



# ROKPA TIMES



Annual Report 2019

# Editorial

Dear ROKPA friends,

What was before Corona?

The pandemic is overshadowing much of what went before. It has taken everyone by surprise – including us in stable and safe Switzerland. And it's particularly affecting people in the world's poorest countries. It's no longer so easy to think of the good and beautiful things in life. Or maybe it is, now that we have more time?

Let's take a look back together, because many good and beautiful things happened at ROKPA last year. In Chikukwa, we began supporting preschool for three- to six-year-old children whose parents could no longer afford school after last year's Cyclone Idai. In Nepal, the first 23 graduates completed their hospitality training and are now young adults equipped for working life. The kids in the ROKPA Children's Home are blossoming and have developed incredible warmth and a spirit of helpfulness. In Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, ROKPA has been able to offer support to almost 2,500 people at its two medical Drop-In Centers. And the Johannesburg Soup Kitchen, originally established by ROKPA Co-Founder Dr. Akong Tulku Rinpoche, turned 25 last year.

It is precisely these things that drive us onwards. Although there is a lot of uncertainty at the moment, we remain positive and forward-looking. Because the people in Nepal, South Africa and Zimbabwe need us now more than ever.

I hope you enjoy reading the 2019 Annual Report and that you will continue to support us.

Stay healthy and see you soon!

Yours,

Lea Wyler

Co-Founder and President of ROKPA INTERNATIONAL



## INHALT

EDITORIAL	2
A LOOK BACK – ROKPA child Kashish talks about her year	3
EDUCATION – Chikukwa preschool, Hospitality Training Nepal	4 – 5
MEDICINE – Chitungwiza Drop-In Center	6
FOOD – Johannesburg Soup Kitchen	7
ROKPA IN FIGURES	8 – 9
ROKPA INTERNATIONAL	10 – 11
BACK COVER – Emergency aid in Kathmandu	12

### **ROKPA INTERNATIONAL Executive Board**

Lea Wyler (Co-Founder and President) /  
Peter Fanconi (Vice President) / Lama Yeshe Losal Rinpoche /  
Dorje Tarap / Gelong Thubten / Andreas Vollenweider

### **Imprint**

Editorial team: Andrea Hefti / Corinna Biasiutti / Evelyne Plüss /  
Lea Wyler / Melanie Ewing  
Lektorat: Liane Brand ([www.lianebrand.ch](http://www.lianebrand.ch))  
Copy editing: Claire Twigger  
Graphic design: Renée Reust / Staša Lampret  
Cover picture: © Tal Siano  
Print run: 7,400 copies (German edition)



Printed on recycled paper manufactured in accordance with the rules of "The Blue Angel" eco-label.

# My year in 2019

”

I experienced a lot in the last year. At the Dashain festival I saw my sister again after a long time. At this festival they mix rice with red powder (Tika). Mummy Lea gave me and my sister Tika on the forehead and blessed us. I felt special and happy because it was the first time I had celebrated this ceremony with my ROKPA family. It was one of the

happiest moments of my life. I also went to a new school. That was nice because there I made new friends. The school is big and there are sports and games outside. I like the fact that I can participate in different programs.



## About Kashish

■ Kashish is 14 years old, has lived in the ROKPA Children's Home since 2014 and is now in 6th grade primary. In the past, her father would sometimes beat the children and their mother when in a drunken state. Kashish has three sisters. Their father was desperate for a son and left Kashish's mother when she fell pregnant again. Her mother finally ended up on the streets and survived by begging at the Stupa in Kathmandu, Nepal. Thanks to ROKPA's help, she now lives an almost normal life and has shelter and work.

*Kashish at the Holi Festival in the ROKPA Children's Home, March 2020*

# New prospects for the little ones – Chikukwa preschool

In March 2019, Cyclone Idai devastated large parts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Thousands were left homeless and almost one million people were left in need of help. The eastern part of Zimbabwe was hit particularly hard. In this region, Chikukwa, ROKPA has been supporting a preschool for three- to six-year-old children since last year.

