

Resource 8

Greg Mortenson Article



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In 1993 Mortenson was descending from his failed attempt to reach the peak of K2. Exhausted and disoriented, he wandered away from his group into the most desolate reaches of northern Pakistan. Alone, without food, water, or shelter he eventually stumbled into an impoverished Pakistani village where he was nursed back to health.

While recovering he observed the village's 84 children sitting outdoors, scratching their lessons in the dirt with sticks. The village was so poor that it could not afford the \$1-a-day salary to hire a teacher. When he left the village, he promised that he would return to build them a school. From that rash, heartfelt promise grew one of the most incredible humanitarian campaigns of our time: Greg Mortenson's one-man mission to counteract extremism and terrorism by building schools—especially for girls—throughout the breeding ground of the Taliban.

In an early effort to raise money he wrote letters to 580 celebrities, businessmen, and other prominent Americans. His only reply was a \$100 check from NBC's Tom Brokaw. Selling everything he owned, he still only raised \$2,000. But his luck began to change when a group of elementary school children in River Falls, Wisconsin, donated \$623 in pennies, thereby inspiring adults to take his cause more seriously. The **Korphe Bridge** and the **Korphe School** were complete in 1996. Since then, he's built over sixty schools. Mortenson and award-winning journalist David Oliver Relin have written a spellbinding account of his incredible accomplishments in a region where Americans are feared and hated. In pursuit of his goal, Mortenson has survived an armed kidnapping, fatwas issued by enraged mullahs, repeated death threats, and wrenching separations from his wife and children. Yet his success speaks for itself. This year the schools will educate 24,000 children.

Source: <https://www.ikat.org/three-cups-of-tea/>
 Images Courtesy of Central Asia Institute



Korphe Bridge



Korphe School