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Winter 2022

### Newsletter No 50

Dear friends,

Since all Nepal fans wanted to travel back to the Himalayan country after two years of the pandemic, it was not so easy to find a suitable flight for Tihar (Festival of Lights), so I only arrived on the third day of the 4-day festival. On the one hand there was the typical hustle and bustle with the holiday preparations for the last day, Bhai Tika Day, on the other hand I felt the joy and peace that this festival radiates through the many lights.

On the only holiday of the multi-day festival, our girls again gave our boys, who they call their brothers, the usual blessing - tika - in seven colors. In the afternoon, our big dance performance took place in cultural costumes appropriate to the respective dance, for which our children had practiced even more than ever. The big ones - especially the girls – have professional potential - and the little ones like to emulate them. It was an impressive afternoon. On the next holiday we made a very successful trip to the nature park in Godavari, about 30 km away from us. There, a new group picture was taken of almost all children, some employees and our current volunteers.



The pleasant atmosphere of the festive season continued and still continues to be present in our homes. Our general manager, Rajesh, has welded together his team well and carefully structured and organized all areas. Local employees and foreign volunteers feel at home and like to do their jobs. Our own day care center and school have proven themselves and contribute to the good climate, because with the additional space and all-day, age-appropriate offerings for our youngest children, we are not only better able to meet their needs, but also give the other children and young

people more appropriate opportunities to develop. Our small school (classes 1 to 5) with a total of 55 pupils is good for the 46 children from our children's home because they can be given more attention in these smaller classes with more focus on the individual.



We bring in senior experts to train the educators and teachers. Hans Krause, who had interned with us for the first time in the fall of 2017 together with his wife (see Newsletter No. 40), came as a retired elementary school teacher for a month this summer to introduce learners and teachers to vivid and interactive mathematics lessons. Everyone was eager to participate. Suddenly, mathematics became very understandable and fun for everyone.

Before this Christmas, one senior expert for the day care center and one for languages will come to the school for four weeks. Their paths have been prepared by the Waldorf teacher Nima in the day-care center and by me at school.

There have been personnel changes in our children's home again. About a year ago we hired a young psychologist who is now working almost full time with us. She has had a "get-to-know-you" talk with almost every child, because every

child brings his or her own baggage with them: early death of both parents or one parent, bitter poverty, family break-ups due to separation of the parents caused by alcohol problems or domestic violence; deportation of the child to relatives who usually have too little for themselves to live on. And worst of all: no interest in the child.

Two such fates are mentioned here, which are all the more tragic because both of them were among the best in their 10<sup>th</sup> grade graduating class this year and show exemplary social behavior, but miss recognition and attention from their parents.



When Raju's mother heard about her husband's serious work accident in Oman, she left the village without her son. Relatives took care of the boy until he came to us in 2014. Three years later, the father died in an accident. For a while, relatives in the village had a cell phone number for the mother, but it has since stopped working as well. The agonizing question now is whether she is still alive and just doesn't want to be in touch, or whether she herself has since passed away. In all this misfortune, the now 17-year-old is still lucky, because he is welcomed by his relatives in the village.

Mina, who is now 18, came to us 12 years ago. Soon after her birth her parents had divorced and each remarried, the mother to India. The girl remained in the care of her grandparents until she came to us. About three years ago, the mother returned to the village from India, but showed no interest in getting to know her daughter and has since disappeared. Nothing more is known about the father. After all these years, the mother's brother suddenly showed up, who invited the girl to his place for two days in the summer, but did not get in touch for the holidays. According to Nepalese law and custom, he would have to take care of the girl and at least invite her to religious holidays. After the mother returned to Nepal, I got a photo of her, which of course I printed out for Mina. She literally devoured it with her eyes.





Sadly, we also had to say goodbye to a much and all-around appreciated staff member, 24-year-old Anish Ghimire, who with his natural authority, leadership talent and humor had been very successful as a house leader of the teenage boys for four years and three months. He had obtained a "green card" under the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program and moved to the U.S. in early October. (More about this in a blog on our homepage in German). The farewell with cake and dances was very moving. We wish him all the best for his future.

His place is taken by Raja Timalsina, whom his predecessor was still able to train. We wish him the same good hand and skills in this responsible task.



Let's move on to Germany, where we now also have a foothold. Five years ago Madan Raj Sharma came to Schwäbisch Gmünd for a FSJ year, attended language courses and accompanied elementary school children with their class work. Then he did the one-year preliminary course and this summer successfully completed the 3-year training program as a kindergarten teacher at St. Loreto.



He wrote:

*"During this time I was able to gain a lot of knowledge about childhood education. Over the years I had to write a lot of essays and so I improved my German language. For me, Germany is the land of opportunities, no matter what area you work in. I am very grateful to be able to work in Germany. I would like to thank Ms. Dietrich, Gerda Kucher and Heike Maria Kucher for supporting me."*

He has had a permanent position in Schwäbisch Gmünd since September 1st.

Nine more young people came to Germany for training this fall. Four others had to stay in Kathmandu because they unfortunately did not pass the corresponding language exam in German. Fortunately, we were able to find host families for most of them, where they are accepted like their own children and feel fully integrated. This reception made it much easier for them to get started with all the official formalities and to use the means of transportation. Furthermore, they get to know the everyday German life, because even something as simple as fetching a shopping cart in the supermarket and returning it has to be learned. Last but not least, they get to try German food and have to speak a lot of German, which again helps them in their jobs. So far, I have only experienced satisfied host families and Nepalese young people.



It was agreed with Sachin's host family - he arrived in 2021 - that he would stay with them for a maximum of one year. He will now, barring anything unforeseen, live there during his training, because the family's three children have adopted him as their big brother, and the host parents have taken him in as another son. He also participates in all family celebrations and vacations. Sachin, conversely, feels like a full member of the family and is very grateful for that.

Together with the Nepalese young people, their host families and a few godparents, we celebrated the most important Nepalese festival, Dashain, in a German-Nepali restaurant in Schwäbisch Gmünd on October 8. It eased homesickness and gave the German guests insights into the lives of their new family members. (Read more in our German blog).



Not only in Germany, but also in Nepal, the cost of living has risen enormously as a result of Corona and the war in Ukraine. If you still have a sponsorship with 30 Dollars, we would be very happy if you could increase your monthly contribution by 5 or even 10 Dollars. Generally speaking, we are looking forward to more sponsors for our newly admitted children and also for some older children whose costs are no longer covered by the inflation. Furthermore, there are sponsorships starting from 35 Dollars.

We have more volunteers again, this time even a more mature one, who all make a valuable contribution in our houses with their homework help, their leisure activities and their help in learning German. We welcome more applications of all ages and nationalities.

If you are interested, please contact us by email, WhatsApp or Messenger.

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.

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.

Finally, all that remains for me to do is to thank you very much for your constant support. Please continue to be loyal to us, because we need you more than ever.

With very grateful greetings and good wishes for the upcoming holidays and the New Year,

Yours truly,

*Ellen Dietrich*