

ROKPA



TIMES



We need your help. Please send a donation now! Thank you.
29th year / November 2009

Postkonto 80-19029-5
www.rokpa.org



Dear ROKPA Friends

I am happy that one of the most talented Hollywood directors has found his way to ROKPA. I am talking about Marc Forster (see page 14), a unique talent, whose name has definitely become known world wide since the last James Bond movie. **Marc Forster is our now ambassador on the international stage.**

His willingness to get involved in ROKPA activities shows once again how important the work of our charity is – especially in Tibet. Since 1990 ROKPA works intensively for the interests of Tibetans who are living on Chinese soil today. Particularly close to our heart are all those children who became orphaned or homeless street children through strokes of fate. Without support from the outside they have hardly a chance to escape misery and poverty.

What they need urgently is education! In addition they need healthy food, a safe dwelling, suitable clothes and more than anything someone who believes in them and takes care of them.

For this reason this year's proceeds from the ROKPA Gala on the 26th of November will go entirely towards the Veit-Wyler Education-Fund for Tibet. I founded this fund in honour of my late father. As ROKPA's co-founder it was always an issue of his heart to enable well motivated children and young people from poorest backgrounds to get a good education. An education beyond the obligatory nine school years.

The rate of illiteracy in Tibet is still one of the highest world wide! Even if the Chinese government will pay the fees for the obligatory school years, countless Tibetan parents cannot afford sending their children to school because they have no money for transport, food, school materials and clothing.

Here the concrete help of ROKPA sets in – so that as many Tibetan children as possible can learn to read, write and calculate. And most of all so that they receive professional training or the opportunity for academic studies.

I continue to be amazed how diligent and gifted the students are, that ROKPA recruits from the poorest levels of society. For them school and homework are not an unwelcome ordeal – quite the contrary: they feel privileged to be able to go to school and usually help the younger children in an exemplary way, since they know very well what it is like to be poor! In this way they quite naturally become ROKPA associates!

Therefore I beg you with all my heart: Support our educational projects in Tibet with your donation! **The people who live in Tibet urgently need qualified young people if they are to escape poverty and preserve their culture in the long term.**

With all the best wishes in this Christmas period

your Lea Wyler

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People who can neither read nor write have no means of connecting with modern society.

No future without school education!

In China there are tens of thousands of Tibetan orphaned children who have little chance of an education. Although the government will pay the school fees from the 1st to the 9th grade, the ones who can't raise the money for transport, food, books and clothes remains excluded. ROKPA INTERNATIONAL has therefore taken an leading role in order to enable even the poorest Tibetan children to visit a school.

By Marie-Luce Le Febve de Vivy

The right of education and training is one of the most important of children's rights. Every child world wide should at least be given the chance to visit primary school. This is what was stated in the UN convention of children's rights which was passed in 1989 and ratified by all countries in the world except the USA and Somalia.

20 years later, unfortunately reality still looks very sad. According to a current study of

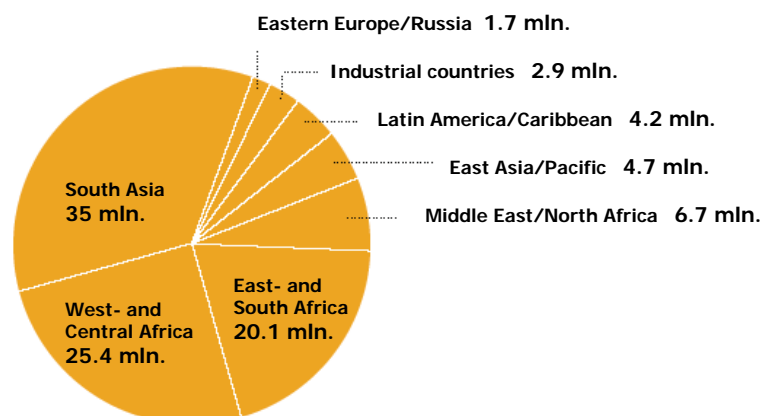
UNICEF, 101 million children of primary school age are excluded from school (see diagram), although it has long been known that school education is the most important factor in order to escape poverty! 88 per cent of the children who don't receive a chance to learn to read, write and calculate, live in Africa and Asia.

