

dnh brief



DNH

DEUTSCH-NEPALISCHE HILFSGEMEINSCHAFT e. V.

GERMAN NEPALESE HELP ASSOCIATION

www.dnh-stuttgart.org

Namaste

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Dear Members and dear Friends of the GNHA,

Both we and you - whereas you perhaps have not been continually following the developments in Nepal - imagined the months following our last DNH-Brief to be different to this.

A blockade on the border to India where the most important supplies enter the country, meant that the planned reconstruction work could not be started. And it is not until now, i.e. one year after the earthquake, and after a great deal of time and energy has been wasted, that it has got underway. For us this was frustrating, but for the people in Nepal, living only under inadequate shelter during these cold winter months, this was sheer misery. The population's ability to withstand suffering was, and is still being put to the test under very hard conditions.

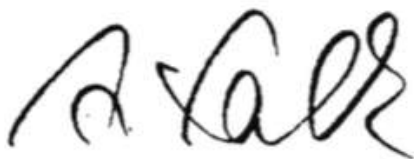
One positive aspect to report is that we were able to inaugurate our Training Centre in Badalgaun despite some delay, and that it is being made full use of. In a sense, it acts as a shining example showing that Nepal was not brought to its knees by the earthquake and the blockade.

And then at last, the long-awaited and half-expected good news finally came - the Millennium Alliance Project had been approved for Nepal. One can interpret this as a sort of knightly accolade for the GNHA. Through this alliance the MGML Project can be implemented even more effectively in Nepal.

And we would also like to inform you that we asked our Coordinator for the education sector, Chandra Shrestha, to give us a personal résumé. We also asked Sabine Baumer to report on how she, as an experienced teacher, is now working as a volunteer and providing our Team with a basic knowledge of English, or helping to improve it.

Everyone has done, and is still doing their level best to convey hope to the people in Nepal – you as friends, members and donors, and we at our office in Stuttgart and with our Team in Nepal. No one earned anything from the deadlock over the past few months. But let's hope it is over now.

In this spirit, I greet you here with a warm "Namaste".



Andreas Falk
- President -

MMB Training Centre in Badalgaun is opened in the district of Kavre

During the last few years, the GNHA's school program has been gaining momentum. There has been a continually increasing need for teachers who are trained in the MGML Methodology. Teaching premises had to be hired for holding our courses, and this was very expensive. As a way out of this dilemma the idea was born of having our own Training Centre.

A suitable plot was found in the district of Kavre in Badalgaun. Situated in the countryside, yet easy to reach, it lies in the direct vicinity of a school we have been supporting there for many years.

In October 2014 we were able to lay a foundation stone (s. dnh-brief 8) thanks to a generous financial commitment on the part of the Margarete Müller-Bull (MMB) Foundation from Stuttgart. The construction work progressed rapidly up until the bare brickwork, and then the devastating earthquake hit Nepal in April 2015. With tremendous relief we could see that the earthquake-proof construction design had survived the natural catastrophe without any damage, and to begin with, we were able to use it for a totally different purpose, i.e. as an emergency shelter for the villagers at a time of utmost need.

After the earthquake there were more important priorities to tackle first, as opposed to finishing the construction of a training centre. From September 2015 the progress of the construction work was again thwarted for months due to the consequences of the disastrous, politically-motivated blockade on the Nepalese border to India.

