



# EDUCATE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL

Lately at Educate the Children we've been thinking a lot about our identity. No, we haven't been having an "identity crisis"! We know what we are, but sometimes it's hard to explain ETC's model of social change. Our new logo symbolizes our integrated model. But we have also added a word to our masthead: International. On page 2 you can find out why. We also have a new website and are launching an e-newsletter (see page 4). ETC has matured as an organization. While we remain true to our mission of bringing opportunities to women and children in Nepal, we have improved how we pursue that mission. Our logo and website are not merely a marketing makeover, rather we hope they better represent what ETC has become.

In many ways identity is at the heart of ETC's program work. One example is Bhagawati Women's Group and their successful efforts to craft a group identity (see page 5). These women have discovered that representing themselves in public as a group via matching saris can give them power in society. The strength they have is not from the saris, of course; rather it is their capacity to act in unison. But by making a public identity for themselves they have significantly improved their ability to let the world know they are able to make a difference.

Identity also plays a role in our education work. Sponsorships help students like Anu Thapa get a new lease on life (see page 6). For Anu, sponsorship has allowed her to change from "child laborer in a brick factory" to "student." "Student" is an identity with hope for the future, a future Anu embraces with joy.

Identity is a key issue for one of our partners, the Thami Education Project (see page 4). The

Thamis have suffered for not being recognized as a distinct group with their own language, culture and history. A new initiative will counter that by developing curriculum materials in the Thami language. By valorizing their language and heritage these materials will be a significant tool the Thami can use to carve out a better future for themselves.



Sponsorship students having fun with ETC!

Finally, there can be no "I" without "you." In other words, we at ETC owe our identity to you, our supporters. So all of us, ETC, our women's groups and students thank you for making us what we have become today.

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## Hard Times in Nepal

Things are difficult in Nepal now. Our staff are safe, but street protests and transportation strikes make it harder to carry out our work. Now more than ever Nepal needs organizations like ETC. We're committed to Nepal. Please renew your commitment to ETC by giving generously today.

## ETC Nepal Forms Board of Directors

Educate the Children now has a new human resource to rely on: a Board of Director's in Nepal! Under the regulations of HMG (that is, His Majesty's Government of Nepal) International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) such as ETC International must implement their programs through national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). For this reason, our Nepal office has been formally registered as a national NGO with its own Board of Directors. This is why we now refer to the Ithaca office as ETC International while our Kathmandu office is called ETC Nepal.

Besides complying with HMG regulations, registering the Nepal office as an NGO has two significant advantages for ETC. The first is

that we have a capable group of experts in Nepal we can rely on to help orient the continuing evolution of our programs. Each member is profiled below. We're proud to welcome such a distinguished group of Nepalis into the ETC family.

The second benefit is that registration allows ETC Nepal to access resources from which ETC International is excluded, foundations that only support national NGOs for example. While some INGOs prefer to treat registration of their in-country offices as a mere formality, ETC has preferred to maximize the potential benefit to the organization. In our never ending quest to bring opportunities to women and children in Nepal, ETC always strives to make the most of every resource we have.

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### Board of Directors, ETC Nepal

**Ram Prakash Yadav, Ph.D.**, is Board President. He is an agricultural economist educated at Cornell who has had a long and distinguished career in international development. Dr. Yadav is currently a consultant with the World Bank in Nepal.

**Bal Gopal Baidya, Ph.D.** is a Senior Research Associate with New ERA Ltd., a highly regarded development policy and research organization. Dr. Baidya is a former member of the Nepal National Planning Commission.

**Vijaya Shrestha, Ph.D.**, is Team Leader for the Melamchi Water Supply Sanitation Project of the Nepali government. Dr. Shrestha has worked with the Asian Development Bank and several European bilateral development agencies.

**Mukta Singh Lama-Tamang**, Board Vice-President, is currently finishing his doctorate in anthropology at Cornell. In Nepal he is Executive Director of Social Action for Grassroots Organization (SAGUN).

**Bal Maya Bishwokarma** is Education Coordinator for Save the Children-US in Nepal. She has worked with Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization and has a Masters Degree from Tribhuvan University.

**Nirala Tiwari** is a consultant with expertise in gender, women's development and microcredit. She has worked with the German Bilateral Development Agency (GTZ), among others.

