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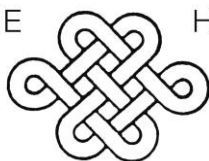
Mai  
2015

# dnh brief



DEUTSCH-NEPALISCHE

HILFSGEMEINSCHAFT e.V.



GERMAN NEPALESE

HELP ASSOCIATION

[www.dnh-stuttgart.org](http://www.dnh-stuttgart.org)

**Namaste**

**Dear Members and Friends of the GNHA,**

Unfortunately we did not quite manage to arrange the opening of the Training Centre in Badalgaon at the beginning of the new school year. But with a few weeks' delay we shall manage this - unlike the overdue decisions on the agenda of Nepal's leading politicians. They still have not managed, even after 5 years, to adopt a constitution. But adopting a constitution, of course, is far more complicated than building a house. It has to safeguard the differing interests of the country and all the ethnic groups, and this is exactly what the parties and civil society find difficult. Let's hope together with the Nepalese population, that the "constituent assembly" will now soon have a viable constitution that is accepted from all sides.

Well, what are we reporting on in this new GNHA flyer? Our member, Dr. Elke Mascher has written a very detailed travel report on the latest project trip. This report is descriptive and very informative, as well as being full of valuable perspectives and insights. Unfortunately its length goes far beyond the space in this GNHA flyer. Therefore we can only include some extracts here, but we have posted it in full length on our website. Incidentally, all the participants, several of whom have already been to Nepal many times before, are of the same opinion - this trip was something really special! Let yourselves be taken on our journey once again by reading the report.

Our staff member, Nara Bahadur is introducing himself to you in this flyer and explains how he came to the Dispensary, and what motivates him in his work. After more than 30 years of activity as a member of the Board, the greater part of which as Treasurer, Susan Theissen is saying a farewell that was planned for some time, and resigning from this responsibility. She, too, describes the initial stages of the GNHA and the circumstances that kept her at it for so long. Susan has set stringent standards that will continue to serve as our guiding principles. We are very, very grateful to her for her loyalty, factual advice and friendship.

In December and January our Office in Stuttgart was orphaned, so to speak, due to the illness of our Office Manager, Doris Keppeler, that has unfortunately not yet been cured. We have endeavoured to carry out the necessary work and handle the inquiries as best and as quickly as we could. But a Doris is not so easy to replace. Since the duration of her illness is not yet foreseeable, we engaged two part-time office staff in mid February - for 6 months only, to begin with. Should you, therefore, contact the Office in the near term, Claudia Kurz will be answering your calls there. Thanks to the tremendous commitment of our Vice President, our accountant and other committed members, we are now up-to-date again in the Office. The absence of our all-rounder whose memory never left us in the lurch, has prompted us to take follow-up measures which were overdue in other respects, anyway. We are updating our hardware and software and are in the process of adapting our Office organisation to new challenges. So if there still are some deficiencies, we kindly beg your understanding and bank on your loyalty.

We hope that you share our pleasure in an exciting and spirited GNHA flyer. Enjoy reading it.

Yours,

Andreas Falk, Mühlhausen/Thür.

*This significantly shortened travel report can be found in full length on our website [www.dnh-stuttgart.org](http://www.dnh-stuttgart.org) under "Projektreisen nach Nepal" (Project Trips to Nepal)*

### **GNHA Project Trip from 27.2. – 18.3.2015**

The aim of this trip was for us to gain an insight into the varied activity of the GNHA in Nepal, i.e. in the educational, social and medical fields. In addition to this, there was sufficient time to learn about the rich culture in Nepal and enjoy travelling in this wonderful country.

On Saturday we were expected at the Dispensary in Bir Hospital, which is also known as "**Christine's Dispensary**". It is a dispensary for the poor and needy (Armenapotheker); an average of 110 people come here every day and are provided with medication that they cannot afford to buy themselves. Thanks to the GNHA and the support provided by the organisation, Nepalhilfe Beilngries, the Dispensary is well stocked and has a sufficient amount of all the 200 medicines that are recommended by the WHO. Impressive were the cleanliness and orderliness in the medicine depots - by no means standard practice in Nepal!

