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## PSD Connect

A quarterly E-Newsletter

Year 4 - No. 1

March 2009

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 good wishers, about our activities and news. PSD Nepal is a not-for-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](http://www.psdnepal.org).

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### MESSAGE FROM EDITORIAL

Dear Friends!

We would like to thank you for your warm responses to our newsletter as usual! Since the first edition of our newsletters has been such a great success, we enthusiastically present our newsletter regularly and this is another issue for your discretion. We publish our newsletter on a regular basis as scheduled to keep you informed about PSD Nepal's work and results. This issue is mainly focused on the Glimpses of 2008 and few articles. In addition, this newsletter will give you a brief update of the projects that have been finalized, the current situation in Nepal, what PSD-Nepal envisions in the future and of course, how you can help us. Please feel free to write to us, if you have any announcement, articles, or a message you want to spread through our newsletter. We heartily welcome your views and your comments, 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](mailto:psdnepal@mail.com.np) or call us at (9771)-4780369, fax 4780631.

*Bishnu H. Bhatta*

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### LATEST PSD NEWS

One short term volunteer Ms Kiran Sondhi from the UK worked in Panchkhal for five weeks and has returned home last week after completing her placement. She has had a wonderful time with the children in Panchkhal and helped a lot to raise their confidence. Professor Dr. Les Samuelson from Saskatchewan University visited Nepal to carry out research. Dr. Samuelson and Bishnu Bhatta carried out this research jointly on the post peace accord period. The research paper will be published in a Social Journal in Canada or in the United States. Lara Proctor from Canada has raised some fund during her wedding to help small scale project in Nepal. We are very much thankful to her for help the project. We wish all the best for her newly married life.

Nepal is facing acute power problems so we are not able to work efficiently and effectively because of the 18 hours load-shading per day. It looks as though that the power outages will increase in the coming months.

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### Ms Kiran Sondhi, Volunteer from UK

I arrived in Kathmandu after a long journey from the UK on the 11<sup>th</sup> January. I was full of excitement and some nervousness as to what the next 6 weeks would hold. After a briefing from PSD, we left the craziness of Kathmandu after a day of my arrival and reached the calmness and serenity of Panchkal, Kavre.

Panchkal is about 2 hours away from Kathmandu and the orphanage, Samaj Kalyan Bal Kendra (S.K.K) is situated in a quiet spot surrounded by green fields and beautiful hills and mountains. My surroundings were so peaceful by day as well as night – in fact, every night I would look into the dark skies to see the most shiniest stars I have ever seen!! Very different to the grey/ dull skies of the UK!!

I soon settled into life in the S.K.K and the community surrounding it. Being of Indian descent, I was already used to 'daal bhaat', although I wasn't quite expecting so much of it!! From day one, I became part of the morning and evening team serving food to the children. The children found this very amusing as I could not quite get used to putting daal into their plates without spilling some on the floor!!

My time at S.K.K was amazing, the children were so friendly and welcoming that I soon forgot about the electricity issues and the cold water!! The children asked me many questions about life in the UK including the national dish (which I guessed must be fish and chips!!). I was also asked by the boys if I could teach various things such as English grammar, computer programming (!?!) and algorithms!

Most of my days were spent socialising with the children, playing sports, having art competitions and generally chatting about stuff that children like to talk about like films, sports and music!. I also had the opportunity to teach history at two local schools. I loved my experience at the schools despite the many challenges I faced! These changes included learning Nepali history overnight and trying to work out how to motivate all the children.



Teaching at the local schools meant that I had the opportunity to integrate with the community. I had many people ask me "where are you from?" and "where are you teaching?" – of course in Nepali! One lady in particular (who reminded me of my grandmother!) would ask me the same questions every day and everyday I would reply with the same answers in very broken Nepali and we would both laugh at my pronunciation!!