**Lazima Onta-Bhatta, Ph.D.**, Board Treasurer, is the National Program Manager for the Community Owned Primary Education project of the United Nations. Dr. Onta-Bhatta is a former board member for ETC in Ithaca .

**Sharad Babu Shrestha** is Director Rural Education and Development (READ-Nepal) an organization that builds libraries throughout the country. He was a close friend of ETC's founder, Pamela Carson, and helped establish ETC's office in Nepal.

**Rekha Tulachan** is Assistant Program Officer for USC-Canada in Nepal. She has a law degree from Tribhuvan University and is Secretary of the Board of Didi Bahini, an organization dedicated to gender equity within development organizations in Nepal

## Students on the Value of Education: Excerpts from *Godavari Mala*

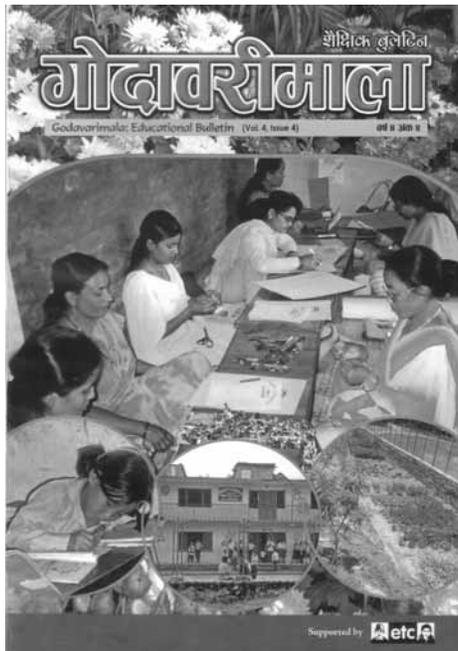
*Godavari Mala* is an educational bulletin ETC produces annually in its Godavari program area. Most of the articles, poems and stories are written by students at the local schools. These cover many issues of interest to the schools and community. Mostly written in Nepali, some students make compositions in English. Two are reproduced here.

### The Importance of Education by Ritu K.C. Class 10

Humanity's journey from stone age to the age of dot com is not easy. In order to get through the path full of obstacles, humans really need, still need, and no doubt will be needing, a powerful vehicle and that vehicle is education.

This is just a glimpse towards the importance of education. Just stop and look backwards to the ages that have passed, what the world was, what the world is, and what the world will be. To understand the importance of education, look at the changing development scenario of this world lifestyle of us humans. This all relates to the importance of education. It is said that education is the way for society to move from the age of darkness to the age of light. Humans are social animals and in order to socialize, one needs education. Discussed earlier, for a journey from age of darkness to present world, it was possible only due to education.

In short, the source of human civilization is education, the mother of wisdom, which is the only identification of the homo sapien. Let's say in short that if oxygen is needed to be alive, education is needed to be human.



### My School by Anjali Silwal, Class 7

My school name is Shree Krishna Lower Secondary School. It is in Kitachour. I like my school very much. It is big and beautiful.

In my school there are eight classes and two toilets and one tap. Near my class there is an office room. In the office room there are many books and many important things. In my school there are many students.

In my school there are twelve teachers. I like my teacher very much. The teachers are very good. I like all subjects, but math is difficult. My best teacher is Sarita Madam. Her habit is very good. She teaches us English. English is my best subject.

Near my classroom is a very beautiful garden. In the garden there are many kinds of flowers like roses, etc. The rose is my best flower. It has many colours. It is big and small.

In my school there is a very big ground. In the ground we play. In the ground we can play many kinds of games. Games are football, volleyball, etc.

In my school there are many friends. I like all friends. I must like Sajana and Kabita is my best friend. Her habits are very good.

My school has a building. The building is very beautiful. We read in the building. Near the building there are many shops and many houses. In the end I say my school is very beautiful. I love my school very much.

The End.

## Thami Project Receives a Three Year Grant

The Thami Education Project (TEP) recently received a three year grant from Onaway Trust for a school improvement program. Previously, the Project provided basic study materials and support for twenty students, a village sanitation project, and a rotating credit fund for medical emergencies. The grant from Onaway will enable a significant expansion of programs.

ETC and its Thami partner, Fashelung Samajik Sewa (FSS) will work together to replicate ETC's model of school improvement, including renovation of school buildings, provision of materials, teacher training, the establishment of kindergarten classes, and scholarships.