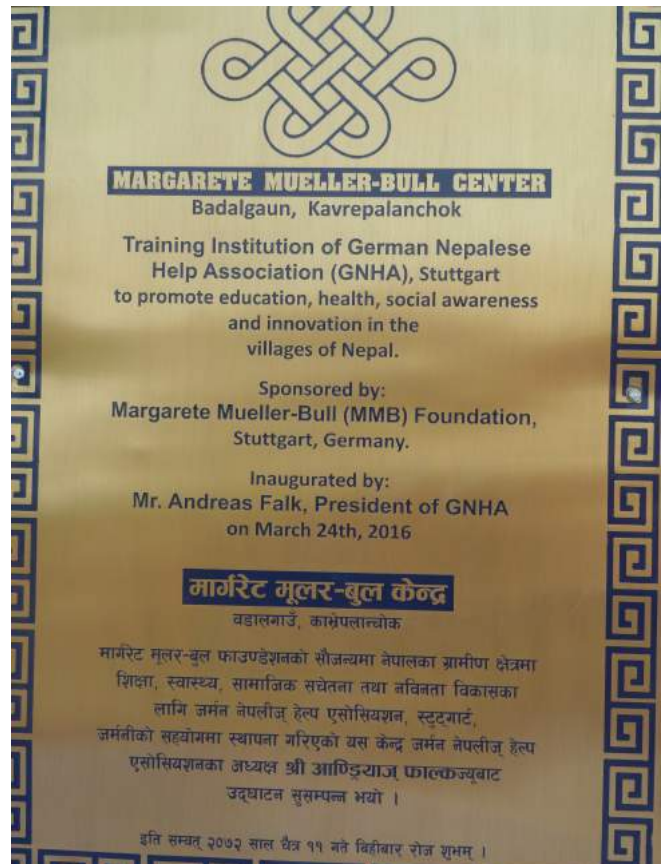
The supply crisis took us totally by surprise, as we were practically without any building materials and fuel, thus causing our building activity to come to an almost complete standstill.

After so many endurance tests during the building phase, we are all the more delighted about the completion of what we consider to be our wonderful, purpose-made Training Centre which, apart from a generously spacious training room, also has a conference room, three bedrooms, a kitchen and ancillary rooms.

The Training Centre lies on a steep slope that had to be secured. During the months following the earthquake there were a great many discussions about stable, earthquake-proof and low-cost building alternatives. We innovatively used earthbags. Besides using the soil available on site for filling the big, strong, plastic sacks, barbed wire was also implemented.

The rectangular-shaped earthbags, intermeshed with barbed wire, were layered to form a wall and now support the steep slope. As we only needed to buy very little material, the wall could also be completed during the blockade.

This wall made out of earthbags, has meanwhile impressively demonstrated this alternative construction method that can also be used for reconstructing houses in the village. In this way we have additionally been able to make a contribution towards the technology transfer.



On 24th March the President of our Association, Andreas Falk, was at last able to conduct the long-awaited inauguration of our MMB Training Centre at an official opening ceremony. Our thanks go to the sponsors who enabled it to be built.

(KS)



Andreas Falk with Nepalese colleagues at the official opening ceremony



The MMB Centre with its multi-layered wall made out of earthbags



Already in use today - the Training Centre



Opening ceremony in Badalgaun with official guests, students and villagers

GNHA - one of the players in the Millennium Alliance (MA) for Nepal

We shall be hearing the term, Millennium Alliance (MA), more frequently in the future in connection with our school program. Here, therefore, is an explanation of what it involves, as we can indeed be proud of having become a part of it.

The MA is composed of authoritative institutions such as the State Technology Development Board of India, the umbrella organisation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and international development authorities such as the USAID, the World Bank and the UKAID.

The Millennium Alliance uses the slogan, "Inspiring Innovation, Sharing Solutions". What is the idea, or the basic theory behind this? India has a host of problems in nearly every sphere of human life, that directly concern the population and its wellbeing. Numerous institutions and individuals work meticulously at finding a solution, often unnoticed by politics.



MGML lesson - whether learning in the group, alone, or under the guidance of the teacher, each child is supported here individually



The classroom with child-friendly facilities

And indeed, there are ingenious and surprisingly successful solutions, time and time again at grassroots, that are capable of being applied - also gainfully in other places - both nationally and internationally. Therefore it is essential to found partnerships, promote their innovative capacity and ultimately spread these new methods. For this purpose, prizes are awarded by the MA in the sectors for agriculture, power supply, water resources management, education and health.

In the sector for education, RIVER (Rishi Valley Educational Resources) made an application with its Multi-Grade, Multi-Level (MGML) Dissemination Model. The purpose of this specific application is to encourage this educational approach and introduce it to more and more schools in Nepal and in another Indian federal state.

The contacts for this process are the Nepalese educational authorities. But it is also clear to RIVER that the state needs competent support for this and has therefore assigned the GNHA as a further operative partner. In addition to the State, we are subsequently the most important partner for the MGML methodology in Nepal. In the same constellation with us, Rishi Valley was one of the three prize-winners in the educational sector in April 2016 in a multi-state selection process.

