



Sunrise Children's Association Inc. Australia (SCAI)

"Bringing a brighter future to the needy children of Nepal"

October 2010



www.scai.org.au

ABN: 23 135 797 643

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Below: Sunrise children in traditional costume



The need in Nepal

Nepal is the home of the great Sagarmatha (Mount Everest), and was the birthplace of Lord Buddha. Until April 2008 it was the only Hindu Kingdom in the world.

- Land area smaller than Victoria (147,181sqm)
- Population 26.3m
- First opened to the outside world in the 1950's
- Over 40 different ethnic groups and tribes
- Hinduism 87%, Buddhism 8%, Muslim 3% and other such as Christianity make up 2%
- Common to all these religions is the integration of religious expression into every day life, resulting in over 50 brightly coloured festivals and numerous forms of daily worship.

Amidst the warm hearts, joyous smiles and celebrations, the Nepalese people have faced great struggle and turmoil, political conflict, poor economy, health care, welfare support and limited access to new knowledge and education.

Today,

- Average yearly income is **\$US240**
- **49%** of the population live in absolute poverty
- **47%** unemployment rate
- Literacy is generously estimated at **29%**
- Over **13,000** killed in the Maoist's Peoples War since 1996, with thousands of children being forced into armed conflict, left orphaned and abandoned, left to beg or sold into various slave trades
- **Over 2.6m** child labourers
- Over **150** orphanages in Kathmandu alone
- Infant mortality rate of children under 5 years **10.4%**

Sadly, these poor children and their families have limited access to basic welfare support such as health care, education, training, resulting in far more cases of unemployment, poverty and tragedies such as death and illness than necessary. Tremendous responsibility continues to be taken on by local and international NGO's (non-government organisations) to provide these much needed services.

Below: Some of the needy children living in the Kalimati slums



Introduction to SCAI

SCAI is a young and dynamic charity, established in Australia in July 2005 by three Australian women after they each spent time working as volunteers in an orphanage in Nepal throughout 2004.

SCAI is a **not-for-profit, non-government** organisation. It does not receive any government funding, and as such depends entirely on the generous donations of businesses and individuals.

SCAI continually strives to keep administration costs in Australia and Nepal to an absolute minimum, with all work in Australia being conducted on a **volunteer** basis.

On 16 June 2010 SCAI was endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR), so any donations over \$2 made after that date are tax deductible. All tax deductible donations are held in a separate Public Fund, administered by 3 Trustees based in Adelaide.

SCAI is run by a team of five Australians, headed by President and co-founder Emma Taylor. Emma lives and works full time in Nepal, with the 4 supporting committee members based in Melbourne and Adelaide, working full time in professional careers and volunteering their time with SCAI on a part time basis.

Vision

Bringing a brighter future to the needy children of Nepal

Mission

SCAI is committed to helping alleviate poverty amongst underprivileged children and youth in Nepal and the communities in which they live. SCAI aims to co-create long term sustainable solutions, with improved standards of living and reduced dependence on external assistance. We do this by working in partnership with local communities to provide education, training, development and income generating opportunities.

SCAI and its partners fully support the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Philosophies

- **Empowering** the locals in need to help themselves, by providing training programs that develop relevant skills, leading to employment and self-sufficiency.
- **Develop and facilitate** projects and various programs by working in consultation 'with' local people and communities developing sustainable practices .
- **Encourage active participation** by the community in identifying needs, developing, designing, implementing and evaluating projects in partnership, empowering them with a greater sense of ownership, responsibility, and community participation.
- **Working in partnership** with local people and/ or communities to identify and tackle the **causes** of poverty with long term goals, through open, honest, mutually respectful and transparent communication.
- **Focusing on youth** as leaders and facilitators for change
- **Equality** amongst people of any religion, gender, political preference, ethnic group or background.
- **Creating positive development change** that brings about permanent solutions and produces benefits in the community that is ongoing and sustainable.

SCAI in Nepal

SCAI has been working in partnership with Sunrise Orphanage Nepal since July 2005. In 2008 SCAI was approved and registered as an International Non-Government Organisation (INGO) with the Social Welfare Council in Nepal, one of only 4 Australian charities to do so. Emma Taylor works as Country Director of SCAI Nepal.

Sunrise Orphanage is home to almost 80 orphaned and abandoned children.

Since July 2005, SCAI has continued to implement various other projects through Sunrise Orphanage; they are ;

- Three Education Scholarship Programs
- Two Community Training and Development Centres.