Afterwards the so-called **PIN (People In Need) House** was awaiting our arrival. The main aim of this facility is to provide a home for girls who are in need. However, the number of girls who can stay there is restricted. Steps are now being taken to provide aid for supporting their families. The girls are given the possibility of going to school and learning art-work and handicrafts, e.g. carpet weaving. These small carpets are then sold in Germany; 90% of the proceeds go to PIN, and 10% to the girl.



The DNH focuses its activity on the educational sector and is in the process of introducing an educational method known as the "**Multi-Grade/Multi-Level (MGML)**" concept. This learning method is practiced on an 'inter-year' basis, but has only been implemented until now in Classes 1-3. Each child has its own "learning ladder" according to which it learns under the guidance of the teacher, together with its schoolmates, or on its own. Children on different learning levels are taught together in one room. They greatly enjoy learning and, brimming with enthusiasm, they continually discover new things. The children are able to 'develop' in the true sense of the word. This learning method is not applied exclusively with a view to intellect, but also for these little ones to 'develop' as a whole. It was a joy to find out more about this learning atmosphere which we found very

impressive. The MGML learning method is promoted by the government for small schools with a small number of children. The DNH finances and conducts the teachers' training for this new learning and teaching method. A Teachers' Training Centre is now being built near Dhulikhel. There are plans for the course participants to be able to live with families in the village, who offer them a room and subsequently also have a source of income. Some of these homes have to be modified somewhat, so that they are suitable for a guest. The DNH also takes over these conversion costs. A participant in our travel group spontaneously declared himself willing to take over the costs for setting up the Training Centre and the funds required for converting the homestays, i.e. the homes rented in the village - a tremendous help for the GNHA!

On **04.03.** we drove to the town of **Charikot**, in the **Dholaka District**. Here, too, we visited the state primary schools supported by the GNHA where the **MGML** method is taught. We were joyfully welcomed by the children, teachers and mothers and greeted with coloured scarves, flower garlands (malas) and bouquets. The children had prepared a quiz parcour for us with 22 different stops where the guests were tested, which was good fun for everybody. For example, we had to guess how long a rod was in inches, put English verbs in the different tenses correctly, walk blindfolded along a short path between rows of bottles without knocking them over, as well as many other amusements. This encounter enabled us to gain yet another very varied impression of this child-friendly form of the MGML teaching concept. We also wanted to visit another school but had to postpone this to the next day for time reasons. 80 mothers and schoolchildren had been waiting for us to arrive and when they heard that we would not be coming they shed some tears, so we heard later on.

For the next day, a 2-day **trekking tour** had in fact been scheduled for part of the group. But due to the snow at that altitude, we had to change our plans. We went on 2 wonderful day-tours taking us to an altitude of 3,100 m. And then at last, with excellent weather, everyone was able to enjoy the view of the Himalayan giants.

We also visited Dhasarth, a school located outside the Kathmandu Valley; the GNHA had agreed to fulfilling the school's wish for planting an orchard, thereby enabling a source of income to cover the running costs of the school. Until now we had experienced the joy, enthusiasm and motivation amongst the participants in the school projects, but here unfortunately we noticed a certain lethargy amongst the teachers. They were only lamenting about the things that were **not** possible. However, we do believe that with a little more initiative much more could be achieved. But this is also typical for Nepal.

In Pokhara, the next stop on our journey, we visited the **Children Nepal** project. This Nepalese NGO cares for underprivileged children in the Dalit caste in a variety of ways, as well as the mothers of these children, most of whom have also experienced extremely difficult, domestic circumstances. This NGO enables the children to go to school; social workers visit their homes and try to improve their domestic conditions. The women learn from each other, under guidance, in self-help groups about the income-generating measures available. For example, they can receive a small credit from the women managing it, to buy a pig, a pair of goats, or a sewing machine, that they can then pay back later. They are taught how to keep a cash account book. And they are also informed about the issue of women's rights. They learn how to speak and act confidently. With a better income, the domestic situation of these families improves in most cases, too. During our visit we were taken round the rooms of the organisation. Most of the children between 6 and 18 years who were being cared for by Children Nepal, were all gathered together in one room. Some were asked to tell us a little bit about themselves and how the help from Children Nepal had changed their lives. Two girls of 17 and 9 years managed to do this quite well after their carers had repeatedly bucked up their courage to speak, but two teenagers began to cry bitterly; they could not tell us any more and hid behind their friends. It is absolutely amazing what this NGO manages to achieve in order for these underprivileged children to grow up into self-confident individuals who take the initiative.