Of course, this presents the GNHA with new and greater challenges, but we feel competent to tackle them. With our highly qualified and motivated Team, the relevant experience in this field, the close contacts with the Nepalese educational authorities, good contact with RIVER as a result of several professional meetings, and our new Training Centre (see also the article on the opening of the MMB

Training Centre), we have laid the foundations in the recent past for this project being a success. The GNHA is thus an important player in a national educational mission.

The project is envisaged for a period of three years. Just how high the prize and/or the grant will be that the MA will finally place available, has unfortunately not been published yet. However, it is a fact that we, too, i.e. the Nepalese authorities and the GNHA, will have to grant financial support. We have already made a good start by providing the training requisites (i.e. a team of instructors, and premises), and are financing the printing of the extensive, carefully-devised learning materials for levels 1 to 3, since the training of the teachers and the respective material are decisive for the success of the MGML methodology.

(AF)

From Primary School Teacher to GNHA's Education Program Coordinator

My name is Chandra Kumar Shrestha. I was born on 16th May, 1983 in Panchkhal. I grew up in an illiterate family with a poor economic background. My father worked as a plumber in Lamidanda. My mother is a housewife and used to work as a fruit vendor. Born as the second child, I have 2 sisters and a brother. Now I am married and have a daughter and a son. I started my primary-level schooling at the age of 4 and had to face lots of challenges during my primary education. I completed my secondary level education at Sarbamangala Higher Secondary School.



Due to my poor economic circumstances, I had to work as a fruit vendor to cover my family's everyday expenditure. My parents were against my education as they wanted me to work. But due to my keen interest in study, I continued my education at the same time. Although I was a good student I failed to pass Grade 10 due to my additional heavy workload.

I then quit working and concentrated on my studies. After finishing my SLC I started to work as a volunteer at the local Golma Devi Primary School for nearly 3 months.

I also gained some experience as an office assistant at Golma Devi Primary School.

Later on, I started to work as a teacher in Golma Devi PS. The GNHA supported the construction of the school's building and bathroom in 1995 and the teachers' remuneration. After completing high school, I got an opportunity to undertake a one year Primary Level Teachers' Training Program (PTTP) in the Rato Bangala Foundation.

I successfully completed the PTTP and although I was offered many opportunities to work at private schools, I turned them down because the development of my village and working on behalf of children's welfare was always my main concern. Hence, I joined Golma Devi PS. The GNHA and GDPS also helped me to prove myself as a competent teacher. I always attempted to implement knowledge from the PTTP. Altogether I worked there as a teacher for 10 years and am therefore aware, from my own experience, of the problems teachers have to face. In addition to this, I was able to share my knowledge and skills with other teachers.

The GNHA has various different programs for improving the quality of the education at primary schools. It worked with a small number of schools and planned a qualitatively high-grade model, and subsequently expanded its program for other schools. I was appointed as an Education Officer by the GNHA in 2011 and worked for a probation period of 6 months. During this period I had the chance to understand more about the GNHA's intervention in government schools and school practice.

I always believed in doing hard work for obtaining good results. The more experience and training I had, the better I managed, and with virtues such as sincerity and honesty I was able to gain the confidence of the GNHA project partners.

I started to work as a permanent staff member of the GNHA and increasingly gained responsibility. Now I am working as an Education Program Coordinator. We, the members of the GNHA, are conducting education programs with 63 community schools and 2 NGOs in 7 districts. The project is well-correlated with the District Education Offices, District Development committees and other local stakeholders of the GNHA's working areas. I have always believed that following the GNHA's endeavours and objectives would support my colleagues. I would like to thank all the GNHA members and the GNHA staff members in Nepal for their wonderful support and encouragement. I believe that every child should get the chance to learn life skills at school as they will then be able to get a better education for a better life. I am also doing my Master's and am the first member in my entire family to study for a Master's degree.

Chandra Kumar Shrestha
Education Program Coordinator
GNHA



Chandra with students

Project Trip

Nepal – Project Trip, spring 2017 – advance notification

A project trip organised by the local travel agency, Tembas Nepal Trek, Kathmandu, is planned to take place in March 2017. Prospective duration, approx. 20 days to/from Kathmandu. Minimum number of participants: 10 persons.

Binding advance bookings are to be received by Tembas Nepal Trek by the end of October 2016, at the latest.

