

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Choosing Our Future: Wealth, Money, and Financial Structure in Shambhala

This report is a look at our community's current structural and cultural relationship to money and wealth. It is drawn from an analysis of the international finances, databases, and stories of our Centres, Land Centres, divisions and affiliates (Shambhala Media, Nalanda Translation Group, etc.), and the Centre of the Mandala.

1. What is the current financial health of the mandala?
2. What is the scale of revenue needed?
3. How will the Unified Giving Model enable us to meet that need?
4. What makes this so urgent? What are the consequences of delay?
5. What impact could creating a culture of generosity and wealth throughout our community have on our ability to take Shambhala forward? What would this look like?

The key finding is this: Our entire financial situation – our wealth, our challenges, our wisdom, and our mistakes – all of these are basically good.

This report is intended to spark conversations on what it means to shift the financial direction of Shambhala at all levels and to usher in a new age of how we relate to wealth and money.

In many ways, the next frontier for us as a community is to establish a strong foundation in the realms of wealth, power, and money. We hold a vast treasury of teachings on inherent richness and are well-poised to manifest these externally, expressing the success that accompanies embodied windhorse.

Shambhala is growing financially. It has over 200 Centres and Groups world-wide, more than 9,000 members, and annual global revenues of nearly \$20 million dollar a year.

But the Centre of the Mandala is significantly underfunded – by approximately \$500,000 per year. This creates a misperception that Shambhala as a whole is financially troubled. Yet in an organization with nearly \$20 million in revenues, this \$500,000 represents a less than 3% funding gap – a very manageable and solvable shortfall for an organization of our size.

Shambhala's main issue as an organization is therefore one of synchronization. Growth is taking place, but the resources from that growth are not being reinvested into the organization in a way that allows all aspects to thrive.

Let's look at why we encounter difficulties in our current funding model.

There are three primary factors:

- People's connections are to their local Centres and Groups.
- Donating to a central administration is not inspiring.
- Our local and central organizations are not synchronized.

The key is working where the inspiration is and generating new revenue for our entire mandala. To do this, we'll need to work together – Centre Directors with Centre Directors, Centres with Groups, the Centre of the Mandala with Centres and Groups, and individual with individual.

The purpose of the Unified Giving Model is not only to solve the financial issues of the Centre of the Mandala, but too establish a financial structure that helps our mandala function as a coordinated, integrated, unified whole.

To give a specific example of what's needed, the Centre of the Mandala's funding must be tied to the success of the Centres and Groups that it supports. Only then can we create a feedback system that focuses all our energies in the same direction. Growth in our Centres feeds growth in the Centre of the Mandala which feeds growth in our Centres. We thereby create a positive feedback loop.

To put Shambhala as a whole on a solid footing, funding is needed at three levels:

- Centre of the Mandala
- Land Centres
- Regional Support (or similar mid-level structure)

Long-term, Shambhala as an international organization needs total annual funding at the following levels:

Centre of the Mandala	\$2.5M
Land Centres	\$1.5M
Mid-level Support	\$1M
Total	<hr/> \$5M

These funds would:

- Allow appropriate staffing in the **Centre of the Mandala** to provide:
 - Coordination of a unified mandala
 - Curriculum development
 - Marketing support
 - Collecting and disseminating best practices to Centres and Groups
 - Programs for growing our mandala
 - Proper IT infrastructure
 - Stronger reporting and data sharing
- Support for the ongoing operational budget gaps at our **Land Centres**, along with increased needed maintenance.
- Create the means for establishing small, but highly functional **Regional Support**.

From a long term perspective, a healthy mandala will require a transfer of 25% of Centre and Group revenue to fund the Centre of the Mandala, our Land Centres, and Regionalization.

25% is a standard percentage for central services or overhead in non-profits. Still this represents a significant jump from where we currently are. So how can we do this?

