He was still jet-lagged when he got news of the Gorkha Earthquake in May 2015 from Nepal. Born into a poor family in Tshanglakot of Lungbuche VDC, Solukhumbu, he was 18 years old then. Nepal had just been hit by the deadly earthquake which had killed thousands, caused huge damage and destroyed many homes. Asia NewsPost reported that 8.1 million people had lost their homes and another 1.8 million were forced to evacuate and become internally displaced.

The information reached Nepal from the monastic residences in Khumbu Region. His work was to help the people in these Monastic residences which were not being seen anywhere else. The Foundation stepped in for which he was thankful to the Foundation.

The Foundation has reached out to people living on its way in the villages in Tshanglakot and Tshanglakot (Pangboche, 4,532m). The volunteers of the Foundation helps to raise funds and help people who cannot afford to build their own houses.

Born in a poor family in which his father was dead and mother always sick, Pemba Tenzing Sherpa, 38, who was an artist and painter. He learned the painting art in his home village.

The Sherpa Foundation, which was established in 2000, could not have built a house for itself if it was not helped by people in power.

"It had just started with friends who used to help me. If I had given the money to the Foundation for whom I had started it, it wouldn't have been so grand. It wouldn't have been so wonderful without,” he said.

Today this 38-year-old painting contractor (Sherpa Painting since 2000) who lives in Davos, Colorado, USA has established the Sherpa Foundation, raised funds and helped to build or rebuild homes for poor families.

"In the villages that the Foundation has reached out to people living, there are many more houses which need help,” he says about the project.

The Foundation has built 513 houses in Khumbu Region. By the end of October 2016, the Foundation has built 149 houses, took them to their villages. Using local resources like stone and wood as well as reusing materials like sheets for the roof and cement were delivered till date. The Foundation has helped many poor families who did not have enough funds to build their own houses.

"The Foundation stepped in for which we were thankful,” he said. The Foundation continues to build new houses for those families who are still in need of it.

When Pemba came back in Nepal, the Sherpa Foundation was very much active. From Tenzing-Hillary Airport in Lukla till Namche Bazaar, there are many beautiful homes made of stone and wood. Those houses, visitors might think are built by the people of Khumbu Region. His work is important because building of houses is a practice of the Buddha Dharma. Khumbu Region is one of the regions where the Dharma is being practiced by the people. Even the leaders of Khumbu Region are motivated by it while getting support from his friends. Sherpa has become a saviour of arts in that region.

The Sherpa Foundation has built a house — 38 feet by 24 feet — of two rooms for her. It is made of stone and wood wrapped by grey tin.

The Sherpa Foundation also helped people like 36-year old Dawa Sonam Sherpa living in Shap and Sherpa of 25-year old Nima Tshering Sherpa who was born in a poor family.

When Lakpa Sherko, 29, and her family were building their new home, they did not have enough for the roof. The Foundation stepped in for which she feels obliged. It was the same with the family of 64-year-old Dhamala Singh Tamang living in Benkar — they were given a sum of Rs 24,000 to fix their roof. The family could not have built a house on their own. In the earthquake, “I couldn’t have built a house on my own. They (Sherpa Foundation) did it for me,” he said.

From Tenzing-Hillary Airport, the Foundation has built 1,700 houses. Sherpa, who has welcomed Sir Edmund Hillary in Phakding, the historic 500-year old Pema Cholling Ghomba in Phakding and Sir Edmund Hillary in his village when he was still jet-lagged, was very much moved by people who came and helped him.

"How can I continue this?” wonders Pemba, who received the Tamrakar Sherpa’s medal from President Bidya Devi Bhandari in May for his social work.

They raised around $53,000 from Sherpas living in New York and Colorado to help their fellow Sherpas in the historic 500-year old Pema Cholling Ghomba in Phakding.

This money was used to put a copper roof on the Gompa and to build the giant statues of Guru Padmasambhava and its relations outside the Gompa. Sherpa Foundation handed over the 21 statues of Gurus that were left by Nawang Phunchung Lama, who had urged Pemba to help his fellow Sherpas. To Pemba, “I am personally thankful to him for giving me the strength to find funds. If not, we would not have raised $53,000. I owe it to him. It wouldn’t have been so wonderful without him,” he said.

Good work continues

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