The school has been in existence for over 15 years and was founded by the people of Chikukwa as a community initiative. Until now, it has been financed by family contributions to school fees and food, as well as by local donations. However, many parents can no longer afford the school because of the economic situation. ROKPA takes on the costs for their children. It also pays the salary for an additional teacher, taking a lot of pressure off the existing two teachers.

## About the school

- Approx. 50/50 boys and girls
- About 10% of the children are orphans
- 2 nutritious meals per day
- 2 medical check-ups, at the beginning and end of each semester, including a weight check



Last year, 100 children attended the preschool. This was almost 20 more than usual, as children from the cyclone-hit region were also admitted.

## Early childhood development support and nutrition

Three local teachers provide basic reading and writing skills and introduce the children to the English language. The children also receive a nutritious meal twice a day to prevent deficiencies. These can impair the children's physical, mental and educational abilities. Preschool relieves the parents and gives them the opportunity to pursue gainful employment despite their small children, thus ensuring the family's livelihood.

 **SCHOOL UNIFORM** 38 CHF  
FOR 1 CHILD



A colourful classroom at Chikukwa preschool.

 **MONTHLY WAGE** 206 CHF  
FOR 1 TEACHER

# We did it! The first hospitality graduates!

In May 2019, the final examinations of the 23 students following the first course of study at ROKPA Hospitality Vocational Training were held. All students passed the examinations. Nine of the original 32 students had to terminate their training prematurely for various reasons. 13 completed their subsequent internship in the ROKPA Guest House or Restaurant, and 10 in other hotels in Kathmandu. The graduation ceremony took place on January 24, 2020.

## Independent thanks to training: Sonam's story

One of the hospitality graduates is Sonam. „My childhood could not be compared to anyone else's. As a child, I was always abandoned. My mother was a single mother and I never met my father. I was sent to a home and never received the love that my friends received at home. The hospitality training allowed me to find my own way and to have a better future. After graduation, I got a job at the ROKPA Guest House. This makes me very happy. My hobbies are travelling, reading books and eating (preferably momos and chocolate!). My favourite colour is black and I like listening to music.“



Sonam: a young woman who has found her way despite a difficult past.

 **SCHOOL SUPPLIES** 32 <sup>CHF</sup>  
FOR 1 YEAR

## Ready for professional life – ROKPA Hospitality Vocational Training

We are glad that Sonam and her classmates are now prepared for the future and have prospects once the Corona crisis is over.



Sonam loves her job. Especially the knowledge she acquires in the front office, which she says gives her independence. Here pictured with Sanjaya, Guest House Manager.

 **FOOD** 554 <sup>CHF</sup>  
FOR 1 YEAR

*Nokutula with her one-year-old daughter.*



# Help in times of need – Chitungwiza Drop-In Center

## Personalised help for individual journeys

For over a decade ROKPA's partner, the ROKPA Support Network, has been running a Drop-In and Referral Center (DIC) in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe. In 2019, an additional center was opened in Chitungwiza, a suburb of Harare. The DICs are a contact point for people seeking help of all kinds and the staff are confronted with a wide range of requests. Sometimes, people come directly from the streets to ask for medication and food. Others, for example, need walking aids, artificial limbs, glasses or blankets, or are looking for assistance with the payment of school fees or funerals. The DIC helps as far as it can. Most requests are medical in nature.



Medical treatment in Zimbabwe is very expensive and the majority of people cannot afford health care. ROKPA covers the costs of appointments with a local doctor as well as the cost of medication. This prevents families becoming destitute.