To reach a funding goal of \$5 million dollars with a 25% centre transfer as described above, we'll need to grow our membership and program revenues at the Centre and Group level to \$20 million in the coming years. This is a doubling of our Centre and Group revenue. This will require an additional \$10 million of revenue at the Centre level and means significant changes in how we view membership and programs.

Funding Necessary for Centre of the Mandala, Land Centres, and Regional Support	\$5M
Transfer Percentage	25%
Revenue Required at Centre and Group Level	\$20M
Current Centre and Group Revenue	\$10M
New Centre and Group Revenue Needed	\$10M

There are many approaches to doing this, but at the simplest level it means:

- Increasing our member base from 9,200 to 20,000 by 2020.

- Increasing our average membership donation two or three times what it currently is (\$28/month in North America, for example).
- Working to implement best practices in our programs.

This is not an outrageous prospect – indeed, some would say these are humble goals.

How does a membership goal of 20,000 relate to the 12 million figure referred to by the Sakyong? The Sakyong has said that this number is not about bringing 12 million people into Shambhala but about reaching 12 million people with Shambhala vision. *The Shambhala Principle* has been offered as a means of doing that. And the creation of affinity circles represents further steps that will enable us to inspire ourselves and begin dialogue and partnerships outside of Shambhala.

We have a treasure trove of data on program attendance patterns thanks to the Shambhala Database. **With focused effort and the harvest of best practices both within our community and beyond, we can radically change how our programs connect people and bring them back.**

With just a small amount of effort, we could radically transform our financial situation. Doubling members, doubling or tripling membership donations, and doubling our program attendance would establish Shambhala as a powerful force in the world, poised to welcome many more in the work of transforming society.

A leap to \$20 million in revenue with \$5 million of funding for central resources won't happen in one step. But it's by no means out of reach and could be achieved in just a few years with all of us across the mandala exerting a focused effort.

The transformative changes in membership and programs described above can not happen through scattered and diffuse efforts here and there. They require leadership that brings together all involved parties. This is the purpose of the Centre of the Mandala. But it is underfunded and underfocused.

For us to move to a new level of engagement with society, we need to resolve our synchronization issues. We must create a situation that directs the efforts of the Centre of the Mandala to the most direct impact possible for our local Centres and Groups. And we must strengthen the Centre of the Mandala and work on regionalization to do that in the ways that are most helpful to our individual Centres and Groups.

With Unified Giving successfully implemented, we have these seeds for that radically different future. What this would look like:

- True synchronization: Growth in our Centres and Groups would result in growth in the Centre of the Mandala.

- Inviting the Lha: Centres and Groups would directly support the activity of the Sakyong.
- Thinking and acting as a mandala: There would be a tangible feeling that we were a single, unified community working towards a shared vision.
- Alignment: The Centre of the Mandala's services, goals, and results would correspond to those of the Centres and Groups it serves – and its funding would reflect that.
- Caring for our people: We could create manageable workloads for our staff, offer them a good livelihood, allow them to maintain a practice to enrich their service, and generally express Shambhala vision in the realm of work.
- Caring for all our entities: We would have sufficient resources to support our Land Centres and the many entities that make up Shambhala such as the Nalanda Translation Committee, the Shambhala Archives, Shambhala Media, and many more.
- Expressing lungta: Our people would feel successful and that energy would flow from our Centres and Groups to the Centre of the Mandala to our Land Centres and ultimately to all the individuals we touch.
- Increasing services: Over time, additional services in the areas of curriculum, marketing and advertising, IT, training, best practice sharing, teacher support and more would be funded and available.
- Projecting richness: Shambhala would stand as an example of the flow of generosity towards a vision to benefit millions of people.

Ultimately, the Unified Giving Model is one piece in a larger shift of heart and mind: a shift of dissolving the boundaries both within our mandala and between our mandala and the greater world. The first step is for us to want to do this. It is an invitation to express the wealth of our tradition, to let generosity flow, and to unleash the windhorse and success that is our potential.