
PSD Connect

A quarterly E-Newsletter

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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 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.

MESSAGE FROM EDITORIAL

Namaste Friends!

Thank you very much for your kind responses to our newsletter! Since our previous newsletters have proven so popular, we enthusiastically present our newsletter regularly and this is yet another issue for your reading pleasure. We publish our newsletter on a quarterly basis to keep you informed about PSD Nepal, its work and accomplishments. This issue will focus on the work of our summer volunteers and intern, what PSD-Nepal envisions in the future and of course, how you can help us. 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

PSD-Nepal's Director, Bishnu Hari Bhatta, had the opportunity to visit the United Kingdom from June 7th to the 25th. He is extremely grateful to World Forum Foundation who gave him the opportunity to attend the conference by providing support for his trip to UK and also many thanks to all the others who helped him to make this trip possible. It was undoubtedly a productive and worthwhile trip. Bishnu first attended a two day meeting of Nature Action Collaborative for Children in Belfast followed by a World Forum on Early Care and Education Conference. This conference had over 600 participants from 70 countries which provided a great opportunity for him to network and make contacts on behalf of PSD-Nepal. In Scotland, he was fortunate enough to participate in a three day tour around the Crieff Hydro sponsored by Mind Stretcher, an organization focusing on providing outdoor learning opportunities for children. Aside from the conference, he able to use his time wisely to network within the PSD network also. He met with trustees, current and past volunteers from Oxford, Bristol, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. Through these meetings he was able to strengthen the partnerships between PSD and its partner universities organizations and to discuss improvements that could be made to the volunteer program. Bishnu also met with the chairman and trustees from the UK-based charity JustAid, that partner with PSD to fund many small scale projects in Nepal each year.

PSD-Nepal is on facebook! Recently, PSD-Nepal created a facebook page as a way for current volunteers, alum, staff, and other supporters of the organization to stay connected. It will be updated regularly with news of current activities, future events, and pictures from volunteer groups. After less than a month in existence, Partnership for Sustainable Development – Nepal has over 131 fans! Please search for us on facebook and become a fan!

Interning with PSD-Nepal

**Elizabeth Clark,
2009 Summer Intern**

I arrived in Nepal not really sure what to expect from Partnership for Sustainable Development - Nepal or my internship. As a Master of International Development student at the University of Pittsburgh I was required to do an internship during my two year program. Frantically, over the Winter Break of my first year, I began searching for a NGO in South Asia that would be willing to take me on as an intern for the summer. I randomly found PSD through a web search and contacted them expressing my interest in their organization. Immediately, Bishnu responded to my request and within a couple days had agreed to accept me as an intern with PSD for the summer. I was relieved to have my internship set up but to be frank, also a little wary. I was agreeing to work for an organization that I knew very little about, and had fears that I'd show up in Kathmandu to an unorganized, ineffective, and irrelevant organization. Thankfully, I had nothing to worry about.

My work with PSD-Nepal was comprised of several components. First of all, because I had taught English as a Foreign Language for two years in rural Mongolia with the United States Peace Corps, the staff at PSD-Nepal asked me to create an English language curriculum and lesson plans for the volunteers to use as resources during their site placements. I also led trainings for each group during their orientation on teaching tips and strategies.



Secondly, I visited four of the project sites in order to conduct focus group sessions with both the volunteers and local people of the community as part of a program evaluation I was carrying out on PSD-Nepal's Summer Volunteer Program. This aspect of my internship was especially gratifying because I got to witness first-hand the work of the volunteers and the effects they were having on the communities. I gained a lot of insight from the focus group sessions themselves which were paramount to writing a thorough program evaluation. This leads me on to the next aspect of my internship - the actual writing of the evaluation report. This was also a great learning experience and the results of it were very positive. Aside from a few recommendations, I found the Summer Volunteer Program to be an extremely successful and sustainable program, definitely worth continuing and expanding in the future. For a copy of the report, please e-mail PSD-Nepal at psdnepal@mail.com.np.

