access to education, money and technology. Barely 25% of Nepali women are literate and face systematic discrimination due to institutionalized chauvinism and a pronounced cultural preference for sons in Nepali society. Women in the highly-marginalized Dalit (“untouchable”) and Thangmi (a low-caste ethnic group) population, with whom ETC’s works, are most likely to be subject to crippling poverty and exclusion.

ETC’s current work focuses on women and girls in the rural Dolakha District (a rural region, located North-East of Kathmandu, and borders Tibet). There are three core programs that comprise ETC’s work: children’s education, women’s groups (literacy, microcredit and health), and agricultural development to improve food availability, nutrition, and household income.

External evaluations repeatedly verify that ETC’s work makes a real and lasting difference in the lives of children, families and communities. A recent independent evaluation revealed some amazing statistics on the impact of ETC programs and their lasting contribution to the lives of the participants. Here are some of the highlights:

- 91% of women who participate in ETC women’s group programs achieve basic literacy, passing the literacy exam, compared to the national women’s literacy rate of 53%.
- After learning how to cultivate and sell their kitchen garden excess, the average household income of women’s group participants is on average 15,347 Rupees higher than non-participant households.
- 100% of women’s group participants enroll their children in school, which results in a significantly lower dropout rate in ETC areas (at all grade levels) than the national average.

EDUCATE THE CHILDREN WOMEN’S GROUPS:

Women’s Groups are at the heart of ETC’s work. These groups begin as literacy classes and become revolving-loan microcredit groups. They progress through a variety of activities and trainings including toilet building, health and sanitation, potable water, kitchen gardening, sustainable agriculture, market surplus to improve household income, legal literacy, and animal husbandry.

The combination of interdependent and mutually reinforcing microcredit, agricultural income generation training, health education, sanitation, kitchen gardening and the formation of cooperatives within the context of an integrated cross-generational educational program of social change is innovative, effective, and sustainable.

Especially significant is the fact that the local institutions (women's groups and cooperatives) created by this project are specifically designed to continue to carry on activities after ETC has phased out its direct implementation. This phase-out is done over the course of a one-year period in year 6; all program activities are explicitly designed around, and oriented toward, this period from the very first contact with the community. Past project areas have successfully make this transition, with women's groups and cooperatives continuing today, years after phase-out of direct implementation by ETC.

For the last two years, Educate the Children has operated primarily in the Dolakha District of Nepal. ETC Nepal Executive Director, Mira Rana, reports that one key component to women's empowerment and self-sufficiency, including income generation, is the agriculture training and education they receive through ETC. In the past two years, ETC's agriculture program has made a tremendous impact. *Here are a few examples:*

- 3 Agriculture Demonstration Farms have been established
- 665 women's group members received bio-pesticide training
- 90 women's group members received compost-making training
- 20 women have started semi-commercial vegetable farming
- 42 women's group members received soil-solarization training
- 46 women's group members received intensive vegetable production training

GLOBAL GIVING PROJECT:

With the support of Global Giving we aim to raise \$30,000 to enable 832 women from the poorest sector of society to start their own businesses. Working with already-established ETC Women's Group members, ETC will provide them with the funds and skills necessary to provide for their families and dramatically improve the future for themselves, their children, and their community.

Specifically and with the support of Global Giving donors, ETC will strive to accomplish the following:

- Provide funds in the form of micro loans for Women's Group members to start income-generating business
- Offer nine-week advanced literacy and numeracy classes
- Provide intensive agriculture training and supplies so as help women launch ago-income generating business
- Provide intensive husbandry training for women to start livestock and dairy businesses (chicken, goats, cows and buffalo)
- Hold intensive record-keeping and savings workshops necessary for all new business ventures
- Hold small business/retail establishment training for women wanting to start tea shops, inns, produce markets and textile businesses.

This work will not only have a lasting impact on the lives of these 832 women but will directly benefit their families and their communities for generations to come. It will help break the cycle of extreme poverty and malnutrition and provide these people with a great sense of self worth and hopeful future.