And after this, it was "holiday pure" - first at the lakes in Pokhara and Begnas and afterwards in the jungle at Bardia National Park in the far west of Nepal.



A whole day's "**Floating Safari**" was on our program there. We drifted down the Karnali River in large rubber dinghies and from the water we were able to view the countryside and observe the animals. And lo and behold! There was a tiger standing in the midst of the elephant grass. Everyone was delighted to see a tiger in the wild.

On the following day we divided ourselves up into two groups and with two rangers per group we walked along narrow paths, rough and smooth, over stumps, stones and roots **through the jungle**. We were not allowed to talk normally, but just whisper, very, very quietly. As a group we had to stick close together. It was all very impressive - total immersion in the wild nature of this region, listening, hearing, watching and smelling everything around us. It was cloudy that day, and there was also a little drizzle. The wild animals did not seem to like this much. They preferred to stay in the thicket. We were able to see some roes and deer and it was also possible to observe a large number of different birds, some of which were very beautiful. One of the groups experienced a second wonder! This time they were able watch a tiger taking a long bath for about 10 minutes!! - admittedly it was at some distance away, but with the telescope and telephoto lens it was wonderful to look at and take photos of.



Before we left the National Park we went on another excursion in the early morning, on the back of an elephant and then paid a visit to a crocodile farm. The crocodiles that are bred here are set free afterwards on the water meadows.

The day back in Kathmandu, before we went home, was at our free disposal. We could all do what we wanted. A wonderful journey had come to an end. Andreas and Temba, we sincerely thank you so very much for enabling this entire program to run so smoothly! We did not have to worry about

anything! There was always a solution to every issue. I would like particularly to express my thanks to Temba for the many unrequested 'small extras', from hot-water bottles, cough syrup and throat drops, to a hot cup of tea or a helping hand stretched-out, without even asking for it! This gave the whole trip a tremendous sense of human warmth! And on top of that, the entire group harmonised very well. There was so much to laugh about and no discord or quarrelling of any kind. Each person accepted the others just as they were, and I had the impression that everyone was concerned about each other's well-being, which is something I have never experienced until now in this form! We gained a deeper understanding of this wonderful country, and the varied, beneficial activity of the GNHA was an impressive experience for us all! We would like to express our heartfelt thanks!

Elke Mascher, at present in Chaurjahari, Nepal

## A JOURNEY TO SOCIAL WORK

With regard to my childhood, I grew up in a small village in Ramechhap. Born in a middle-class family, my father was the single breadwinner to my 7 family members. Farming being the only source of income, my father had to toil hard to meet our family expenses. When I reached the age of 5, my parents decided to migrate towards more affluent part of the country. So we headed towards Dhanusa district situated on the Terai region of Nepal which is considered as a good landscape for agriculture. I along with my small brother was the only fortunate siblings in my family to receive education



After completing my schooling, I headed towards Kathmandu with the aim of higher studies. I used to reside in Kuponhole in rent along with my friend. I joined Patan Campus for Intermediate level study. Financial crisis being the hurdle in my path, I started searching for a job. In this phase, I met with Mr. Bharat Bahadur Karki, Incharge of Social Service Centre in Pulchowk who introduced me to Father Thomas E. Gafney, Director,

Nepal Jesuit Society. I was then employed as a medical social worker in social work programme at Bir Hospital. Reflecting back on my childhood, I never considered a career in social work but my inclination towards the field made it probable. On the verge of earning money, I couldn't complete my high level education.

I worked conscientiously and well and served as the team leader of the social workers doing medical social work at the name of St. Xavier Social Service Centre for 8 years. The work includes administration of consumable medicines to poor and needy patients by purchasing from local market; arranging amenities for blood transfusion; sending stray children to orphanage home such as Save Our Soul, BAL Mandir, St. Xavier Social Service Centre; sending deprived older people to old-age home; arranging funds for cremation and funeral rituals to the needy and bereaved family; supporting transportation expense to poor people; arranging shelter homes for deprived widow woman in Manohar Gandhi Ashram etc.