Further information on the journey and booking will soon be available on our website: www.dnh-stuttgart.org and under www.tembasnepal trek.com.

Three months of freedom

After teaching German and English for 17 years in Bavaria and also abroad, it was time to have a change, so two years ago I started putting some money aside, but still felt very vague about what I wanted to do. I wanted to gain some new experience and take a small break from the everyday routine at school - not because I didn't enjoy teaching any more, but because I was fed up with all the silly reforms and regulations within the last ten years and because I had gained so much positive experience teaching abroad at the German School in Lisbon/Portugal for three years after I was unemployed in Germany.

I wanted to give something back in return for all the good fortune I had had in my life, do something useful and experience a very different culture. When I heard what my task in Nepal would be, i.e. practicing English with the GNHA staff, going to the new Training Centre in Badalgaun and working there with the children and teachers, I immediately agreed, as I knew I would like this kind of work.

Although I have only been here in Kathmandu for 16 days, it feels more like four weeks or more. I really feel at home, although the traffic, air and infrastructure differ a great deal from my peaceful, green and quiet home in the Bavarian Forest, in the middle of nowhere. However, I settled in quickly, and the hospitality, care, concern and friendliness of the people here who have far less than those in my own country, have made up for all this. I often wondered how these people could laugh so much and so heartily and cope with all their everyday problems, such as power cuts 24 times a day, or having to work 6 days a week.

I have been teaching the staff of the German Nepalese Help Association for two weeks now and have met so many admirable people who are devoted to their work. They have told me a lot about their lives, cultures, creeds and everyday life and have been practicing and improving their English in the process. I really enjoy teaching them as they appreciate my work and are eager to learn, as they are aware that education and learning languages serve as a key to a new world - something my students at home did not always realise as they were too busy complaining about all the work they had to do.



Sabine, our English teacher, with her GNHA students, Sunita and Thakur at the "Holi Festival"

I work in small groups with up to 4 people and try to teach my new students useful vocabulary, e.g. the drivers learn sentences they can use with foreign visitors, and with Sunita, our lovely secretary, I work at improving her written reports.

I am very glad I made this decision to take a break from my daily routine in Germany, and quite sure that I will reflect on all that I have seen and experienced here for a very long time, when I am back home again. My impression was reconfirmed that the support given to the NGOs themselves, directly in the country, whether with money, goods, medicine or personal help, is the best and most efficient way to support them, and for each individual person here, this help makes a great difference to their lives and similarly to yours and certainly also to mine!

Sabine Baumer, Kathmandu, April 1st 2016

The deadlock with the reconstruction measures

They were urgently necessary, and how eager would we have been to report that we had been able to set up new buildings during the reconstruction work of the demolished schools at the several different locations, and that a large number of classrooms that had not been so badly destroyed by the earthquake could be repaired. Unfortunately we have to come to the sobering realisation that we have only just been able to start the reconstruction work.

At the beginning things looked so assuring. Just like many other organisations, we found ourselves on the starting blocks for beginning our work after the Dasain holidays in October last year. And then we were held back completely by the blockade imposed by India. For five and a half months practically no supplies were coming into the country any more. This blockade had a particularly disastrous effect on the fuel and energy supplies. As a result there were queues outside the petrol stations, several kilometres long, as well as traffic jams, and subsequently the transport came to a complete standstill.

Many held the unanimous opinion that the effects of the blockade hit Nepal even harder than the earthquake itself, and the aftershocks that have been occurring up until today. The reconstruction work could not even get started, as the building materials were not available, and fuel for the transport vehicles could not be procured.

On top of all this, the State institutions simply failed in this situation and by no means did justice to their responsibility for ensuring a speedy formulation and implementation of the directives.

For example, the authority that was made responsible for the reconstruction of the devastated private homes, is still not able to function fully. There is not enough staff and until now, only about 150,000 (as per April 2016) of the 498,852 houses in question have been examined. The public criticism of the regulations for carrying this out is unfortunately fully justified.

Since the beginning of February, the most important border-crossing point to India has been open again. Important supplies are coming into the country again without any hindrance. As a pleasing consequence the supply situation, with the exception of the fuel supplies, has returned to normal.