Additionally, ETC and FSS will work with Mark Turin, a linguist who is one of the founders of the TEP, to develop primary literacy materials in the Thami language. The Thami people are

one of the least known and most impoverished indigenous groups in Nepal. One significant reason for this is that they were never classified as an 'ethnic group' in Nepal's 1854 Muluki Ain legal code; without this recognition, Thamis are often deemed low-caste and it is difficult for them to obtain employment without masking their identity as someone of a better known ethnic group. The development of curriculum materials in the Thami language will not only improve education in their schools, it will valorize Thami culture and strengthen community identity. This will be a powerful step in helping the Thami people gain pride and communal self-confidence in their heritage.

All of us at ETC are excited to be participants in the steady growth of this project that brings such benefits to the Thami people.

## ETC's New Webpage: Tell Your Story Here!

In December 2005, ETC launched its new website. Packed with pictures and information, the website is a great place for you to learn more about ETC and keep up with what we're doing. There is a news and events feature on the homepage where you can find up-to-date stories about our work in Nepal.

We invite you to participate by emailing us your own news about ETC or Nepal. Maybe you have made a recent trip to Kathmandu or have a great story to share about your sponsored child; here is the place to share it! Write to us: [info@etc-nepal.org](mailto:info@etc-nepal.org).

Soon we'll launch our first email newsletter that will compliment our print newsletter. The email newsletter will be sent out every couple of months and will keep you up-to-date with ETC. You can sign up for the e-newsletter on our website.



## Dressing for Success The Bhagawati Women's Group

Empowering Nepali women to be leaders in their own communities is an essential goal for ETC. ETC has helped organize dozens of women's groups in Nepal who work to strengthen local communities. One of these groups recently took a step that no other had before: they have dressed for success!

In Nepal, women are widely discriminated against and often ignored when they speak out, even when they do so in a large assembly. Bhagawati Women's Group of Jharuwarasi Village Development Committee decided that had to change, so they made themselves matching saris to firmly establish their identity as a group. Now, when one member speaks, it is clear that all members are represented through her.

The group has caught the attention of many in the community including an important government agency, the Lalitpur District Development Committee (DDC). After they made their uniforms, one of the group's first projects was to attend a DDC meeting to request assistance for renovation of a bridge which leads into the village of Jharuwarasi. The bridge was in significant disrepair, limited the mobility of the people, and created problems for the movement of goods to and from the village. So the women assembled all dressed in the same, vibrant sari and marched to the DDC Office.



Bhagawati Women's Group in uniform.

When the Committee members saw the women dressed so remarkably, they were astonished and very interested to know for what purpose the women had gathered to meet with them. The group described the state of the bridge and requested their assistance. The DDC members were very impressed by the group's unity and aspiration to improve the well-being of their community. As a result, the committee granted them financial support to the tune of \$10,563! Assistance of this magnitude is unusual in Nepal, especially when it is petitioned by female advocates. It was the group's turn to be astonished! Other groups have heard what the Bhagawati Women's Group achieved and have been inspired to make their own uniforms. Based on Bhagawati Women's Group's example, they've concluded that uniforms are a stepping stone towards positive development and equality for women in Nepal.

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### Become a Women's Group Sponsor!

**Elizabeth Johnson** and **Elizabeth Ryan** are sponsors of the Bhagawati Women's Group. Their support makes it possible for the women of Bhagawati to achieve so much for themselves, their families and their communities. There are 11 new groups in ETC's Badikhel program area. You can sponsor the next success story of ETC's Women's Development Program!

**Go to [www.etc-nepal.org](http://www.etc-nepal.org) for more information.**

## The Difference a Sponsorship Makes: Anu Thapa's Story

Anu Thapa is a 10 year old from a very poor family in ETC's Godavari project area. Her mother is disabled and cannot work; her father and brother work at a brick kiln to support the household's basic needs. Anu also worked at the kiln and contributed 50 rupees a day to the family income. Being a child, she wasn't allowed to work full-time, so when not at the kiln she had to do the domestic chores, including cooking, dish washing, laundry, cleaning, and fetching water. She only went to school occasionally given all her responsibilities in her family.