Most Tibetans are illiterate.

Especially disadvantaged are children from poor and rural areas, girls and handicapped children – this also goes for Tibet.

Most Tibetan children grow up as poor nomad or farmer's children in rural areas, where there are but few schools. The level of education is very low because there is a lack of qualified teachers. The world bank estimates that only 38% of men and 13% of women can read and write! The scant life full of privations in the remote high valleys also demands countless human lives each year through avalanches, land slides, car accidents and sickness. Countless are the children who have lost one or both parents and are left to their own devices if they are not taken in by relatives. They often have no other chance than to scratch along by begging.

Children of primary school age, who do not go to school Source: UNICEF2009





ROKPA President Dr. Akong Tulku Rinpoche makes random visits in Tibetan schools every year.

China. Since, during the past years, an increasing number of relief organisations have abandoned this region, the Tibetan people urgently needs support to educate and promote qualified juniors. ROKPA's education programmes have supported over 10,000 children and students of poverty-stricken family backgrounds year after year. ROKPA has also built own schools and provided advanced training to teachers, both male and female. Furthermore, ROKPA engages significantly in the preservation of the Tibetan language and so far has edited 32 different schoolbooks in Tibetan, from algebra over history to physics. «Gannan Girls School», the boarding school built by ROKPA in Khenlo, was meanwhile defined as exemplary institution by the Chinese authorities. There, 150 Tibetan girls – escaped from desperate conditions - are given board, lodging and education. Without ROKPA's intervention their future would have been a sad one: At the best, they would be tending yaks and sheep, but a great number of them would have ended as drudges or prostitutes.



Subsistence costs are high

During the first nine years at school a child receives 3.3 Yuan per day for meals from the Government. However, in Yushu, a town where food is easily available, a child needs 14.5 Yuan daily in order to be adequately fed (breakfast 4 Yuan, lunch 6 Yuan, supper 4.5 Yuan). In isolated areas, meals are accordingly more expensive. University students even need 40 to 50 Yuan per day, but do not receive any support from the Government. ROKPA helps there, too.

Development of prices in Yuan: (1 CHF = approx. 5.8 Yuan)

	1998	2007	2008
Butter, 500 g	5	15	25
Tsampa	0.5	2	4
Meat	3	10.5	23

Please help now and donate education!

The total proceeds of this year's ROKPA Gala of 26 November are to the benefit of the Veit-Wyler Education Fund for Tibet. Nevertheless, we are still in urgent need of further donations.

Schooling material: Please provide a child with books and stationery – **CHF 80 per year**

Guaranteed education: Please donate schooling including board, lodging and clothes to an orphan. **One month - CHF 80, one full school year - CHF 960**

Academic education: Please donate university studies to a gifted orphan - **CHF 3,450 per year**

Qualified teachers: Please donate an annual salary for a Tibetan teacher - **CHF 3,600**. For a university lecturer - **CHF 11,000**

We thank you for your donation – endorsement: Veit-Wyler Education Fund No. 7810 – to:

- Bank account: ROKPA, No. 0065-0455090-11-1, at Clariden Leu AG, Bahnhofstrasse 32, 8022 Zurich
- Postal account: ROKPA 80-19029-5

For nomad children the way is particularly hard

Two girl students and one boy student from Tibet tell us how – in spite of adverse fate - they undertake everything to complete their studies and thus be able to help others one day.

Barbara Pfeiffer and Lea Wyler from Tibet



Lijang Döndrup (21 years)

«I want to write books on Tibetan culture!»

