

NAMCHE YOUTH GROUP

WATER ATM PROPOSAL



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<https://namcheyouthgroup.org.np/>

General Manager of Himalayan Trust New Zealand, Alex Hillary, trying
the Water ATM

Namche Youth Group

The water ATM project was initiated and will be implemented by the Namche Youth Group, an organization that has been working in the Namche and Khumbu region since 2000. They have organized various projects in the town that have had significant impact. For example, in 2005 they built a shelter for porters who otherwise might not be able to afford other accommodation options in Namche. The porter shelter has a capacity for about 65 people and also has dal baat available for a cheap price, making food and accommodation affordable and accessible for many people. The Namche Youth Group has also sponsored a toilet with a hot shower at the Namche market available to porters.

Another major project of the Namche Youth Group is the dog shelter that is located above and a little bit outside of the town. This shelter was initiated in response to the Covid pandemic, when dogs that typically follow trekkers through the Everest Base Camp route no longer had people to follow and ended up settling in Namche or other towns along the route. This caused issues such as fighting and barking among the dogs. The Namche Youth Group built and sponsors the shelter to take care of about 60 dogs that otherwise would be causing disturbances in the towns.

The Namche Youth Group also engages in various other activities that work to support the development of the Khumbu region. Recently they hosted a sexual harassment awareness training program with shop / restaurant owners and locals in Namche. Additionally, they have sponsored events during Everest Week celebrations, such as the Namche 12km Sky Race, a volleyball championship, and Sherpa dance competition.



Background Information

The town of Namche Bazaar is the heart of the Everest Base Camp trekking route. With most tourists staying two nights on their way up and one night on the way down, the town sees a large number of people seasonally. The constant influx of staff, tourists, and guides during the two peak seasons a year makes it very difficult to manage waste. This problem is exacerbated by the perceived unsafe nature of the tap water in the towns along the route, leading to many tourists purchasing dozens of single-use water bottles throughout their time in the region.

Namche Youth Group has proposed a project to install five water ATM machines throughout Namche Bazaar, and is currently seeking donors and funding. Namche receives about 1,000 trekkers per day during the peak tourism seasons, so each machine, which filters about 300 liters per hour, would be able to accommodate 200 tourists, plus a number of locals, guides, and staff.

The filtered water ATM has been piloted in Namche for over one year and has had outstanding results. Nobody has gotten sick from drinking the water from the machine, and many trekkers are choosing to use the ATM instead of purchasing single-use plastic water bottles. The water ATM costs 100 rupees to fill 1 liter of water, which is the same price as purchasing a water bottle from a shop along the EBC route. This price matching will encourage eco-conscious trekkers to choose the ATM over using a plastic water bottle.

Funding

Each ATM will cost 381,940 NPR, plus an additional 25,000 for the transportation and 46,000 for the prefab house. In total, each structure will cost 451,940 NPR- around 3,500 USD, including around \$200 for unforeseen expenses.

Prospective donors have the option between sponsoring all 5 machines, which will cost \$17,500; or sponsoring a single machine for \$3,500. Each machine will contain a small plaque listing the donor's information as a sign of gratitude for the support.

Implementation Plan

Each of the 5 water ATMS in Namche will have a sign with information about how the water was filtered, the types of filters used, and how the machine functions. This is so trekkers can make more informed decisions about the water they choose to drink, and will encourage them to feel more comfortable with drinking water from the machine.