When Anu learned that her education was going to be sponsored through ETC, she was overwhelmed with joy. She felt like she was now an important person in the world. She was so happy when she received her school supplies for the first time and felt blessed to receive such a gift. Anu is excelling in school and is considered an intelligent and disciplined student. Anu thinks she would like to become a teacher. Her family is proud of her and the progress she has made.

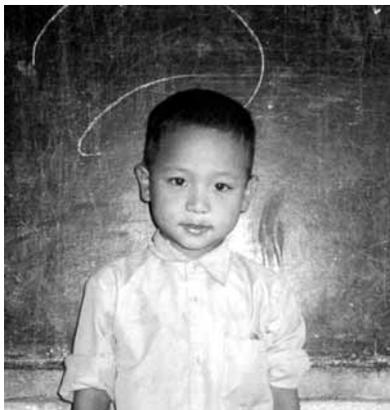
Long time ETC supporters Donald and Nan Leitch are Anu's sponsors. Thanks to their support, Anu has been able to leave the kiln's and dream of a better future for herself and her family.



### Community Sponsors Needed!

More than 120 people have committed to supporting deserving students in Nepal through ETC's Community Sponsorship Program but we need many more. With ETC beginning work in Badikhel VDC, our list of children waiting to be sponsored has doubled in size. As a Community Sponsor you can make a tremendous difference for other children just like Anu Thapa. As a sponsor, you will receive periodic updates about the student you support, including letters and photos. You will also get the heartfelt gratitude of a wonderful child along with everyone at ETC!

**Go to [www.etc-nepal.org](http://www.etc-nepal.org) for more information.**



Sushil Pahari, Aastha Acharya, and Anil Pahari

## Be a Volunteer Fundraiser for ETC With a Firstgiving Websites

**Firstgiving** is a web service you can use to create temporary webpages that serve as tools for fundraising. These websites are a great way to spread the word about Educate the Children and your efforts to support our work with children and women in Nepal.

Board President and former ETC Co-Director, **Colleen Flynn Thapalia** created a website to raise money for a 5k race which she ran (AND completed) last June. Colleen raised close to \$1400 through her Firstgiving website! Colleen also created a memorial page for ETC's founder Pamela Carson. **Students in the International Club at Ithaca College** created a site to advertise and fundraise for a series of events they did on campus to teach students about Nepal and ETC.

These websites are easy to set up and can be used to commemorate any event. For more information, go to our webpage: [www.etc-nepal.org](http://www.etc-nepal.org).

## Thank You!

- ~ To everyone who contributed to our memorial of Pamela Carson. We raised over \$600 online and almost \$10,000 total. Pamela left a lasting impression on many people and we're proud to carry on her legacy.
- ~ To our Ithaca volunteers: **Lynde, Katherine, Maira and Leslie**.
- ~ To **Rebecca Talley** for her significant help with grantwriting.
- ~ To Board Member **Dan Sisler**, for arranging speaking opportunities at Kendal at Ithaca and the Ithaca City Club.
- ~ To **Daksha, Manabu and all the members of the International Club at Ithaca College** for raising awareness about education in Nepal and ETC's work.
- ~ To **Greg, Larry and Mark at Elucid8 Design** for building our wonderful new webpage.
- ~ To **Barbara Cook, Dan Kohl, and Renee Thakali** for acting as workplace giving contact persons.
- ~ To **Sarah Jane Bokaer** at the Lehman Alternative Community School in Ithaca and **Purushottam** at Kitini Higher Secondary School in Godavari for making our School to School sharing project possible. And thanks to the students at both schools who are participating!
- ~ To **Sandra Mennella** for coordinating a student fundraising project at the Lehman Alternative Community School.
- ~ To the **Onaway Trust** for its support of the Thami Education Project.
- ~ To **Chandra Khaki** for designing our new brochures.
- ~ To **Nancy Cameron and students at the American School of Dubai** for sending school supplies to Nepal and for their years of support.

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After 10 years with Educate the Children, Senior Administrative Officer **Raju Dhamala** decided it was time to move on. Raju has played a key role in making ETC what it is today. We all extend him our heartfelt thanks and wish him the best in his future endeavors. We'll miss him.





**EDUCATE THE CHILDREN**  
INTERNATIONAL

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PERMIT NO. 131**

*Founded by Pamela Carson*

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**Finance Officer**

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