Together with two construction management teams, we are now in the process of organising the reconstruction of the schools at ten locations in the districts of Dhading and Dolakha, simultaneously. The locations chosen were those farthest away or the hardest to reach during the rainy season. In addition, we have placed orders with various different metalworking businesses for supporting structures for the school buildings, so as to be able to transport them, as far as possible, to other locations too, before the monsoon starts. In this way we shall also be able to work during the rainy season.

We are endeavouring to complete these tasks systematically. As one can imagine, this presents a tremendous logistic challenge within the short period that still lies ahead of us, as the time frame for being able to bring transports to the partly remote villages before the monsoon sets in, is very short.

Our Team, of course, was very active. The monthly Mobile Health Camps took place in exactly the same way as the training and guidance of the teachers for the MGML methodology. At all the school locations so-called Temporary Learning Centres have been set up - mostly temporary classrooms of corrugated sheet metal, where teaching can be continued. The inhabitants of some of the villages situated higher up, were supplied with warm blankets during the winter.

We are exceptionally grateful to our donators for their patience, and to our Team for the commitment it has also shown during the months of crisis.

(AF)



Possible at last - the reconstruction of the Lower Secondary School Gyanodaya, Katunje in the district of Dhading – one of the 10 locations where work could be resumed..

We would like to express our thanks

to all our donators who ensure a sound financial basis for our work, so that the reconstruction of our schools can also be guaranteed alongside our work in the current projects.

In particular we thank our partner organisations, the Kindermissionswerk "Die Sternsinger e.V.", Nepalhilfe Aachen, Nepalhilfe Beilngries and the Margarete Müller-Bull Foundation, that give us tremendous financial support.

We thank the many companies that give donations to the GNHA instead of Christmas presents to their business partners. Similarly, we sincerely thank the numerous jubilarians who asked for donations instead of being given presents, the Rotary and Lions Clubs, Emmi Zehnle and Christl Graf for their tireless work at various different street markets, Christine Reuter, Peter Schöderlein, Ulrike Drasdo and Roland Brand for their numerous talks held for the benefit of the GNHA, as well as all the schoolchildren who collected donations for Nepal with donation and cake-selling campaigns, etc., etc..

We also express our sincere thanks to all the donators and helpers whom we have not been able to name personally due to their large number.



Arrival of the materials



Working on the foundation

Dates and latest information

For the latest information on special dates and our projects, please see our homepage or Facebook page.

www.dnh-stuttgart.org

www.facebook.com/Deutsch-Nepalische-Hilfsgemeinschaft-117494788313902/

04.06.2016: GNHA Annual General Meeting

We shall be glad to welcome all our members and any guests who are interested.

Saturday, 4th June, from 10.00 a.m.. Place: Firma Trelleborg, Handwerkstr. 5-7, 70565 Stuttgart-Vaihingen (in the Cafeteria, Hofgebäude 1st floor)

05.06.2016: GNHA outing to Remstal

We shall be enjoying a walk with wonderful views around the "Korber Kopf in Korb" in the Remstal valley, and making a pleasant stop on the way. GNHA members and Nepal friends are warmly invited. We kindly ask you to inform the GNHA Office beforehand, if you wish to take part.

Sunday, 5th June, at 10 a.m., at the meeting point: car park (Parkplatz) "Hanweiler Sattel" situated above 71404 Korb

19.-20.11.2016: GNHA Nepal Bazaar

We now already invite you warmly to visit our traditional Nepal Bazaar

Saturday, 19th November, 2016: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Sunday, 20th November, 2016: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Place: Firma Trelleborg, Handwerkstr. 5-7, 70565 Stuttgart-Vaihingen (in the Cafeteria, Hofgebäude 1st floor)

11.12.2016: Nepal – Multivision Reportage by Dieter Glogowski

"Nepal – Acht – Der Weg hat ein Ziel": Charity Event for the benefit of the GNHA.

Sunday, 11th December, at 4 p.m., at the Lindenmuseum in Stuttgart

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BANK ACCOUNT FOR DONATIONS

Commerzbank Stuttgart

IBAN DE 03 6008 0000 0182 4971 00, BIC: DRESDEFF600

The GNHA is a recognised, non-profit organisation. Donations are tax-deductible. Donation receipts are, as a rule, issued at the end of the year, but also beforehand upon special request. Last certificate of tax exemption of 28.10.2014.