Projects

SCAI's work continues to focus on the most disadvantaged groups in society:

- Orphaned/abandoned children
- Disadvantaged children/teens
- Girls at risk of various forms of exploitation
- Families in need of support for their children

SCAI 's seven projects in Nepal are:

1. Sunrise Orphanage - Kathmandu
2. Community Training and Development Centre - Jorpati
3. Community Training and Development Centre – Kalimati Slums
4. Education Scholarship Program – Kathmandu
5. Education Scholarship Program – Katmati Slums
6. Education Scholarship Program – Jhapa District
7. Sunrise Children's Village (SCV)

These projects vary significantly in size and have a range of funding support from SCAI. All projects have been or are being developed with local partners in Nepal in line with our Mission and Vision.



1. Sunrise Orphanage

Sunrise Orphanage is SCAI's first major project in Nepal. It was founded in July 2005 by SCAI and Sunrise Orphanage, made up of Chairperson Sangita Bhandari, in close collaboration with a dedicated team of Nepalese people who shared the same vision of educating and empowering innocent victims of poverty and injustice, to become happy, confident, inspired future leaders within their communities.

Sunrise Orphanage is run by nine live-in Nepalese carers, and supported by seven Nepalese committee members.

Beginning with nine children in July 2005, Sunrise now provides a safe, loving home for **almost 80** orphaned and abandoned children, who may have otherwise faced a bleak future of starvation, poverty, slavery, trafficking, being forced into armed conflict, or simply end up on the streets of the increasingly crowded Kathmandu.

Several of the children came to Sunrise from other orphanages that were closed down in emergency rescues by the Child Welfare Board, Police, Human Rights organizations and other local authorities. Several of the children were suffering from malnutrition and other illnesses before coming to Sunrise. Some had not attended school and needed basic medical treatment. A well managed nutritious diet, lots of love and a good education resulted in these children thriving with hope for the future.!

Whilst providing the basic rights for the child, SCAI is committed to developing the skills of the staff and children at Sunrise Orphanage and the local community and empowering them to become employable and independent in the long term. SCAI is working in partnership with the community and organisations in Nepal on various training, development and income generating programs to achieve sustainability and provide future pathways for employment.

Below & right: The staff and children of Sunrise Orphanage



Sunrise Orphanage (Training Programs)

Training and Development Programs

- **Basic life skills training;** Housekeeping and basic hygiene; health treatment and prevention (general, dental and re-productive health); nutrition; first aid; child behaviour management

- **Vocational training and skill development;** Computing, sewing/tailoring/knitting, thanka painting, dancing, singing and music
Foreign volunteers also bring a range of skills they share with the children during their stay e.g. Art, craft, photography, sports

- **Income generating programs for the children;** Thangka painting, sewing and candle making, producing goods which are now being sold both within Nepal and overseas.

- **Sunrise Community Outreach Program;** Older youth from Sunrise Orphanage volunteer their time in the Kalimati slums, where they talk to the local people about their past, the current issues they face, their needs and their dreams. They counsel the children, share their own experiences, values and opportunities, focusing on the importance of education, in the hope of helping these children along a path to a better future.

- **Educational field visits and work experience;** The Sunrise children participate in trips to museums, zoo, historic places and as they reach their final years at school will be involved in practical work experience in sectors within the local community that will provide potential employment opportunities.

- **Rehabilitation Program;** We also provide specialist care for the disabled children at Sunrise, with a fully equipped rehabilitation therapy room and local therapist treating seven of our children on almost a daily basis. The children, who suffer from cerebral palsy, polio, epilepsy and some bone and muscle deformities resulting from malnutrition and neglect as young children, have improved significantly over these past months.

- **Child Rights;** The older children at Sunrise Orphanage receive training on child rights - the right to survival, development, protection from abuse, violence and exploitation, active participation in family, cultural and social life.(UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child)

Due to a poor welfare system in Nepal and lack of training facilities and support for underprivileged children and families, we intend to expand these programs for the Sunrise children and the broader community as part of SCV.

*** We are currently seeking sponsor support for these programs**

Below: Sunrise Outreach Program, Computing, Rehabilitation Therapy, Thangka Painting



2. Community Training & Development Centre - Jorpati

The **Sunrise Community Training and Development Centre** was established in October 2008 to provide various skills training to predominantly women from the local community who need life-skills, employment and income opportunities.

Current programs include **computing, sewing, candle making and English language**.

We are planning on expanding this to include other new classes in the near future as requested by the local community. The candles are being sold from the centre to the general public, leading to long term sustainability.

Sunrise library, a very exciting new project located in the training centre will greatly benefit the English language and Nepali literacy students, local community members as well as school children.