I was born in Rebgong, could go to primary school at the age of six and then for further six years to a secondary school, where I benefited from a ROKPA scholarship. My father had been a teacher for Tibetan and mathematics, which is fairly uncommon since the bulk of my nomad family cannot read or write. My father died when I was 17. At that time, my sister was 13 and my younger brother 12. My mother was very sad and our uncle decided that one of the children had to stay at home with my mother in order to help her in the fields. Although the choice fell on me, my mother

preferred my sister on this job since I had already gone to school longer than the others. However, as my sister refused and insisted to go to school by all means, my younger brother stepped into the breach and promised to work so hard that both of us would be able to complete our education. I started my studies at the

Qinghai Normal University in Xining in 2006 and tried all sorts of things to earn money in my spare time – for instance as a singer in bars. When I was 18, the Television of Qinghai engaged

me as quizmaster more than once and paid me 200 Yuan for six days. Furthermore, I wrote poems and articles for journals and was compensated with 20 to 30 Yuan each time. But now I have no more time for such odd jobs; also my tutors at university found that I was too good a good student to waste my time.





political sciences. In January 2010, I want to pass the exams for my bachelor degree; after another three years, I will apply for the master degree.

However, this needs money (see box on page 8). So far, I could borrow the money for the university fees, but my mother and my brother have to pay for food and clothes. They work extremely hard and sometimes even lack food for themselves – only to enable me to continue my studies. Upon termination of my studies I would like to work as a project manager for ROKPA or as a teacher in a secluded area – wherever fate will send me. I am happy that, being a nomad child, I have accomplished so much.

Delha (20 years)

«I want to be a an English teacher and a modern woman!»

Our family consisted of my grandparents, my mother and me. My father had left us for another woman when I was six months old. At the age of seven, I started primary school. With ROKPA's help I could subsequently frequent and complete the secondary school in Dzamthang. At that time I had a very impressive dream: I was absolutely desperate to learn English. When somebody came to our school to choose the best pupils, I was very lucky. Together with two girlfriends I could go to Xining and study English with one of the country's best teachers.

My mother had to care not only for me, but also for my grandparents in spite of her poor health. But she was marvellous! (*Delha puts her hands on her heart and starts crying.*) When I returned home from the training programme in Xining she fell very ill. (*Delha cries heartbreakingly.*)

She had a terrible headache and I brought her to hospital, where she

remained for one month. On New Year's Day, my mother died of a stroke. (*After crying for a while, Delha braces herself and says:*) Now, our family consists of my grandfather, my grandmother and me. They are very old, but they help me wherever they can although they are so poor.

I will do anything in order to meet my objective.

My main subject at the Khampa University in Dartsendo is Tibetan, although my dream persists to become an English teacher for we are living in a modern society and I want to keep up on an international level. I still have to learn a lot, but after all the suffering I experienced I will give everything to make my dream reality.

Please help me to make my dream come true!

Should I ever be a rich woman, I would help the poor, particularly those living in Tibetan regions just because poverty is so frequent here.

No more time for odd jobs

Today I study from 6 in the morning till 11 o'clock at night; I have to learn a lot by heart. I dream to become a university lecturer and to write books on the Tibetan culture. Unfortunately, many of these books are full of mistakes, and I would like to correct them. Even though Qinghai Television has meanwhile offered me a job for 2000 Yuan (!), I will not accept it as I think it vital for my studies to prevail.

During my education I have been awarded over ten prizes of excellence in various subjects (see photo). Quite recently I have been selected – together with another student – to best student of over 1000 applicants. I am now studying Tibetan language in the fourth year. Further subjects are Buddhism, Tibetan culture, literature and history as well as



Should I even become very wealthy, I would buy houses, food and clothes for these people – no matter young or old. For the time being, I do not possess anything, but my dream is so compelling that it must come true.

ROKPA Tibet

Kang Lha (20 years):

«I want to teach nomad children.»

My parents separated when I was a very young child. Therefore, I often had to lend a hand to my mother. I have two elder and two younger brothers as well as an uncle. The nomads' work is rigorously split into women's work and men's work. Women have to milk the Dris, i.e. the female yaks. This has to be done very early in the morning. So I had to get up with my mother in the morning at four in order to help her milking. Subsequently, I had my very special task: to gather the yak dung and to spread it for drying for we use it as fuel. Only then got we breakfast; we always ate Tsampa with yoghurt. Afterwards I had to bring the little calves to the pastures as we kept them separate from their mothers. At lunchtime I fetched them back and had a small meal, mostly Tsampa with yoghurt, very rarely ravioli filled with tomatoes. When in the afternoon my brother had brought back the cows from the pasture, we had to milk again. The calves could then stay with their mothers out at feed until nightfall when we had to bring them back and tie them up. If the weather was bad, we sometimes spent hours in their search. I often cried from exhaustion because we could not give up until all animals were found and tied up. It happened frequently that I could only go to bed at 11 o'clock at night



I fell asleep crying and thinking: «Why must I lead such a hard life? Am I not too young for this?»

