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Newsletter No. 45

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Dear friends,

First, I would like to wholeheartedly thank you for your loyalty and your constant support. It is expressed in your sponsorship contributions, your general donations, and your special donations in the three campaigns that we carried out since the last newsletter: "betterplace" and "gut-für-die-ostalb". Because you took the time to donate just before Christmas or Easter and on a bridge day at the specified hours, we were able to get a total of € 2,815 (about \$ 3166) for the first two campaigns and our contributions were matched by the bank Kreissparkasse Ostalb - i.e. as a gift. On June 15, I put the third fundraiser online, which is still running, after I was shaken and startled by the high suicide rate in Nepal with 856 deaths - and the trend is rising. By comparison there were only officially 20 corona deaths. Nepalese take their own lives to avoid slow, painful starvation. I just had to act. It is about washwomen, traders who sell their goods by bicycle or collect and sell scrap metal and paper, unskilled workers in construction and day laborers in agriculture, disabled people, elderly people without residence, and Indians born in Nepal who are concerned about the Nepalese laws that do not allow them to be naturalized, etc. They mostly belong to very low castes and are generally illiterate. The state feels little or no responsibility for them. In addition, food is becoming scarcer and more expensive, so that many can no longer afford it.



So far, we have distributed a total of 400 care packages to the needy mentioned above. These care packages contain 25-30 kg of rice, 4 kg of lentils, 1 kg of soybeans, 2 l of oil, salt and some sugar, and in the Terai 300 mosquito nets. The recipients of these care packages cannot believe their luck. Some had tears in their eyes, because it happens so rarely that someone does something good for them. They are at the bottom of the caste and social structures and are generally suppressed. The lentils were received with astonishment and special gratitude because these people can only afford these nutritious and protein-rich vegetables - just like meat - during the two highest holidays in the country. In Kathmandu we also helped an elder-care home with 35 elderly people who were picked up by the police on the street. The state housed them in a building but did not look after them in these precarious times.

The manager thanked us on her Facebook page in Nepalese, mentioning the exact quantities of each article they had received. You can read more about the whole campaign in our blog on our website or by clicking on the following link <https://www.betterplace.org/de/projects/81778>. We also posted a lot of pictures there and will keep you up to date about what is happening. The text is in German, but maybe you can translate it into English with Google Translate.



We are very grateful that our campaign "Fight against hunger in Nepal due to the lock-down" was and still is so popular with you because we are still receiving donations. When this newsletter was being written we had already received an incredible € 12,735 (about \$ 14,326) in donations on the dedicated donation account that was set up specifically for this purpose (see the link above) and on the regular donation account. Thank you very, very much! You can support this campaign via the link or via the account of First Hope (note: for SHN: Hunger), because your help is still needed. Enough people in need are urgently waiting for our help.

In addition to Kathmandu, we also distributed care packages at two locations in the Terai, which is located in the south of Nepal. There the Tharus ethnic group lives in very simple and extremely poor conditions. Our former leader, Navaraj, who now lives in this area, asked us for help after experiencing a completely inefficient government food distribution program. The rations and the total amount of goods were so small that the poorest of the poor got nothing. Since he had led our earthquake relief in 2015, he trusted in the renewed help of our association.

Furthermore, Ganga, who had grown up with us, turned to us about twenty-two particularly needy households in her village. She got married shortly before the lockdown. As trekking guides, she and her husband are now unemployed and moved to their village where their parents live. Both reported that the recipients of the care packages were very grateful.



On March 24, Nepal not only closed its external borders, but also imposed a total curfew, which was strictly enforced by the police and even in the villages, which paralyzed all traffic from the rickshaw to the intercity buses. Now even people who still have a job can often no longer reach their job due to the lack of public buses.

Recently there has been a slight easing of restrictions in Nepal. For example, all private vehicles are allowed to be on the road again, but there is no public transportation yet. The poorest are punished again because they rely on public transportation. Unfortunately, it is still not clear when schools will open again. Since all interns left the country for safety reasons by the beginning of April and since some of our staff preferred to go to their villages rather than move in to our children's homes, our remaining employees have been facing a major challenge for the last three months. They have to take care of and entertain almost two-thirds of the remaining children all day and without the possibility of day trips. The remaining one third of our children are with their families in their villages. The decision to do this was made in consultation with their families and was a result of the requirement by the government that no more than 25 people can be in one place. We have not fulfilled this requirement yet, but we have come a little closer to doing so. The police checked our houses and found nothing to complain about.