Women's Support Groups for divorced, single or widowed women, disabled, poor and people of the lower castes are limited in Nepal. The training centre and library is a very exciting initiative, providing people who are likely to have remained unemployed, often illiterate and suffering great hardship an opportunity to develop their skills in relevant fields and earn a basic salary for themselves and their children.

Over 330 students have joined the centre to learn sewing, computing, English and use the community library since its establishment.

Below: Students developing their skills at the Training Centre



3. Community Training & Development Centre – Kalimati Slums

Kalimati is the location of one of the largest slum areas in Kathmandu, where over 300 families live in make-shift bamboo and plastic homes along the polluted riverbank of the Kalimati River.

The Sunrise Training and Development Centre was established in the Kalimati slums in April 2010, **providing training in sewing, literacy and candle making.**

SCAI not only provides education scholarships for 118 children from the Kalimati slums, it also develops the skills of the parents so they can become more employable, earn a regular salary and start to contribute to their child's education and improve the overall standard of living for their family.

The Centre is well supported by the local community, with the training rooms provided free of charge by the trainers who themselves live in the slums.

There are already **30 students benefitting from the centre with numbers increasing each month.**



Below: Some of the children and houses in the slums. Above: Some of the women at the new Sunrise Training Centre



4. Scholarship program - Kathmandu

Sadly, thousands of children in Nepal are sent from their homes by their parents or other family members to orphanages and various institutions in Kathmandu in the hope of a better future for their children. Primary motivations are safety, due to many children in rural areas being at risk of being kidnapped or recruited into the Maoist army, or simply a desire for their children to have better food, medical care and education.

In order for children to be accepted by some orphanages parents may bribe relevant authorities to sign false paperwork stating they are dead, whereabouts unknown or are too ill or poor to care for their children. This often then tragically means that the parents cannot or do not then see their children again.

The Sunrise re-integration program supports local families, in particular single mothers who face great hardship, with education for the children at a local school and some basic needs for the family to encourage the parent/s to keep the children at home with them rather than abandoning them.

There now almost 60 students benefiting from this program.

*** We are currently seeking sponsorship for the current and future children of this program.**



Below left: One of the families that Sunrise supports and the small tin shed they live in. Above and below: Some of the children we are now supporting.



5. Education Scholarship Program - Kalimati Slums

As well as the Training and Development Centre in the slums our major Education Scholarship program which is in its 3rd year includes:

- Sponsoring **118** children to attend a good quality, local government school;
- Providing **before and after school tuition** for the class 4-9 students to give them support in doing their homework, as they receive little support if any from their parents/guardians who are generally illiterate and not able to support them ;
- Providing classes during the day in a small school established within the slums for around **40 3-5 year old children** who do not yet attend school, and some of the children from the **lowest caste's** who are not permitted to attend proper school by their parents, often preferring their children to help support the family by begging on the streets.

This program has strong community support, with the 2 classrooms being provided free of cost by the local community within the slums.

The sponsorship includes fees, tuition, books, uniforms, bags, shoes and stationary.

Sadly many of the parents of the remaining children do not allow their children to go to school as they use them for begging on the streets . We hope to include some of these parents in some training programs in the future and hope to encourage their children to go to school, both building a foundation for a better future for themselves and their families.

Right: Some of the children that Sunrise sponsors as part of its Education Scholarship Program and their homes.



6. Education Scholarship Program – Jhapa District

In May 2010 we established an exciting new program 'Eve Foundation's Education Scholarship Program for Village Girls' in the far South East corner of Nepal, in a needy village of Jhapa District called Rajgadh.

The only vehicles that can be found in Rajgadh are a few motorbikes, with most people still getting around on bicycles, ox carts or on foot. Some children are required to walk an hour or more to school each day, which in the hot, humid Terai climate can be extremely exhausting. Many of the families we are now supporting survive on daily wages, from the sale of their agricultural produce or sporadic work in construction, assisting others on their farms and other ad-hoc labour intensive jobs.

The standard of living is extremely low, with the majority of families living in simple mud-dung houses.

The sponsorship of **63 of the most needy girls** has been welcomed by the local Village Development Committee (VDC), the local community, the schools, the parents and the children with great enthusiasm and appreciation. It has provided great hope to many people in this area for a brighter future for their children



Above: Home of some of girls we are now supporting. In front of their home. Below: Some of the girls benefiting from the program.