When I was seven, everything changed.

My two elder brothers had never gone to school, but when I was seven, the Government decreed that of every nomad family one child should go to school. So my mother sent me to primary school. When the six years were over, she said: «I would like to be proud of you, my daughter. Therefore I will send you to Dzamthang secondary school.»

There, ROKPA paid for my education.

I had such good marks that I was invited to study English in Xining. I passed the entrance exam, where

only 30 of 700 applicants were accepted. So lucky was I! After two years and a half there, I returned to Dzamthang to prepare the university entrance diploma. And now I have been at Khampa University in Dartsendo and have studied Tibetan for one year.

Unfortunately, my uncle, who had supported me financially, died last year, and my mother could not pay tuition fees, board and lodging for me, but **thanks to ROKPA I could continue my studies!** This makes me so happy for now I know that I can repay the good I have experienced in my life. I am dreaming to become a teacher in the country where the nomads live. It is my firm intention to become a popular teacher so that the children like to come to school.

In case I should have a lot of money one day, I would give it to the poor – exactly as ROKPA does – to the beggars in the street, who lack food, decent clothes and a home and are not welcome anywhere. In particular, however, I would help the poor children to get education. I would do anything for them for I know too well how hard a life without education is!



Formerly, Kang Lha slept on the floor in a nomad tent. This berth is now her little paradise.

Please help poor nomad children to obtain a university degree.

Please help particularly gifted students such as Lijang, Delha and Kang Lha to study and graduate. They will have an extremely positive influence on the new generation for their own fate and their poor background have made them recognize how important it is to assist and promote others.

A Tibetan student needs approx. **CHF 3,450** per year:
CHF 1,000 for university fees and accommodation in a dormitory
CHF 2,000 for meals
CHF 250 for books
CHF 200 for clothes

We thank you for your donation – endorsement: Veit-Wyler Fund for Higher Education No. 7810 – to:

- Bank account: ROKPA, No. 0065-0455090-11-1, at Clariden Leu AG, Bahnhofstrasse 32, 8022 Zurich
- Postal account: ROKPA 80-19029-5



Left: For years the highly gifted Lhamo Giap was the best student in his class. During his school holidays he offered the children in his village free tutoring in the subjects of English, Chinese, Tibetan as well as mathematics. **Right:** After many years in Europe, Dröntso is now living again in Tibet with her Canadian husband.

ROKPA Hires Young Talent

This year Dröntso and Lhamo Giap will join the ROKPA project inspection tour for the first time. This means that they will be visiting many places in their homeland that they've never seen before.

Dröntso, the pretty 28-year-old, grew up in a nomadic region, where as a small child her father – a doctor of Tibetan medicine – carried her in a sack tied to his back as he visited his patients. The family later moved to the city of Dartsendo, and Dröntso felt an ever stronger desire to travel to other countries. One day Akong Rinpoche visited the family. As a little girl she would often sit on his lap, and he knew about her wishes. “Would you like to travel to Germany? There is a family there and you can spend a year with them as an au-pair.” And so the courageous 18-year-old headed overseas. She spent a year with the family of Barbara Pfeiffer, ROKPA's representative in Germany. This

was Dröntso's first contact with ROKPA's work. Afterwards she continued her education in Beijing, as she continued to learn German, English and accounting. She then met the man that would become her husband, Paul, who took her to Spain, where she also learned Spanish and worked. The couple now lives in Chengdu. With her extensive foreign and professional experience as well as her charming personality, Dröntso has the best qualifications to work for ROKPA in the future not just as a translator, but also as a project manager. Lhamo Giap, the smart, tall 24-year-old, is a kind of whiz kid. He didn't begin attending school until he was 11, because his grandparents (whom he spent his early childhood with), wouldn't let him go to school. Then his parents took him back and he began his education. Unfortunately his mother died a short time later in an accident at a construction site. His family was so poor that that the other children teased him because he didn't have a his *tsampa* as they did. And yet he s much butter in was always the best student in

