



Continuing an ancient cultural tradition – caring for the elderly

Throughout Golok’s long history, nomadic families have relied upon monasteries for support as family members aged. After a hard life of following their herds across the land, the time comes when the challenges of the road give way to the need for a more sedentary life. The younger generations then assume responsibility for the family’s herds and allow their elders to retire, often in a home built within the precincts of their chosen monastery. There, these elders benefit from the watchful care of the monastery’s monks, and can live out their days in relative comfort, devoting themselves to study, prayer and meditation. This is not just the local custom, but the tradition of the whole of Tibet, honored and supported from ancient times.

YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE!

We are committed to bringing a water system to Bayan’s elderly nomads. Join us in working to improve the quality of life for these people in need. Each and every gift of support brings us one step closer – **YOU** can make a difference!

The Sogan Foundation



Ven. Sogan Rinpoche

Ven. Sogan Rinpoche is the head of two monasteries: Bayan Monastery in Golok (N.E. Tibet) and Awo Sera Monastery in Serta (East Tibet). He was born and educated in Golok, and currently lives in Oakland. Rinpoche is founder and Chairman of the Board of the Sogan Foundation.

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Through compassionate giving and service The Sogan Foundation aspires to bring hope and opportunity to those most in need.

The Sogan Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

The Bayan Seniors Water Project



bringing a safe water supply to aging nomads in Golok, Tibet.



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Shown above, Bayan monastery, nestled on the side of a mountain in Golok, Tibet; approximate elevation, 13,500'.

Bayan monastery welcomes a new senior community

Bayan has approved the construction of 54 homes for elders, enough to form a small retirement community on the monastery's land in the remote Gongma Torma district of Golok. As of August, 2009, thirty-two of these homes have been completed, with 85 people already in residence. Additionally, fourteen homes are under construction, with eight more in the planning stage. Ultimately, the monastery envisions a community of 300 people, the most that the land can support. However, a water system will be critical to the sustainable expansion of this community.



Carrying heavy buckets of water is difficult at any age; here an elderly Tibetan woman carries two of them back to her home near the monastery.

Currently, residents must fill buckets with water from an unprotected spring some distance away, and haul it back along narrow dirt paths to their homes. In the very best of conditions, they risk drinking water contaminated by livestock, or injury as they carry the water on steep hillside paths. The paths can become especially dangerous during the rainy season, when they turn slick from mud, and in the long winter when ice and snow make traversing the paths extremely hazardous.

THE WATER PROJECT

The monastery has prepared a project proposal for the construction of a gravity flow "spring catchment" water system, an efficient and economical means to deliver clean water directly to the senior community. The project will take advantage of a natural spring. Thor-

This how the community water source looks today – unprotected and hard to reach, especially for older people.



The simple houses being built in this community are the first step in providing a less strenuous way of life for older nomads.

ough analysis has confirmed that the spring will provide an adequate water supply for the next 30 to 40 years.

The spring itself will be protected, and systems installed to filter the water and collect it in a large cistern. Using gravity, the water will flow through a set of underground pipes to two taps near the community. Small brick enclosures will insulate pipes during frigid winter weather. No electric or gas-powered pumps will be required to bring the water to the surface.

The budget for this project is 269,924 Renminbi – approximately \$40,000 –

which includes:

- **labor** (including protection of the natural springs, burying the pipes and cistern and construction of two brick buildings to house water taps);
- **materials** (including pipes, filtration system, cement, bricks and a cistern); and
- **transportation** of all materials (a significant cost given this district's remote location).