Meanwhile I had to engage myself in other forms of job for income due to the discontinuation of St. Xavier Social Service Centre based social work at Bir Hospital. I too wanted my children to achieve higher education and secure their future. With this motive, I did not return to the village. Whilst working at Bir Hospital, I came across with Sister Christine Hoffman. As Sister Hoffmann was well acquainted with my experience, passion and motivation towards the work, she along with Mr. Ram Krishna Dulal requested me to be a part of German Nepalese Help Association. I too showed interest to work as a team in GNHA.

Through Sister Christine I met with Mr. Rupakheti, Ex- Country representative of GNHA. Mr. Rupakheti, inspired by my dedication and honesty towards work, forwarded my bio-data to Mrs. Margot Busak, Ex-President of GNHA.

On 01.06.1991 A.D, I was appointed as a staff of GNHA. I commenced my work in GNHA at Emergency Department. Further, I joined the 3 month orientation course concerning the administration of medicaments during this period. It wasn't an easy job for me to deal with the least advantaged and vulnerable group of population. Attending the dispensary in times of Bandhs due to political conflict in nation was indeed a difficult part of the job as I had to walk for minimum 2 hours in order to reach the dispensary. I really had to struggle hard to meet up with day to day challenges of providing benefit to the poor and needy people. Dispensing of medicaments as per the doctor's prescription, visiting the wards and scrutinizing real needy and poor patients seeking assistance in course of medical treatment is indeed a challenging job. My effort and benevolent nature actually paid off. My keenness to work as a team in German Nepalese Help Association made it possible for me to come this far.

Social work being the most renowned occupations when it comes to helping people, I served in several areas of social work profession. Serving patients became my passion regardless of my accomplishments. Presently, I am working as the Incharge of GNHA, Christina Dispensary, Bir Hospital.

Nar Bahadur Shrestha, Kathmandu

## **Why I became an active member**

My dear Board colleagues were of the opinion that before withdrawing to my well-earned "retirement" as a member of the Board, I ought to mention once again, the reasons that prompted me to work with the GNHA (DNH) and why I have also done this over so many years. I do not wish to assert that dementia prompted me to make this decision, but to quote Mr. Niedecken, it has already been "donkey's years".



In the summer of 1982 I did my practical at the company, Busak+Luyken. At that time, Kamal and Gajendra were in Germany and Mrs. Margot Busak held a Nepal Evening at Handwerkstr. 5-7. Mr. Kisgen, at that time the authorised representative (Prokurist) at the company, and Doris Keppeler were present and Andreas Falk also joined us during the course of the evening. This was my first contact with Nepal and the Nepalese. In May 1985 I began my work at Busak+Luyken, which at the time was tantamount to becoming a member of the GNHA. It was clear to me at that time, that I should not stick my head out too far, as otherwise Mrs. Busak would immediately "arrest" me for special missions to Nepal. At some stage though it could no longer be avoided and thus, together with Mrs. Nessler, I was elected into the Board - at the suggestion of Dr. Schlüter - as the Board had come up with the idea of taking on two more members due to the forthcoming 10th Anniversary. Two years later I was elected as Dr. Schlüter's successor, the Treasurer of the GNHA, and shall be giving up my post this year in June.

...Half pulled by it, half sinking herself,... just to quote Goethe with a slight modification, and as in any declaration of love one would say, "I cannot restrict myself to one single reason", ... and this is the way I have felt and feel with the GNHA. On the one hand there was the attraction of the exotic at the beginning - the chance to get to know a country not just as a tourist - and on the other, also the motivation to achieve a great deal with little money. After the death of Mrs. Busak in December 1991, I also felt a certain gratitude towards her. However, these reasons have gradually dwindled. What is left? Here too, there were and are the most differing reasons motivating me to carry on. There was this continual stimulus for being able to achieve something, even though I had indeed "let off steam" on several occasions. I still had the incentive to occupy myself with something different that has nothing in common with the normal, general, daily routine.

But it is quite clear, that the longer I was there, the more the people who were also interested in Nepal and supported the country, played an extremely important role. From my perspective, there is already a certain GNHA family whom I have grown very fond of during the course of time and whose warmth I would not want to miss. I have always sensed their feeling of goodwill towards me as well as their interest in my person, which has also inspired me. In the meantime I am sitting a little further away from Stuttgart, and therefore a trip to Stuttgart is always enveloped by a certain feeling of returning home!