Our on-site team does an excellent job. Depending on their age, the children learn every day one to two hours in the morning and in the evening. I receive regular emails, WhatsApp messages with pictures and short videos about all the activities. The new ways of communicating and sharing information are a great blessing for our work! However, it is even more important that everything goes well on site. Nobody so far has fallen ill. All employees still enjoy their work, even if they do sometimes understandably feel very exhausted.



We even expanded our team of employees during the Corona period to include the husband of Sharmila (called "Saru") Basnet. Laxman and Saru now live with our grade 10 and higher youngsters who live in our third house. These young people still urgently need female and male contacts to help them find their own identity and career path. And right now they have a lot of time to think about themselves and to have conversations. For the last one and a half years, Saru has already proven herself in the supervision of homework for the youngest children. The two 27-year-olds met in college (Nepalese high school level), both received a bachelor's degree in sociology and married after a seven year relationship. So it was a love marriage, not an arranged marriage, which is still the exception in Nepal. Laxman then went to work in Dubai. During this time, Saru received her master's degree in sociology. Throughout her studies, she made her living by working in her uncle's humble jewelry store in the Thamel tourist district.

A ray of hope in these difficult times is the birth of Rajesh and Pallavis' daughter on June 27th. We are very happy for the both of them and warmly congratulate them! We hope and wish that this child grows up well in our large family. The parents do not have to worry about finding babysitters. The girls are already in the starting blocks.



This newsletter was originally intended to cover our senior interns, English classes for our domestic workers, and a visit that failed five years ago due to the earthquake and has now been made up for. Samjhana and Prakash, who attended the international 10th grade at the Friedrich-Schiller-Gymnasium (high school) in Marbach am Neckar (Germany), were going to share their experiences. They flew back on June 29 on a return flight organized by the Nepalese government.

Who knows when and how they would have gotten home. Nepal is currently having to bring its guest workers from the Gulf States and India back into the country because they have become unemployed, are without food, and are homeless. They often bring back COVID 19 with them. The government has reported a sharp increase in the number of cases, fortunately there have been few deaths and many recoveries. Let us hope that Samjhana and Prakash stay healthy. The pandemic has forced us to set other priorities. Everything is so uncertain that we do not want to send any new interns to Nepal before mid-February. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our group tour for this fall.

Our emergency aid for (starving) hungry persons in Nepal will surely be needed for some time. We are aware that despite your generosity, we can only help a relatively small number of people. But this help is much better than nothing!

Thank you, that you contributed to our projects!
Thank you, that you feel the same way!
Thank you, that you always help!





Jakob Neugebauer, our webmaster, writes regular Blogs with updates for our website, which he very carefully maintains. Take a look, it's worth it, even if you only look at the pictures.

If you live in the U.S. and want to support this organization you can do so by sending a check to the following American organization that is kind enough to transfer your contribution to our account in Nepal and to issue a tax refund slip to you.

Nepal Hope
38112 Young Drive,
Fremont, CA 94536.

Please, specify our organization by stating "for SHN." "SHN" stands for Self Help Nepal, the name of our organization in Nepal.

We are also urgently looking for more sponsors for individual children. Sponsorships start at 35 Dollars per month. A 100% of your donation goes directly to the care and education of the children.

At the moment Nepal Hope can accept PayPal payments via this link:

https://paypal.me/NepalHope?locale.x=en_US

They are working on getting their website up and running so they can accept credit card payments as well.

You can find out more about this and other topics on our website which is also in English. Just click on www.homeofhope-nepal.com or if this doesn't work, click the German website www.hausderhoffnung-nepal.de and switch to English.

Finally, we want to thank you again for your valuable donations and please stay loyal to us because we urgently need your support.

Get through these challenging times well and stay healthy!

Kind regards and yours truly,

Ellen Dietrich