7. Sunrise Children's Village – Future Direction

Buying land and building “**Sunrise Children's Village**” (SCV), a purpose built, energy efficient, eco-friendly, permanent home is the next major step towards establishing self-sufficiency and sustainability for the current and future children of Sunrise Orphanage.

SCV will not only be a ‘home’ but a training ground to provide a strong foundation for the children. We plan to house up to 100 children at a time, with the following facilities:

- Living quarters for Sunrise Orphanage children
- Computer centre
- Training and development centre for sewing/tailoring, candle making, thanksgiving painting and other saleable goods
- Library and English language centre
- Hall / Music centre for singing, dance, music, performances
- Rehabilitation centre for disabled , including basic medical facilities
- Multi-purpose sports field for soccer, volleyball, badminton, basketball & sports area for table tennis and other games
- Playground - swing, slippery dip, seesaw, climbing equipment
- Courtyard/ quiet area for reading, yoga, meditation , talking
- Vegetable and herb garden for Sunrise consumption



Sustainability

Renting properties on an ongoing basis is unsustainable and the orphanage faces constant hardship with a severe lack of water, power, safety and security, hence the urgent need to build a permanent facility.

To maximise the sustainability of these projects we plan to minimise the impact on the environment and where possible use low cost, low tech, locally built renewable energy sources. Local materials, resources and labour will be used in order to provide employment, boost the local economy, encourage greater ownership, responsibility and sense of achievement by the locals and produce a model that can be replicated in other communities.

The following initiatives will be considered:

- Solar energy for heating, cooking, drying, power, recharging
- Environmentally friendly rubbish and sewerage disposal/ practicable recycling methods such as composting bins and toilets
- Effective water catchment , storage and use methods
- Other alternative heating, cooling , power

Sunrise School

Our longer term plan is to build a Sunrise school on nearby premises to service both the Sunrise Orphanage children, local community children as well as possibly a hostel/boarding home for poor children from surrounding villages. Good educational facilities in villages are very limited so this project will provide a much needed service to those people and help reduce the number of families sending their children to Kathmandu to orphanages or other types of children's homes.

*** We are currently seeking donations for the land and building fund.**

How To Help

We would greatly appreciate your financial support in the following ways:

Sunrise Orphanage

- General Sponsorship (min \$20/month) for unexpected expenses such as emergency medical and other ad-hoc household needs
- One-off donations (usage to be confirmed with donor)

Sunrise Children's Village

- Monthly sponsorship for land/building fund
- One-off donations for land/building fund
- Sponsorship for construction of children's rooms, library, music centre, training and development centre, rehabilitation centre, sports field, playground, courtyard, vegetable/herb garden, building materials

Sunrise Education Scholarship Program – Kathmandu

- Monthly or lump sum donations to sustain the current program and expand to include new students in 2011.

To enable us to plan ahead we request a minimum of 1 year sponsorship of any project or program

Donation of materials:

Sunrise Orphanage:

- Educational materials e.g. books, stationary, computers, games
- Medical items
- Clothing/Personal items; clothing, shoes (5-18 yrs), toiletries
- Recreation; Sporting equipment (balls, badminton, table tennis bats/balls, ropes, kites, outdoor games
- Toys; jigsaws, puzzles, board games, cars, art/craft.
- Household items; furniture

Training Programs

- Sewing - Sewing machines, overlocker machines, needles, thread, material, buttons, wool, knitting needles, scissors
- Computing - Desktop computers and laptops, computer training manuals, educational software, anti-virus software, USB sticks, blank DVD's, mousepads
- Music/Dance/Singing – DVD/CD/MP3 player, speakers, microphone, recording equipment, digital camera, video camera, musical instruments (keyboard, madal, tabla, flutes, guitars, violin – there are Nepalese versions of these which can be bought in Nepal very cheaply)
- Thanka painting – oil paints, paintbrushes, metal thanka frames, cloth, thread (these materials can be bought in Nepal relatively cheaply)
- Outreach Program – digital cameras, hand held tape recorders for interviews, notebooks, pens, backpacks, folders.

Many of the above listed items can be bought in Nepal for a considerably cheaper rate than in Australia, so if you are visiting, you may like to buy some items in Nepal on arrival. An excess baggage allowance can generally be sought from most airlines to carry things over from Australia, but this should be organized at least a month in advance.

Please visit our website for more details, and if you are interested in sponsoring one of SCAI's projects, donating materials or simply finding out more, please contact emma@scai.org.au

On behalf of the children and their families, thank you for your support!