 **AVERAGE DOCTOR'S** **13** USD  
**APPOINTMENT**

## Empowering people in difficult times

In 2019, the DIC Chitungwiza helped 2,480 people. One of them was Nokutula, a young widow suffering from HIV. She lives with her three daughters in a small room. She visited the Drop-In Center with her one-year-old daughter. Both were sick – the baby suffered from malnutrition and did not show normal developments for her age. ROKPA supported Nokutula with food and paid the medical costs for her and her daughter. An employee now visits her regularly at home and accompanies and supports the family in these difficult times.

*Advice and support at challenging times:  
A ROKPA DIC employee with a patient and  
her child.*

# Johannesburg Soup Kitchen – for the city's poorest



*Last year, 26 mothers with their 33 children visited the Soup Kitchen, including 24 babies.*

 **CHRISTMAS PACKAGE** **6** CHF  
PER PERSON

## Volunteers at work

The Soup Kitchen is financed by donations from individuals, local companies and ROKPA INTERNATIONAL. Every week, six to ten volunteers lend a hand: they buy the food, prepare the meals on Tuesday morning and hand them out in the evening. The Soup Kitchen celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2019.

## Poverty in the City of Gold

Although Johannesburg is the economic center of Africa, poverty is ever present. Many people – especially from neighbouring Zimbabwe – come to Johannesburg in the hope of a better life. But unfortunately, most of them end up on the streets. They stay there too, because they don't have official papers. Most of the help offered comes from NGOs and churches, because the city lacks the funds to support these people and street poverty is not a priority.



**150 MEALS**  
PER WEEK **223** CHF

## A hot meal every Tuesday night

The ROKPA Soup Kitchen is open once a week on Tuesday evenings. It offers soup, a piece of fruit and a peanut butter sandwich. Donations in kind such as clothes are handed out on the street, and blankets are handed out once a year for the colder months. Before Christmas, Christmas parcels are distributed, which include toiletries. The Soup Kitchen is visited especially by the homeless, the unemployed and refugees.

## About the Soup Kitchen

- Open on Tuesday evenings, 48 weeks a year
- An average of 150 meals distributed every week, or approx. 7,200 every year



*Working for the poorest people in the city: every week, volunteers put in around 21 hours at the Soup Kitchen, or around 1,006 hours a year.*

# ROKPA in figures

## Project expenditure by focus

ROKPA's main focus is on education, which at 32% once again represents the largest share of project expenditure in the 2019 reporting year. The new training courses in the hospitality and textile sectors, on offer since 2018, continued successfully (see p.5). In the textile sector, support was also provided for a training course in Pokhara (Nepal). Projects in Zimbabwe in the areas of Education, Medical Care, Nutrition and Food/Living Costs were expanded. Project-related costs include expenses spread over several projects.

**Total project expenditure (100%):** CHF 1,225,116

Previous year: CHF 904,078

**Number of projects:** 49 / previous year: 32



- 32% Education
- 18% Medical Care
- 17% Project-related costs
- 14% Food / Living Costs
- 9% Nepal reconstruction
- 7% Nepal Technical Training Center
- 3% Other

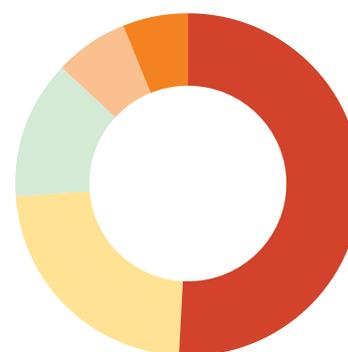
## Project expenditure by country

The number of projects increased by almost 60% compared to the previous year. This is mainly due to the expansion of projects in Zimbabwe (2019: 23%, previous year: 10%). We were also able to support additional projects in the Tibetan areas of China in 2019. It was only possible to continue supporting projects in these areas thanks to local contacts who have supported our work in this region for many years.