Finally, I spent some time trying to seek out new partnerships with other universities in the United Kingdom in order to increase the number of volunteers who come to Nepal. The impact PSD volunteers are making in the countryside is substantial; however, the demand for construction of new classrooms, community centers, sanitation centers, etc...far outweighs the supply of volunteers and funding that PSD-Nepal can currently provide. It is the ultimate goal of PSD-Nepal to host hundreds of volunteers a year so that they are able to complete more projects.



I have definitely had a productive and educational summer interning with PSD-Nepal. I knew I didn't want to spend my internship making copies or summarizing reports as some of my colleagues in large development agencies ended up doing. PSD gave me the grassroots experience I was hoping for. The staff of PSD has been very welcoming and helpful. I can return to my final year of my Master's program and be proud that I was part of a worthwhile and hard-working organization that truly puts the needs of Nepal's poor and marginalized as its top priority.

Summer Volunteer Program 2009

This summer, Partnership for Sustainable Development-Nepal hosted 11 groups from five universities, totaling 67 volunteers in all. The volunteers were placed all across Nepal from the cool, mountain tea gardens of Ilam all the way to the east, to the hot, jungle area of Chitwan in the south. This article will give a general overview of each group and their projects, with more detailed accounts coming from the volunteers themselves in a future newsletter.

Gorkha – University of Aberdeen



Six students from the University of Aberdeen were placed in Harmi village in Gorkha District where they helped to construct a three room school building. The volunteers also placed a strong emphasis on the teaching aspect of their volunteering and not only conducted English classes everyday but also started an English Speaking Club with older students to practice their conversational English (pictured to the left).

Ilam – University of Bristol

The University of Bristol sent three groups of volunteers to Nepal who constructed three multi-room school buildings and taught English in three different villages in Ilam District. The volunteers also took the initiative to undertake many extra projects during their stay such as repainting classrooms, starting a Book Club, playing football with local children, and providing educational resources to the schools. At the conclusion of their placement, all groups were fortunate enough to finish their projects.



Volunteers on rooftop after completion of the School Building in Barbote



Book Club in Jasbire

Chitwan – University of Birmingham & University of Glasgow

13 students from the University of Birmingham and 12 students from the University of Glasgow came to Nepal to work in four villages in Chitwan District. All groups constructed new classrooms for their villages as well as renovated libraries, taught English to local students, provided new drinking water facilities, and organized Sports Days and art competitions. They also participated in several local festivals and activities such as rice planting.



Volunteers and Local People Carrying Bricks for Dhurba School



Renovated Library in Shantipur

Baglung – University of Oxford

Most recently, three groups from the University of Oxford were placed in villages in Baglung District. Two groups will be building two room schools, and one group will be constructing toilets and a playground for the local school. Details of the work of ODA volunteers will be in the next issue.

In Volunteers' Own Words:

"Volunteering is one of the best things I have ever done in my life; I think everyone should do it. It gives you a good perspective on your own life and is important to tell people at home what life in a developing country is like."

"Living in a Nepali village was a unique experience, eating local food and conforming to local customs also. It was also my first time doing construction and teaching and I found it very worthwhile."

"This was an amazing experience and beneficial to me as a person and to the community we were in and completely unforgettable. The projects are worthwhile because they are sustainable and PSD is so well-organized and goes above and beyond for their volunteers. And Nepalis are so welcoming!"

Share Your Experience!

PSD Nepal is going to organize Mud day with orphan children in Panchkhal on 14 September. We are planning to provide dress, food and soap for the 60 children and will have lunch together with them. The support has been raised by children from Bold Park School Australia.

The staff of PSD-Nepal wants to thank all those volunteers who gave both their time and money in order to come to Nepal to help enrich the lives of its people. This year we celebrated the highest number of summer volunteers to date and look forward to hosting even more in the future. We urge all our previous volunteers to help us promote and advertise our program to potential volunteers by talking about your experience to as many people as possible, serving on the board of the volunteer organizations at your university, and by becoming a fan of PSD-Nepal on face book. If we can be of any assistance in your promotional efforts, please let us know!

I am able to upload all the photos of Summer project in our face book so that please go through to see our work.

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