The Sunrise Family

Who We Are

Emma Taylor, President SCAI Australia, Country Director SCAI Nepal

Emma lives and works full time with Sunrise in Nepal after 10 years in the advertising/media industry both in Australia and overseas. Emma co-founded SCAI Australia and Sunrise Orphanage in Nepal in July 2005, inspired by the sad plight of a group of Nepalese children she volunteered with in early 2004 at a locally run orphanage.

Kumaran Yogaranandan, Secretary

Kumaran has volunteered at Sunrise Orphanage Nepal every Christmas/New Year period since Christmas 2006. Over this period, he has developed a sound understanding of the evolution and intended future direction of the orphanage and SCAI's other projects. Kumaran is a Principal of Mercer (Australia) Pty Ltd and has worked within the Retirement, Risk and Finance department for over ten years. Kumaran became a child sponsor in January 2007 and joined the committee in November 2009.

Moira Fogarty, Treasurer

Moira works full time as a Strategic Investment Manager for a multinational infrastructure and investment company in Melbourne, predominately working on corporate acquisitions and operational structuring. Moira became a child sponsor and joined the SCAI committee in September 2008.

Sarah Thom, Committee Member, Volunteer Co-ordinator

Sarah works full time as a Strategy Director at Australia's largest media buying agency in Melbourne. She has worked in the advertising industry for the past 13 years both in Australia and overseas. Sarah has been involved with SCAI as a child sponsor since mid 2008, has visited twice and joined the committee in September 2008.

Angus Sobels, Committee Member

Angus Sobels is an Adelaide businessman whose interests span environmental consulting, commercial property development, commercial landscape contracting and property investment. Angus' strengths are in the business management and financial growth sectors of these industries which he has specialised in over the last 10 years. Angus joined the SCAI committee in January 2008 and became a child sponsor in mid 2008.



Above (clockwise from top left): Emma, Kumaran, Sarah, Moira

For further details see
www.scai.org.au

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SCAI News

Over the past few years the Sunrise team have been recognised for their hard work and unwavering commitment to the children of Nepal.



Above: Emma receiving a **Special Honorary Award** for her ongoing dedication and support for the children in Nepal, at a ceremony attended by many local dignitaries, well known singers, dancers, actors, poets, authors and other social workers. All of the Sunrise children attended as special guests and had the chance to meet and dance with some of their local heroes in Nepal! **Below:** With co-founder Sangita Bhandari.



A glimpse into SCAI over the past 18 months...

Today Tonight Melbourne: Sunrise features in 'Unsung Heroes segment' 28th December 2009

Today Tonight Adelaide: Sunrise features 7th August 2009

ABC Radio Adelaide: Morning Show with Sonya Feldhoff, 10th July 2009, 'Beyond the Backyard Morning Segment' 12th Jan 2009, 26th August 2008

Listen to the interview on website [www.scai.org.au/Newsand Events](http://www.scai.org.au/Newsand%20Events)

The Today Show: The Australian Elephant Polo Team visits Sunrise Orphanage with Nine's 'The Today Show', November 2007

The Unley Rotarian: 7th July 2009

SA Life: 1st July 2009

Adelaide Confidential: July 2009

Eastern Courier Messenger: July 2009

The Adelaide Annual: January 2009

Marie Claire: Winner of the Marie Claire/Garnier 'Taking Care of the World Around You' competition 2008

The Adelaide Magazine: November 2008



Sunshine of my life

Sunrise Children's Association Inc (SCAI) is a volunteer run, non-profit, non-government organisation established by Adelaide's Emma Taylor who, after a decade in the corporate world, felt called to volunteer to work with children in Nepal. Sunrise now cares for almost 80 orphaned and abandoned children at Sunrise Orphanage in Kathmandu, and also runs a training and development centre for more than 100 underprivileged people from within the local community, sponsors the education of 95 children from one of the major slum areas in Kathmandu, and provides support for 34 other needy children and their families within the local community through their reintegration programme.

Sunrise relies solely on donations from the public, and keeps administration costs down with a volunteer workforce, the personal contribution of committee members, and support from the local community, so Emma (pictured with Bishu Sharma at Sunrise Orphanage) is back home for a fundraising event at Annesley College on Saturday, July 25. Tickets are \$100 and guests will be provided with a taste of Emma's life overseas with dinner catered by Beyond India, Bollywood dancers and footage of the children and projects in Nepal, as well as guest speaker mountain climber Duncan Chessell.

"My life in Nepal is truly wonderful. I love it, I love our kids, I love my work, I love the culture, the mountains and the beautiful environment in which we live," Emma says. Needless to say, while she is away from home Emma does miss her family and friends and the SA beaches – not to mention a decent roast dinner.