Life at S.K.K was great; I would socialise with the children and chat with the staff (in very broken English and Nepali!). I had raised funds before I left the UK by doing a sponsored silence and fast for 24 hours (a challenge I can tell you!!). With the help of PSD and a very inspiring man who works closely with Nepal Children Organisation (NCO), we made some decisions about how to spend the money I had raised. It was very satisfying watching work being carried out knowing that it would benefit the children. There is still so much to do in S.K.K and since my return to the UK, my mind has been working overtime on what I can do to raise more funds!!!

I had so many highlights in my time at S.K.K including seeing an autistic child, who is normally withdrawn come out of his shell, smiling and jumping up and down with me as I sang the wheels on the bus go round and round! Other highlights include planting an idea of the 'S.K.K Olympics' into the mind of one of the older boys and then empowering the children to organise the whole event – the boys put together an Olympic committee (true democracy in action!) and we had an opening and closing ceremony complete with a mock "Olympics torch" and real medals!



I could spend hours talking about my experiences at S.K.K (I haven't even touched upon my whistle stop tour of Nepal, the 160m bungee jump that I did and helping give an elephant a bath!) – my whole experience was very amazing and humbling! I have learnt so much from the children, the community and all the people that I met along the way – I will never forget my experience but I know that I will return to Nepal one day to continue the learning experience that I have started!

Thank you to S.K.K, PSD and NCO for making my trip an unforgettable one!

## Looking Back At 2008

Going back in 2008, 47 overseas volunteers and nine Nepali volunteers participated in the Summer Project. The participants from six different universities (Oxford University, Glasgow University, Birmingham University, Dundee University, Bristol University, Edinburgh University) participated in the summer program in 2008 and supported rural schools by improving the physical infrastructures and hence improved the school environment by attracting the children to the school. Similarly 21 volunteers from the Aberdeen University joined the Easter Programme and were supported by four Nepali counterparts. The volunteers from the Easter Programme worked in the rural health post and organized health camps to help contribute towards the free treatment to the people living in rural areas.

### Lively Pictures from 2008 projects and programmes



**Volunteers teaching rhymes to the children**



**World map drawn by volunteers to decorate the classroom**



**Volunteer working together to construction of rural school building**



**Children listening to the rhyme taught by volunteer**



**A volunteer teaching children**



**Volunteer are in the construction field**



**Building build by volunteers**



**Volunteers organizing extra Curricula activities to children**



**Volunteers drawing world map**



**Newly build building by volunteers**



**Volunteers at work**



**Soak pit build by volunteers**



### **FUTURE PLANS: coming events of PSD-Nepal**

- Professor Dr. Pramod Parajul is the Director of Program Development for Sustainability Education from Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona USA. Professor Parajul will deliver a lecture on "Designs for Ecologically Sustainable, Socially Just and Bioculturally Diverse Nepal" to teachers and principles of different school and talk program organize by Local Development Ministry of Nepal.
- Professor Dr. Steve Johnson is adjunct professor at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon USA where he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on citizen participation, community studies, urban watersheds, civic engagement and social institutions, urban planning, and healthy communities. Professor Johnson will deliver a lecture on "Creating Sustainable Communities: economic, environmental and social"; and "A Decade of Learning through service: the Portland State University Model" to teachers and principles of different school and talk program organize by Local Development Ministry of Nepal.
- There will be 3 medical students from Edinburgh University who will be carrying out their elective in Nepal for eight weeks. They will be working in a Tropical and communicable disease hospital and rural health post.
- Also one medical student from Southampton University will carry out her elective in the rural health post and city hospital.
- There will be 26 medical students coming to volunteer in Nepal on 3 April and they will be working in the rural health post in the Lalitpur district. We divide them in 5 groups and send them to 5 different health post of Lilitpur distict as well as they will have change to work in the city hospital as an exposure. They also involve in the health camp during their stay in Nepal.
- One student from Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh will be working at the PSD office as an intern for two months. She will be carrying out her research with our volunteers program and our partner organization as well as community people.

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