All that remains is a well-kept house. In Nepal the generation change, thanks to the actors linked with it, has functioned excellently and also here in Germany the GNHA is on a sound footing, so that the change in the office of the Treasurer will not pose any problem for the GNHA, this also being due to the committed, qualified successor proposed in my place. Thus all that remains for me to do now, is to thank my year-long, fellow campaigners from the bottom of my heart, for having worked together constructively for the sake of the GNHA.

Susan Theissen, Cologne

### **"Ant Trail Transport" to Nepal!**

- Dialysis replacement parts for the Hospital in Pokhara –

The GNHA has been supporting the dialysis unit at the Western Region Hospital in Pokhara for many years. In 2014, a 3-month training course was subsequently organised in Munich (see dnh brief 8) for a doctor who was working there. Replacement parts and repair tools were now urgently needed for the 5 dialysis machines that had been donated by the GNHA during the course of the past few years. Those who took part in the GNHA project trip had spontaneously agreed to take these packages with them in their baggage and hand them over directly to the hospital. The dialysis technicians, ward physicians and nurses are visibly grateful that the maintenance of their valuable dialysis machines is still ensured.

We should like to express our thanks to all our diligent "Ant Trail Transport" helpers.

Richard Storkenmaier, Stuttgart



## **And this is how others see our work**

### *A voluntary worker from BREPAL (NGO with its main office in Bremen)*

A colleague and I took part in two different school lessons. I was impressed by the professionalism of the Nepalese teachers and the curricula. The concept had already appealed to me beforehand when reading about "Lernen mit Lernleitern" (learning with learning ladders) by Ralf Girg et al.. When working through the book I was still not yet able to discern the meticulousness with which the learning progress of the individual schoolchildren was documented in the different school subjects. For me, this methodology makes sense, and also that the mothers are asked to come and talk to them at regular intervals.

Reinhard Piehl, educator, Bremen, March 2015

### *A participant in the GNHA project trip*

Initially I was told to immerse myself in the country, and let myself in for the culture, the people and anything else that lays before me. I was rewarded for this with friendliness, curiosity and challenges. The GNHA projects - whether for BIR Hospital, PIN Nepal or the various different school projects - have aroused my curiosity to find out more. The way in which the respective projects were selected, questioned, guided and kept up to date has convinced me that the donations do not just drain away, but really reach the people that need them. The aim of making the GNHA projects "self-sustaining" is certainly another challenge and requires time and donations.

Ute Raab, business economist, Bad Nauheim, March 2015

## **We would like to express our thanks**

to all our faithful donators who provide a sustainable financial basis for our work in and for Nepal.

In addition, there are always very welcome donations due to special agreements, pleasant and sad occasions, generous waivers of payment and from other sources. Without these contributions some of our projects just could not be carried through, or only to a very restricted extent.

### **Special agreements**

We should like to thank our partner organisations, the **Nepalhilfe Aachen**, the **Nepalhilfe Beilngries**, the **Margarete Müller-Bull Foundation** and the **Förderkreis Hilfe für Nepal Freiberg** for their co-financing.

### **Happy and sad occasions**

The special birthday of **Michael Bauer** was taken as an opportunity for requesting a donation for the GNHA instead of receiving presents.

### **Generous waiver**

**Ulrike Drasdo, Dr. Christine Reuter** and **Peter Schöderlein** donated considerable amounts from their slide-show presentations.

Our member in Erfurt, Dr. Michael Heinisch, donated the fees from his part-time work for the Pharmacist Association to the GNHA and procures us considerable donations from pharmaceutical companies.

### **Creative and other sources**

The Nepalhilfe Sasbachwalden and Mr. and Mrs. Rohrer were very successful at their Christmas markets, once again.

Once again, many thanks to all the donators.

### **Your contact with the GNHA**

Deutsch-Nepalische Hilfsgemeinschaft e.V.  
Schulze-Delitzsch-Strasse 22  
70565 Stuttgart  
Germany  
Phone: +49 (0)711 45 96-488  
Fax: +49 (0)711 99 77-96 58  
Mail: [buero@dnh-stuttgart.org](mailto:buero@dnh-stuttgart.org)  
[www.dnh-stuttgart.org](http://www.dnh-stuttgart.org)



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