Details: Emma Taylor
emma@scai.org.au or www.scai.org.au

SA Life: 1st July 2009

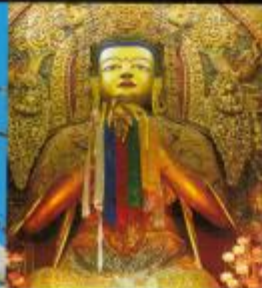


EMMA TAYLOR HUMANITARIAN

Former Adelaidean Emma Taylor won't be taking the holiday she won this year from the Marie Claire/Garnier Take Care/Taking Care of the World Around You competition for her work with orphaned children in Nepal. Instead, she plans to raffie it off to raise funds for the children she adores. This kind of selfless generosity and her motto that "the only limits on your life are those that you set yourself" have driven Taylor in her work at the Sunrise Orphanage in Kathmandu and her charity, Sunrise Children's Association Inc in Australia. Since 2005, the orphanage has grown from nine children to 79. Taylor is now working towards building the Sunrise Children's Village to permanently house 100 children and has also plans to grow crops and graze animals.

The Adelaide Annual January 2009

CLOCKWISE from left: intricate carvings in Kathmandu's Darbar Square; the children of Sunrise; Emma Taylor with some of the 80 orphans in traditional dress in her care; happy faces in the Sunrise playground; the poor streets of Thamel in Kathmandu; a Hindu temple; Golden Buddha; equestrian monument; Boudhanath Stupa; a street seller; the Himalayan range, part of the Everest region.



HAND OF HOPE

Emma Taylor left a high-flying career and sold her worldly possessions to save orphans in Nepal

words by Harrison

On a dirty river bank outside of Nepal's capital, Kathmandu, is an orphanage in a small, run-down brick building. It has no doors and windows, exposed electrical wires hang from the ceiling and there's no regular water supply. It's 2006 and Adelaide girl Emma Taylor has just arrived for a three-month stint as a volunteer. She speaks little Nepali and the people speak no English, which is a problem, because they weren't expecting her. It's at this point Taylor starts to wonder: if coming here has been a good decision. Then, several shabbily dressed children poke their heads around the corner and as she sees their beaming smiles, she knows this is where she's supposed to be.

Fast forward to 2008. Taylor is surrounded by almost 80 children at the Sunrise Orphanage, which she set up on the outskirts of Kathmandu Valley in 2005, after saying goodbye to an international advertising and media career. The facilities are still basic, but unlike the other orphanage, the children are well cared for and the place is filled with laughter and love.

"I love everything about the children and the orphanage," Taylor, 36, says. "They are so full of love and have such vibrant spirit. It never ceases to amaze me, despite receiving little, if any, love in their past, they so freely give it."

Most days, Taylor is on hand to welcome the children home from school – a 15-minute walk away – and to help with their homework and share the evening meal. "Depending on the heat, mosquitoes and power supply it's cut for

40 hours each week, the children sing, tell stories, poems or jokes after dinner. Then we all wish each other sweet dreams, share lots of warm hugs and kisses and head off to bed."

It's a long way from home for this former Adelaide girl, whose dedication to these needy Nepalese children earned her the Marie Claire/ Garnier Take Care/Taking Care Of The World Around You competition in July.

"We weren't surprised when Emma gave up everything to set up the orphanage," says her sister Georgie Speakman.

"Emma always knew in her heart that there was more to life than what the corporate world had to offer. She's one of the great ones as she makes it happen rather than just daydreaming about the possibility."

Taylor had a relatively uneventful childhood with her parents, Pam and Phil Speakman, sisters Mandy, 38, and Georgie, 26, and brother Tom, 24. She attended Mitcham Primary School and Annesley College and spent time as an exchange student in Denmark before doing a Bachelor of Business (Marketing) at UniSA.

After uni, she started working in advertising and media, at Young and Rubicam in Adelaide, and Ogilvy and Mather in Tokyo. However, it was during a two-month contract as associate media director with Leo Burnett advertising in Vietnam when Taylor realised her true passion – helping children in need.

"I have always loved children and, in high school, when I saw a documentary on squatted orphanages in Romania, I knew I wanted to work with children in a Third World country at



The children, with Taylor, learn *thangka* painting as part of their education.

“DESPITE EVERYTHING... I COULD SEE THE LIGHT SHINING INSIDE EACH ONE OF THEM. THEY JUST NEEDED SOMEONE TO LOVE THEM”

some point,” Taylor says. “Then, in Vietnam, I found myself hanging out with poor, disabled, homeless children on the streets. I had reached 30 and was not inspired to go any further with my career and just felt in my heart it was time to move on to the next chapter of my life.”