school, which is why he began attending teacher's college after finishing secondary school. There he was put forward for the English Training Program in Xining, where in a short time he was able to make great strides with the language. On this first trip he gained important experience and developed a sense of the challenges facing him for his further education. Wherever he goes Lhamo Giap collects the telephone numbers of young ladies and he certainly has many young lady friends. ...

In between the ROKPA project tours, both Dröntso and Lhamo Giap will be continuing their educations as translators at universities. ROKPA is also planning on sending them next year or the year after to Europe, where they will spend a year in an intensive project management program, so that they can better understand the western mentality. This will allow them, in turn, to independently inspect ROKPA projects and issue reports.

Lea's Children Write



Dear Mum,
Since you left Nepal a few weeks ago much has happened. We celebrated Darshain (Nepal's largest annual celebration in honor of the goddess Durga, which lasts ten days). The children were on holiday from school. Some traveled to their relatives. We celebrated with the 15 children who stayed behind, serving mommou, chicken and samosas. Your sons and the new ROKPA employees Sagar and Hemraj served night duty. We kept Pemba here with us, since his mother isn't doing so well at the moment. Little Rajen traveled home but soon returned, because his mother is addicted to drugs. Kedar (16) is helping his mother rebuild their small hut, which was swept away during the last monsoon. We are helping him out with the work, which is being financed by a generous Swiss donor. Ganesh Dai (our doorman), Radha Miss (our secretary), Parbati (who cares for the little ones), Shiva (the guesthouse doorman and soup kitchen cook), as well as all the workers at the ROKPA women's workshop also had a holiday. Some children have already begun school again, while others have a whole month free. We paint a lot with the children who have holidays. Pabitra (22) was accepted into college and is now completing a bachelor's degree in tourism.

To sum up, the children at the ROKPA Children's Home are all doing well. Kelsang (20) left today and says goodbye to everyone. As the best student at the hotel college in Kathmandu, she has been chosen to complete an internship at the Hilton Hotel in Malaysia!

Ram Hari is a ROKPA child. Now 26, he is married and has a daughter. He has been working at the ROKPA Children's Home for five years. He was recently made the Guesthouse manager and ROKPA has just named him a Trustee Manager in Nepal as well.

Micro Credit as a Great Opportunity

Single mothers usually end up on the street in Nepal – together with their children. Instead of a social network, they are looked down upon with contempt by passers-by.

Disabled individuals and abandoned mothers have a particularly difficult time in Nepal. Social assistance is virtually unknown. If a man leaves a woman and their common children, the family must survive by begging on the streets and is subject to great humiliation. Beggars are spit on and even trampled. Women on the street are often raped at night. It's no wonder that many marginalized mothers fall – silently and unnoticed.

Here ROKPA is offering a first step in the fight against poverty. It is offering micro loans to single women who have mastered a trade but can't find work due to their social status. The assistance is customized to individual needs. A solution is found for the supervision or education of their children and repayment is also adapted to their specific situations. In this way ROKPA is attempting to reduce the enormous pressure put on these women as much as possible, and to lead them step by step towards an independent future. ROKPA often sets up small market stands for mothers who have no previous knowledge. These loans do not, however, have to be paid back.

Sunita's Story

Sunita and her husband were doing well for themselves. They owned their own small tailor's shop, where they produced clothing for monks, hats for lamas, belts and other accessories. Yet one day her husband sold the sewing machine as well as all the family's other possessions and left Sunita for another woman. Sunita fell into utter poverty – no man, no

house, no money, no clothes and no food for herself or her four children.

