

PSD Connect

A Quarterly Newsletter

The PSD Connect is a quarterly e-newsletter published by the Partnership for Sustainable Development (PSD) Nepal to inform all their partners, ex-volunteers and supporters, about our activities and news. PSD Nepal is a non-profit social development organization dedicated to the alleviation of poverty of Children and youth of rural Nepal. For more information please visit www.psdnepal.org.

MESSAGE FROM the EDITOR

Namaste Friends!

We would like to thank everybody for your kind responses to our newsletter! It has been really pleasant to read all your reactions. Here is our latest quarterly newsletter keeping you up to date with all our works and accomplishments over the last three months. Please feel free to contact us if you have any announcements, articles or messages that you want to promote through our newsletter. We heartily welcome your views, comments, and queries regarding the work of PSD-Nepal and/or regarding the improvement of the newsletter! You can send us an email to psdnepal@mail.com.np or call us at (9771)-4780369, fax 4780631.

Bishnu H. Bhatta

LATEST PSD NEWS

- At the beginning of September, PSD said goodbye to Anya Petrovani, who worked as an intern in the central office in Kathmandu for 3 months.
- Just after Anya left, PSD welcomed a new intern, Laura Anderson, who is also working in the central office and rural village in Ilam for 6 months.
- Mr. Bishnu H. Bhatta, Team Member for Nature Action Collaborative for Children from Asia took part in the regional NACE conference in Mumbai Delhi with other 6 teachers from two different schools. We reached there by travelling 37 hours long journey of train and same amount of time way back too. Our destination was Bambah city of India which is really beautiful city and participate presented in the conference which was focused on connecting the children to nature. Conference organizer NACC - World Forum Foundation, Early Care and Education, India and Podar Jumbo Kids have provided us warm welcome and smart reception which was really appreciable. All the member of team very much enjoyed the conference learnt a lot out of it. One of participants felt that, as principal I felt my challenges how to make aware to our school teacher in order to connect the children to nature. This is very good opportunity to us to expose ourselves how to connecting children with Nature and see how other teachers use this methods while teaching children. This is great opportunity for us.
- Other member of staff Mr. Tirtha Raj Poudel has participated ATP/YPT 2011, training in Jakarta and Balli in Indonesia on 24 October to 4 November 2011.

Being in Nepal in this summer 2011

By: Volunteers, ODA

The project we carried out had several aspects: the regeneration of a degrading state primary school, teaching of english to underprivileged children, soak pit, smokeless stove and toilet construction, structural improvements to a community centre, tree plantation and maintenance of water sources for a lake. The villages in which we stayed - Resha, Dhamja, Sima and Bhakunde - were situated in the Baglung district, an area of Nepal within about 100 km of Nepal's biggest western city, Pokhara.



School upon arrival

For the construction aspect we helped to repair and regenerate the local state primary school, which had been heavily damaged throughout the last few monsoon seasons. Upon arrival the work had already begun with the money (half fronted by the local community and half by the charity). To counter the deterioration, the walls and two of the most degraded classrooms were strengthened and re-plastered. To achieve this local labour was used.

Once plastered, the walls were painted red and white and decorated with a variety of national symbols and anthems. This provided a great improvement to the quality of the school and its surrounding area, generating a pleasant working environment for the children as well as a focal point for the community.



School upon completion of project

The aid to the school also extended to the construction of a water tank and taps to provide clean drinkable water throughout the dry season, as many children did not have a running tap at home. The tank is built from rocks and mud like the school, and covered in a plaster and cement mix to make it waterproof.



Construction of the water tank



We helped to build smokeless stoves in various houses around Dhamja - a task involving stamping on mud to prepare it for use as the cement between bricks, pulling down whatever kind of stove was already in the house, salvaging bricks, and then rebuilding the stove and adding a pipe to heat water. Mina Didi was the skilled labourer on this aspect of the project, and we were impressed with her professionalism.



Several soak pits were built in the front yards of people around the village; concrete structures used to make the washing of clothes and plates, cutlery, etc easier and more hygienic. We helped to break rocks for use in the cement, and on one occasion helped to mix the cement. Otherwise the work was too skilled for us to be of any help, although we were still encouraged to be present at the building sites for soak pits.

Throughout the project, we taught classes (sometimes alone, sometimes with a teacher present) at the local school for around 3 hours per day each. These classes ranged from Kindergarten to Class 4 and subjects we taught ranged from English to Science and Environment. All of the volunteers thoroughly enjoyed teaching and thought it was perhaps the best aspect of the project! We all got to know our classes really well, and this enabled us to bond with the local community much more effectively.