**Total project expenditure (100%):** CHF 1,225,116

Vorjahr: 904'078 Franken

**Number of projects:** 49 / previous year: 32



- 51% Nepal
- 23% Zimbabwe
- 13% Tibetan areas of China
- 7% South Africa
- 6% India

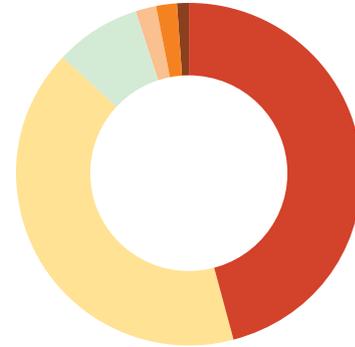
## Use of funds

Total project and operational expenses in 2019 amounted to CHF 1,561,173 (previous year: CHF 1,306,438). Projects were expanded and new ones were added: as a result, project expenditure was 36% higher than in the previous year. 78% of funds (previous year: 69%) were channelled into projects. Owing to the intensification of projects in Nepal, ongoing project

expansion in Africa and the possibility of supporting more projects in the Tibetan areas of China, funds channelled into projects increased significantly compared to 2018. Project expenditure in Africa in 2019 more than doubled compared with the previous year (CHF 301,048 in 2019 versus CHF 154,498 in 2018).

### Source of funds

Private donors and foundations continue to be the main sources of funds for ROKPA projects, accounting for almost 90% of donations. Donations in 2019 were 16% lower than in the previous year. This is partly due to the sharp decline in international donations in recent years. Donations from private individuals in Switzerland remained relatively stable compared to the previous year.



**Total donations and sales income (100%):** CHF 1,543,572

Previous year: CHF 1,832,035

**Number of donors:** 1,754 / Previous year: 1,962



### Voluntary work

Volunteering is critical to ROKPA. Only thanks to the commitment from volunteers can our projects be implemented efficiently. For example, the commitment of the four volunteers who support project work by managing photo archives or reporting corresponds to 60% of a full-time position.

Last year, the total work done by volunteers was equivalent to 5.7 full-time positions. The work of the employees at the Zurich headquarters represented a total of 4 full-time positions. The volunteer commitment at the Zurich headquarters and at the Soup Kitchen and Medical Ambulatory in Nepal corresponds to an equivalent of CHF 478,157 (calculated at an hourly rate of CHF 40).

	Hours	People
Volunteers at headquarters	9'309	34
Honorary work by the Executive Board	1'961	6
Unpaid overtime by employees	434	5
Volunteers at the Soup Kitchen and Medical Ambulatory	250	3
<b>Total voluntary work</b>	<b>11'954</b>	<b>48</b>



# A look behind the scenes

## Zurich Headquarters team

Sometimes things have to be done differently. That's why this time we met digitally for the photo shoot – without a camera or photographer. These are our employees in Zurich – from left to right, top to bottom:

Melanie Ewing | Finance

Andrea Hefti | Communication & Marketing

Evelyne Plüss | Donor Relations

Daniela Fadel | Administration

Corinna Biasiutti | Management

Lea Wyler | Co-Founder and President

Tal Siano | Project Assistant (unfortunately not pictured)



## ROKPA Network - Representatives in 15 countries (as of 2019)

Austria, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Italy, Nepal, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, USA, Zimbabwe

## Patronage members

Thomas Bär, Christine Egerszegi, Josef Estermann, Kurt E. Feller, Marc Forster, Trix Heberlein, Philipp Keel, Cyril Koller, Remo Largo, Charles Lewinsky, Ellen Ringier, Roger Schawinski, Emil Steinberger, Niccel Steinberger, Franz Steinegger, Sandra Studer, Andreas Vollenweider, Christian Wenger

## Now available: donate up to 35,000 miles

You may already know how it works: as you fly, you accumulate Miles and More points. Using the link below, you can now donate between 500 and 35,000 miles to support any ROKPA project.