ROKPA Vice President Lea Wyler and Padma, the director of the ROKPA Women's Workshop, helped Sunita build up a new tailor's shop. ROKPA provided everything, including the material. Sunita was overwhelmed when she saw the new sewing machine, the sewing table,



Lea Wyler paying out a micro loan.

the brocade and other fabrics and all the tools, which would now help her get her feet back under her. For Sunita, her daughters Anita, Parmilla, Kalpana as well as her son Ram, a new, independent life began. ROKPA pays the school fees for her three daughters, so that the mother can better focus on building up her small business. Sunita does not have to pay back the loan. Every year she brings us finished products, which we can sell to help other women like her.

This is how you can help!

With every euro you donate you are helping needy women build up their own business so that they no longer have to beg.

Starting capital for a tea shop, a tailor's shop or a cart for selling items on the street: **CHF 500**

Thank you for your donation. – Note: Mikrokredit No 5810 or Frauenfonds No 8300 – to be paid to:

- Account: ROKPA, Nr.0065-0455090-11-1, at Clariden Leu AG, Bahnhofstr. 32, 8022 Zürich
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Nowhere in the world is the number of children who have lost a father or mother as high as in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe every fourth child is an orphan!

On December 1, World AIDS Day is celebrated. Zimbabwe has the greatest number of AIDS orphans in the world: 25% of adults have been infected with the deadly HIV virus!

By Rita Meyer

Around 11 million people currently live in Zimbabwe. About 1.3 million of them have been infected with the HIV virus. According to the statistics, about 140,000 human beings die from AIDS every year in Zimbabwe. In this land, where a negative social and economic climate prevails, in January 2008 inflation hit 100,000%. In the last few years the country has been hit by severe crises like cholera epidemics, high unemployment, political violence and also a complete collapse of the health care system.

The situation in Zimbabwe is so bad that:

- Between 2002 and 2006 the population decreased by 4 million
- Child mortality has doubled since 1990

- The average age of women infected with AIDS is 34
- Zimbabwe has the highest number of orphans (some 1.6 million) whose parents have died of AIDS
- Every year over 17,000 children are newly infected, the majority from their mothers

Some 120,000 are living with AIDS. For women living in rural areas it is very difficult to receive the proper medication. They are dependent on their husbands, who mostly earn their money in cities, though this isn't enough to purchase medication. Women have to travel long distances to reach health centers, and these are too expensive for most. Long lines and administrative problems in the health centers also make access to medication quite difficult.

ROKPA has initiated the following projects in Zimbabwe:

- ROKPA counsels women infected with AIDS in the framework of various kinds of nutritional and counseling programs, the goal of which is to stabilize the women's health. In this way the women are able to care for their children. A volunteer team provides families with nutritional foods. Mothers infected with AIDS are treated with medications.
- ROKPA helps orphaned children receive an education. Grandmothers are also given financial support, so that they can buy food for their grandchildren and pay school fees. In Zimbabwe AIDS orphans who are not provided for are particularly at risk of becoming socially isolated or engaging in criminal activities.

Give AIDS orphans a future!

ROKPA ensures that children in Zimbabwe who have lost their mothers can still grow up in a family environment so that they do not have to live on the street. This is how you can help:

Education

Help an AIDS orphan go to school by paying his or her school fees.

1 month: CHF 30.

1 year: CHF 360

Food and medication

Help mothers with AIDS and their children. Provide them with healthy food and stabilizing medicines.

1 month: CHF 920

1 year: CHF 11,000

Thank you for your donation.

Note: AIDS orphans

Zimbabwe No 11007

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- Postkonto ROKPA 80-19029-5

CHF 80

Give an orphan child in Tibet school materials for a whole year.

CHF 920

Provide an AIDS-infected mother in Zimbabwe as well as her children a month's worth of healthy food and stabilizing medications.

CHF 180

Buy a year's worth of antiretroviral medications for a mother in Zimbabwe, so that she can care for her young children as long as possible.

Make a donation instead of giving gifts

Christmas is almost upon us. This year ROKPA would like to urge you to give a sensible gift instead of standing around for hours in the Christmas chaos looking for the right product for your loved ones! Make a donation to a ROKPA project in the name of your partner, parents, children, friends and/or employees. Here are a few inspirations:

CHF 10,000

With this sum you can finance a complete university degree for a talented ROKPA child from Nepal, thus giving him or her an independent life on the other side of poverty.