It was lovely to be made so welcome by everybody there – they were clearly grateful for what we were helping them to achieve. We all agree that having a Nepali counterpart from PSD was crucial for the success of the project. There were a vital link between us and everyone in the village and were able to translate and explain what was happening. They were great asset to our team and soon became very good friends to us all. Our host family was incredibly hospitable and welcoming. The food was tasty and always available in vast quantities. We very quickly became accustomed to the routine of daal bhaat tarkari (rice, lentil and vegetables) and extremely sweet chiya!

Overall, the project went smoothly. All deadlines were met and everything was completed on time. We thoroughly enjoyed our time in project and felt very welcome amongst the local community and would recommend the return of volunteers in future. We found the experience highly beneficial to both Oxford Development Abroad and the community in which we stayed. We would like to thank to Partnership for Sustainable Development Nepal for providing this fantastic opportunity.

6 weeks in Nepal as volunteers

by: Luke Rosser, Hinali Ondhia, Jonathon Jordan and Michelle Tran, University of Birmingham



The flight to Kathmandu landed in the city late at night. Even so, there were still many locals around the airport and we able to meet PSD representative who took us to our hotel for the first night there. Our first day in Kathmandu was spent training at the PSD Nepal headquarters. We were given basic language and cultural awareness training as this would be useful for our stay. One of the interesting things we were taught was the order of words is different so that to say "My name is" you have to order the sentence as "My name is". Another highlight of the day was that we were given 'momos' for lunch, they consisted of small steamed pastry packets of chicken mince and a curry sauce.

The day after we headed to the Gorkha district in a minibus and then caught a jeep to take us as close to the village as possible. Our jeep was sliding around near the edge of the mountain road making it a very entertaining journey!. We then hiked down to the village to meet with the family we were to be staying with for the first time. As we progressed into the jungle we were greeted by amazing views of

the Himalayas and our host family. We were all tired from the travelling and grateful that a delicious traditional Nepali meal was ready prepared for us.

Our first full day at Nareshwor village included a visit to Jyoti Primary School as they had received our funding and construction of a new classroom had begun up to foundation level. The villagers and school children threw a welcoming ceremony on the school grounds for us. They gave us garlands and handfuls of flowers to hold. Talks were then given by the school committee and some of those who had helped with the fund raising efforts. We taught grades 3 and 5 basic English. Grade 5 were taught how to play 'Simon Says'; they seemed to enjoy it and could be heard shouting "Simon says stand up!" for many days afterwards. It soon became apparent that teaching mathematics was easier as it didn't require a grasp of the Nepali language to be able to help the kids out.

In the afternoons we helped with the construction of the new building gathering rocks from around the site by pulling them out of the ground with a pickaxe. We would then carry them and bricks up to the site where they were needed as a base layer for the construction of the floor. We were helped with this by the local children of about half our age who with the aid of a basket that strapped around their foreheads carried about twice the amount we were able to! Soon enough, the classroom's walls for the new building started going up. We were directed by the builders as to what we needed to do and would also help with mixing concrete for construction of the parts of the floor that hadn't yet been finished. We also buy supplies for the school and children. We had managed to buy items such as dictionaries, pens, toothbrushes, pencils and work booklets and would give them out at a later date. We also taught tooth brushing technique as one member of our group was a dentistry student.



The next task related to the building was painting the inside of the old classrooms white and then adding educational material to the walls. Examples of the items we put up were fractions, pie charts and a map of the solar system. Our last task was to paint the outside of the old classrooms as this had not been done when they were built. It was a satisfying task as it made a considerable difference to the visual appearance of the building with little input of time or cost. The school was also connected to a water supply a few days before we left. In all we felt we made a small positive change within the community and a larger one to the school itself, with the trip also helping to improve our understanding of the Nepali people.

We very much enjoyed being with host family. They involved us in several of their religious festivals that took place through summer. We also explored several parts of Nepal on our weekends and visited historical places e.g. Gorkha Palace and the Manakamana temple. The palace is the old estate of the Gorkha royal family. The Manakamana temple had a cable car to take you most of the way to the top. It was a well decorated temple with many carvings. We had a trip to the Chitwan National Park where we did activities such as a walking safari (where we saw crocodiles, rhino and deer) and played with the elephants during their bathing time in the local river. We also visited Lumbini, the birth place of Buddha and stayed in the Korean Monastery there. And last but not least our last trip away as a group was to an area of outstanding natural beauty called Pokhara. The main attraction here was the mountain called Machapuchare which overlooks the town. We thoroughly enjoyed the trip and know that it had a positive influence both on ourselves and the people in the community we were living with. Thank you very much PSD who provided for a wonderful experience!

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