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LILLE FRO FOUNDATION

IN 2008, Tamara Cannon, a former corporate lawyer based in Sydney, sent an email to a group of friends telling them about Pema, a little girl she had just met off the beaten track while on a climbing trip in the Trans-Himalayan region of Ladakh, India.

Pema was living in extreme poverty. She was also cold and hungry. Her family could not afford fuel for heating during the brutal winter months. Nor could they afford to send her to school. This little girl's future was very grim.

Tamara decided to sponsor Pema and pay for her to go to boarding school, the only way she could get an education in the isolated region where she lives. A small outlay covered her tuition, uniform, books, healthcare and board.

Moved by how easy it was to have a real impact, Tamara asked her friends whether they would be willing to help other children like Pema. The response was so overwhelming that the decision to start up a charity was made, and the Lille Fro Foundation was born.

Lille Fro Foundation works at the grassroots. With the poorest of the poor. With families and communities who are difficult to reach and hard to help because of their geographical isolation or the conditions in which they live. The focus is on education and training.

Today, the Foundation has 60 boys and girls sponsored. Their goal is to have 100 children in school by the end of the year, and have 500 enrolled by 2015.

In October 2009, after months of talks with the Indian government, Tamara was granted permission to enter a restricted part of India – home to some of the world's poorest nomadic communities. Tamara is reputed to be the first foreigner to have visited many of the isolated communities living in this sealed-off region.

Lille Fro has now established a Community Fund to extend skills training and learning initiatives to improve the everyday lives for families living in remote villages. Working alongside local leaders, Lille Fro aims to increase the community's access to a sustainable livelihood, education, social services and health care.

Lille Fro has completed two community greenhouses as part of a pilot program to train families like Pema's how to grow nutritious fresh food year round. The goal is to have 5 greenhouses completed by the end of 2010.

To find out more, please visit
www.lillefrofoundation.org



Translator Konchok Gyaltzen with Tamara Cannon in the Hanle Valley, Ladakh