<https://milesandmore.loylogic.com/>

## Executive Board

Lea Wyler (Co-Founder and President), Peter Fanconi (Vice President), Lama Yeshe Losal Rinpoche, Dorje Tarap, Gelong Thubten, Andreas Vollenweider

## Experience ROKPA digitally

The latest news about ROKPA and its projects is not only available in the ROKPA Times and the Annual Report, but also on digital media. Follow us online to stay up-to-date:

### News on the website

<https://www.rokpa.org/de/news>

### ROKPA on Facebook

<https://web.facebook.com/ROKPA.org>

### Neu: New: ROKPA on Instagram

[https://www.instagram.com/rokpa\\_international](https://www.instagram.com/rokpa_international)



## Volunteers at ROKPA Headquarters

**We are very grateful that we can count on so many volunteers.**

**Some have been supporting ROKPA for many years. And each and every one of them makes a unique personal and professional contribution. We would like to thank them all very much!**

Aliette Repond, Annelise d'Andres, Anne-Lyse Bérard, Annemari Korhonen, Arane Rossat, Asra Evren, Barbara Wüest, Bea Schmutz, Camille Tissandier, Claire Twigger, Cyran de Ribains, Denise Duay, Eliane Tamang, Elisabeth Lefeez, Elisabeth Retey, Elisabeth Weiss, Elizabeth Postle, Eric Willimann, Françoise Marclay, Georgios Mazarakis, Gisèle Formaz, Henriette Levy, Hermann D'Andres, Irène Duay, Jessica Guttmann, Juliana Formaz, Kaja Kurczewska, Käthi Ruckstuhl, Liane Brand,

Loic Chantriaux, Lorenz Altwegg, Manikya Kurichety, Manuel Bassi, Margrit Stahel, Margrit Unholz, Marianne Darbellay, Marie-Thérèse Vernay, Marlis Lüscher, Mélanie Cattin, Michael Krieger, Michaela Walth, Monique Stermcnik, Muriel Porcellana, Peter Stermcnik, Pierre Yves Gabioud, Rachel Rey, Regula Knellessen, Rita Schöpfer, Rita Straub, Sandra Hopfensitz, Sean Miller, Shraddha Adake, Staša Lampret, Stefanie Unholz, Tereza Konaté, Tommi Schmutz, Verena Carnielli



# ROKPA

Helping where help is needed. Sustainably, for 40 years.

## Emergency aid in Kathmandu



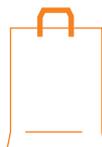
Single mothers with several children, workers, the disabled and other vulnerable people have been the hardest hit by the Corona crisis. Since April, the ROKPA Soup Kitchen has been distributing food packages to the needy. Naresh, a former ROKPA child, runs the Soup Kitchen and together with his wife Jyoti, takes care of the packing and distribution.

In the capital of Nepal, many people go hungry. The current situation makes access to food even more difficult for the poor. Support ROKPA in distributing food parcels for families in need.

### 1 package contains:

- 10kg rice
- 3kg lentils
- 4kg potatoes
- 3kg seasonal vegetables
- 0.5kg dried soybeans
- 1 litre of oil
- 1 packet of masala
- 1 packet of salt
- 2 packets of soap
- 1 tube of toothpaste
- 1 jar of food supplements

A food package for a family of four costs an average of CHF 20.



### How you can help a family of four:

- 1 week: CHF 20
- 1 month: CHF 80
- 1 month for 5 families: CHF 400

Many thanks!

SMS donations:  
GO ROKPA  
+ amount (up to CHF 99)  
to number 488.  
(Eg: GO ROKPA 30)

### How you can donate:

#### Credit Suisse (Schweiz) AG:

IBAN: CH73 0483 5045 5090 1100 1  
BIC/SWIFT: CRESCHZZ80A

Or find the account information for your country on [www.rokpa.org](http://www.rokpa.org)

#### For Food/Living Costs

Project No. 8750

#### For Medical Care

Project No. 8150

#### For Education

Project No. 8100

#### For Urgent ROKPA Projects

Project No. 8000

We are deeply grateful for your generous support.

In Switzerland all donations to ROKPA are tax-free.