CHF 75

Give 400 homeless people in Nepal a warm breakfast at the ROKPA soup kitchen. ✦

CHF 450

Finance training for a volunteer in South Africa to become a local HIV/AIDS counselor.

CHF 15,000

Help combat the lack of doctors in Tibet and finance a degree in Tibetan medicine for an intelligent and highly motivated orphan child (duration of study: 5 years).

CHF 30

Education against poverty: Finance a month at school for an AIDS orphan in Zimbabwe.

CHF 100

Give a Nepalese street child school materials for a whole year.

CHF 1500

Help protect an orphan girl in Nepal by helping her learn a trade – finance a year of her education, including room board and clothing. ✦

CHF 300

Help a Nepalese street child survive the winter with two warm meals and medical care.

CHF 380

In South Africa ROKPA is working to plant organic gardens. Pay the monthly salary of a trained course instructor. ✦

CHF 50

Give an ill person treatment at a local Tibetan doctor, including herbal medicine.

CHF 200

Finance a month's stay in the ROKPA children's home for a former street child in Nepal, incl. food, clothes, medical care, schooling and caring support.

CHF 960

Guarantee a whole year of school education for a Tibetan orphan, including food, accommodation and clothes.

CHF 3450

Tibet urgently needs young academics. Give a year's study at university to a gifted Tibetan orphan.

CHF 600

Save a person's life with a simple medical operation.

CHF 150

Help to conserve endangered medicinal herbs in Tibet. Give an interested person one month's training in environmentally sound herb collecting.

This is how it works

Please let us know how much you would like to donate and in whose name with an e-mail to: info@rokpa.ch or by post to: ROKPA, Böcklinstrasse 27, CH-8032 Zurich.

For every donation over CHF 100.00 we can send a wonderful gift certificate to the person(s) for whom you have made the donation – to the address chosen by you.

Please send us your gift donation(s) with the reference "Christmas 2009" to:

- Account: ROKPA, No. 0065-0455090-11-1, at Clariden Leu AG, Bahnhofstr. 32, 8022 Zurich
- Post office account: ROKPA 80-19029-5

If you want the person(s) for whom you have made the donation to receive the ROKPA Times in future so that they can follow ROKPA's work, we would be glad to receive their addresses.

On behalf of all the children who are on our waiting list to be supported by ROKPA, we thank you for spreading the word about our aid organisation!

Marc Forster is the new ROKPA ambassador!

A great honour for our organisation: Marc Forster (40), one of Hollywood's most sought-after directors, is ROKPA's new international ambassador!

Marc Forster, who had a comfortable upbringing in the Bündner mountains, already knew at the age of twelve that he wanted to be a film director. But just before he took his school leaving examination his family lost their entire fortune. The dream of graduating from a film school in New York slipped away. But Marc Forster did not give up his vision, organised a loan and passed the entrance exam. In New York he lived in a basement apartment among down-and-outs. After graduating from film school he remained in the USA and worked for years on film projects, without any great success. He often couldn't even afford anything to eat. Despite his difficult personal situation, he rejected an offer for a Disney film and missed out on a fee of half a million dollars. The reason: the script wasn't compatible with his ideas. When he made "Everything Put Together" with an amateur camera, Hollywood bosses started to pay attention to him. They asked him to direct the Southern States drama "Monsters Ball". With the Best Actress Oscar win for Halle Berry, Marc Forster, who is a Swiss citizen by choice, suddenly became one of the most sought-after directors in Hollywood.

Marc Forster, you are volunteering for ROKPA from now on. Why?

Marc Forster: There are several reasons. One of them is that with ROKPA the donated money really goes directly to the children. Another is that I love children and believe that all children in the world should have access to food, drinking water, education and medical care. ROKPA does its best

to make this happen.

What is your message as ROKPA ambassador?

As an ambassador you are a walking advertisement. For me, the message on this advertisement reads: we must find a way out of this global imbalance, or else it will sooner or later find a way back to us. Only through empathy with other is it possible for us to find our own hearts.