And move she did, starting with her 2004 visit to that first orphanage, where all won't as it should have been. “As well as poor facilities, the children were deliberately kept in poor conditions to gain pity, and therefore money, from visitors. Most of that money was used to line the pockets of those running it.”

With many children suffering severe neglect, malnutrition and, in many cases, physical and mental abuse, Taylor says it was incredibly difficult to leave when her three months were up. Yet the experience only strengthened her resolve to return and open her own orphanage, with the idea of transferring the children to it, as well as taking in other orphans.

“Despite everything they had been through, from being abandoned by their families, then living through the daily struggle they faced at this orphanage, I could see the light still shining inside each one of them. They just needed someone to love them and give them a chance at life,” Taylor says.

Within six months, she was back, setting up the Sunrise Orphanage with Nepalese friend Sangita Bhundari. Her original plan had been to work in China for 18 months to save enough money to return long-term, but found she couldn't stand being away from the children for that long. Sunrise Orphanage opened in July, 2005, with nine children. At the same time, Taylor set up Sunrise Children's Association Inc (SCAI) in Australia to support the orphanage and its programs. Yet after only five months in Nepal, visa restrictions sent Taylor home.

“I did my last stint in media to save enough to stop going back and forth. I sold my house in Adelaide and my car, and decided to go with what I had and live a very basic lifestyle in

Nepal. That was March 2007 and I have been here ever since.”

When Taylor says basic, she means it. Her first flat was a small room with a single bed and side table, and a shared bathroom with a cold shower and squat toilet. It cost her \$9 a week, but she had to upgrade to an upstairs flat for \$9 as the locals were always at her window, curious to see what belongings a ‘foreigner’ had in their room.

“Living like a lower class Nepali person gave me great insight into the struggles that many people face and a greater understanding of the culture, the people, the family bonds, the sense of brotherhood and what is important to people here. The sense of community spirit, sharing and not clinging to material possessions resonated with me deeply,” she says.

Nepal is known for its peace-loving people and ruggedly beautiful landscape, but also for its corrupt bureaucracy, conflict and extensive poverty. Infant mortality rates are higher than 10 per cent and there's little welfare support for the disadvantaged. This places the children in Taylor's care among the lucky few.

Even for those with families, children in rural areas are expected to work from a very young age. Of those who go to school, they may have to walk up to four hours a day to get there and back. The less fortunate are sold into the sex trade, trafficked to India or forced into armed conflict. Those who live on the streets spend their days searching through rubbish heaps for food or plastic they can sell.

“Life is very tough for children here. They combine school, homework, travel and chores and, with increased migration to Kathmandu and a lack of employment opportunities putting pressure on parents, the number of street children is increasing – Kathmandu now has about 2500 permanent street kids.”

Through SCAI and the orphanage, Taylor and her team are doing their best to change that. SCAI lists its mission as helping to alleviate

poverty among the underprivileged in Nepal and the communities in which they live.

They aim to do this by working in partnership with local communities to provide education, training, development and income-generating opportunities and work towards long-term sustainable solutions aimed at improving living standards and reducing dependence on other assistance. Disadvantaged teens, girls at risk of exploitation, disabled children, families from slum areas and street youth/school drop-outs are just some of the marginalised groups they want to help with SCAI programs. An example is Sunrise's Outreach Team Social Work program, which takes groups of teens out to learn about social work and the broader community.

Another is the scholarship program, which enables 70 children from the main slum area in Kathmandu to attend school. Sunrise staff and children provide counselling, guidance and income-generating ideas to participants and their families. There is also basic life-skills training, such as housekeeping, nutrition, health and first aid, as well as educational training in computing, sewing, jewellery, income and candle making, goat breeding, singing, dancing and *thangka* painting.

“*Thangka* painting has been a particular success and is something the children can take back to earn an income for themselves. We've already sold some paintings in Australia and 75 per cent of the proceeds go into bank accounts for those children,” Taylor says.

Keeping all this going takes a lot of work – when not hands-on with the children or organising Sunrise programs, Taylor spends her time raising awareness, liaising with sponsors and stakeholders and fundraising to keep SCAI and the orphanage going. She is helped out by a management team of local businesspeople and live-in carers, who fulfil the roles of aunt, uncle, cook, cleaner and friend. Taylor herself is known as ‘Aamaa’ meaning ‘mother’, while the locals call her ‘Maya’, meaning ‘love’.