How do you plan to contribute in practice?

I will support ROKPA as an ambassador for the time being. I will campaign for ROKPA more or less depending on how much time I have.

Why a children's aid organisation?

Children are the future of our planet. The more educated and caring people there are on this planet, the greater our chance of creating a balance on this earth for future generations.

A few months ago you had a daughter – Lia. What is important to you as a father?

Loving my daughter unconditionally.

What does your partner think? As a director you have so little time for family life – and now more work on top of that!

We both love children and see the need to support ROKPA.

How important are family and security to you?

I didn't grow up in a "normal" family environment. My parents were always travelling. For that reason I only know this nomadic security.

A home?

For me there is only an inner home, everything else is transient.

What are your memories of



ROKPA Vice President Lea Wyler, surrounded by TV presenter Sandra Studer, director Marc Forster and star harpist Andreas Vollenweider – all three of ROKPA's international ambassadors.

your own childhood?

I had a very nice childhood in Davos. I could engage with nature and play in the woods behind our house.

What would you say to your daughter if she asked: Daddy, what's important in life?

Having an open heart and treating everybody how you would like to be treated yourself.

Will you visit aid projects?

Sooner or later definitely. I don't know yet when.

What do you expect from your involvement?

That hopefully even more children will get the chance for a better and more hopeful future thanks to ROKPA.

Filmography

1995: Loungers,
2001: Everything Put Together,
2001: Monster's Ball,
2004: Finding Neverland,
2005: Stay,
2006: Stranger Than Fiction,
2007: The Kite Runner,
2008: Quantum of Solace (James Bond)

How you can help!

Donate for people in need!

Whether for the orphaned, the homeless, the sick or the elderly, ROKPA relies exclusively on donations for its over 150 projects in Tibet, Nepal, Zimbabwe and South Africa. With YOUR donation, you can make it possible for disadvantaged people to find a way out of grinding poverty. Right now!

Whether you make a one-off donation, support one of our projects in the long term, or include ROKPA in your will, we are grateful for EVERY donation

Donate as a company

Set a positive example as an entrepreneur or CEO! Do without customer gifts on your jubilee or at Christmas and support people in need instead with a long-term company donation. Your generous gesture will undoubtedly inspire your co-workers and customers!

Trees instead of bouquets

Instead of wilting flowers, with CHF 50.00 you can give ten saplings in Tibet to protect the population from the consequences of years of deforestation. The person for whom you make the donation will receive a beautiful gift certificate from ROKPA.

Donations instead of wreaths

Losing and burying a loved one is very painful. Give the funeral guests the chance to pay their last respects in a long-lasting way, with a donation to ROKPA aid projects. Legacies to ROKPA will also make you happy today and help the children in the future.

Talk about ROKPA

At the office, in the street, with neighbours or in school: get everyone enthusiastic about ROKPA's work! Give us a call if you need information material or payment slips for your friends and colleagues: **Tel. 044 26 26 888.**



These and all other ROKPA children thank you with all their hearts for your contributions and generous help.

Sian Edwards



"I'm committed to ROKPA because..."

I have great admiration for the hard work and dedication of ROKPA's volunteers. I first found out about ROKPA when the organisation advertised for volunteer translators. I admit I had never heard of ROKPA before. I wanted to find out more and was immediately impressed by the fact that such a large proportion of donations go straight to those who need it, thanks to ROKPA's network of committed volunteers. And you can see the results in the changes ROKPA has made to the lives of some of world's poorest people. Their projects have given those in need real hope for the future. Children, especially girls, gain an education and with it a sense of self-worth and a chance at independence that would otherwise be out of their reach. I decided I wanted to be a part of that. I only give one or two hours out of my working week to help ROKPA's message reach a wider audience. My contribution is tiny compared to the commitment of those working in the field in Nepal, Tibet and elsewhere. But I hope that my support helps them to carry on with their vital work. I'm glad to be part of the ROKPA volunteer community!

Sian Edwards is a freelance translator, lives in the UK and helps ROKPA with translations from German into English.



We need your help!

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