In Adelaide, Taylor's sister Sangeeta Spinkman also helps SCAI and the orphanage with marketing, public relations and fundraising. She's hoping to make a documentary on Nepal with filmmaker Mark Dobson in the future.

While Taylor says working in Nepal has its challenges, she stays focused on what she has achieved and the lives she has helped transform. “I try and live each day to the fullest. It's important to appreciate every moment and every milestone, no matter how small it is.”

Clearly she has many milestones to appreciate and by the sounds of it many more to come. She plans to buy more land to build the Sunrise Children's Village, a permanent and fully self-sustainable home for up to 100 children on the outskirts of Kathmandu Valley. “Love is the foundation on which we have built Sunrise and it will continue to be the core that holds us together so strongly,” she says. “The greatest way to teach the children about love and happiness is to demonstrate it through our love for them and through the way we live our lives.”

READERS' CHOICE WINNER TAKING CARE OF THE WORLD AROUND YOU

EMMA TAYLOR, CHILDREN'S CHARITY FOUNDER

Giving up a lucrative media career for basic living conditions in a Nepalese orphanage, Emma hasn't regretted her decision for a minute

EMMA'S STORY

Throwing it all in and doing something good for the world is a dream many harbour but few have the courage to follow. Emma is someone who took that step, and now 77 Nepalese orphans have her to thank for their schooling, health and safety. Emma's Sunrise Children's Association organises sponsorships in Australia and ensures the donated money is used to directly improve the lives of the orphans. Now dividing her time between Melbourne and Nepal, Emma is still striving to make the world a better place.

Do I miss the glamour of my former life? Sometimes, but the satisfaction with what I'm doing now is immeasurably greater



The Winners' Lunch was enjoyed by all the 'Take Care Winners'. Opposite page, top row from left: Gemma Bonner, Emma Taylor, Tash Fisher, Gail Goss, Jackie Frank, Cynthia Lovemore, Marie Muirhead, Georgia Reid. Bottom row, from left: Sandra Kelly, Caroline Gowen, Mitty Parker, Nina Finelli, Caitlin Williamson.

AN INSPIRING OCCASION

Garnier flew the finalists to Sydney, where they enjoyed an overnight stay at Star City followed by hair and make-up styling the next day. They then attended a delightful three-course lunch at Sydney's Otto restaurant, located on Woolloomooloo's glamorous Finger Wharf. In attendance was *marie claire* publisher and editor Jackie Frank, advertising director Carolyn Gowen, and representatives from Garnier. A lovely and inspiring lunch was had by all, with many tears flowing when the winners were announced!

Marie Claire: Winner of the Marie Claire/Garnier 'Taking Care of the World Around You' competition 2008

ABC Radio: Morning Show with Sonya Feldhoff, 12/01/2009

Listen to the interview on website [www.scai.org.au/Newsand Events](http://www.scai.org.au/NewsandEvents)

ABC Radio “Beyond the Backyard” segment: Emma Taylor - Nepal

26/08/2008

“Emma Taylor hadn't always dreamed of setting up an orphanage in an underprivileged country, but now that it has happened, she will never look back. After growing up in Adelaide and working here in advertising for a number of years, Emma got the passion to travel and started working in different media agencies around the world.

It was in Vietnam, where Emma used to hang out with poverty stricken kids on the streets in her spare time, that she started seriously thinking about permanently moving to a third world country to live and work with those most in need.

Now Emma unselfishly devotes all her life to working with orphaned kids in a orphanage she set up herself in Nepal. She says the kids are her family and there isn't anything else in the world that she would rather be doing.

Listen to Emma tell her story to Matthew Abraham and David Bevan on www.scai.org.au/NewsandEvents or here:

www.blogs.abc.net.au/sa/2008/08/beyond-the-ba-2.html

You can find out more about Emma's charity Sunrise Children's Association Incorporated at www.scai.org.au “

The Today Show: The Australian Elephant Polo Team visits Sunrise Orphanage with Nine's 'The Today Show', November 2007

In November 2007 the Australian Elephant Polo Team came to Nepal with The Today Show's Sports Presenter Cameron Williams to participate in the World Elephant Polo Championships. The team visited Sunrise Orphanage and very generously presented SCAI with a cheque for **AUD\$10,000** towards the land/building fund.

The boys received a very special and warm welcome from the beautiful Sunrise children, dressed in traditional Nepali costume, and were entertained by our very talented dancers and singers.

Cameron Williams and The Today Show then ran a piece on Sunrise on air over two mornings on their return.

Footage can be viewed on www.scai.org.au, posted soon

