

Partnership for Sustainable Development - Nepal

P.O. Box 19782, Buddhanagar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel. 977-1-4780369, Fax 977-1-4780631

psdnepal@mail.com.np

www.psdnepal.org

DAO - KTM, Reg. No. 180/059/60 GON - SWC. Affiliation No. 13981



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PSD Connect

A quarterly E-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. As you might know we publish our newsletter every quarter to keep you informed about our work and accomplishments. In front of you is our latest version of PSD Connect, which will update and inform you about the latest news, the work of our summer volunteers. 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

- Currently PSD Nepal has two interns working in the central office in Kathmandu. Rosalyn Ayres (former Edinburgh Global Partnerships Researcher) is here for 6 months and will be working on grant funding proposals and project evaluation reports. Francion Brooks (former Bristol Volunteers for Development Abroad President) will be collaborating on similar projects for seven weeks as well as working with Sungava (our partner NGO in Ilam).
- In October 2010, Bishnu Bhatta attended the Nature Action Collaborative for Children Conference in Nebraska where he presented a report on the recent 'Mud Day in Nepal'. PSD are currently organising an International Mud Day in Nepal where people from around the world will take part in this program in June 2011.
- In November 2010, an official from the Social Welfare Council visited PSD's previous project sites around the Chitwan district to make a government evaluation. He was extremely happy with the projects PSD has been involved in and his report will be published soon.

- Nine students (aged 14-17 years old) and three teachers from the School of Salt Lake, USA will be volunteering with PSD in Kathmandu in January. They will be involved in the construction of drinking water facilities within a school.
- In March 2011, students from Oxford University will be carrying out their medical electives in Nepal for two months under the management of PSD Nepal. Around the same time, medical students from Aberdeen University will be working at a Primary Health Care Centre for one month.
- PSD Nepal will be receiving volunteers from Oxford (ODA), Bristol (BVDA), Birmingham (Intervols), Glasgow (SVA) and Aberdeen (HELP) universities in the summer of 2011.
- There are also various independent volunteers who will be coming to Nepal to offer their services throughout the year.

Mud Day Celebration in Nepal- July 2010

PSD Nepal worked in partnership with Bold Park Community School in Perth Western, Australia to arrange a day where children could connect with nature through different activities and celebrations. The children from Bold Park School raised funds for Mud Day in Nepal. PSD Nepal would like to extend their gratitude to Gillian McAuliffe (founding CEO and Principal of Bold Park School) and all the children who joined hands to make this happen.

We prepared a big muddy field in Panchakhal and altogether there were 65 participants comprised of children, organization representatives and international/national volunteers. The day began with a parade in the muddy field which was followed by football, volleyball and the national game Kapardi (touch and run, turn by turn between two groups). All the participants experienced this great day in different but very meaningful ways like splashing the mud, running, funny fighting, singing, dancing etcetera. In fact it was very difficult to actually conclude the program because the children did not want to get out from the muddy field.



The program also provided the participants with two meals and all seemed very happy with the overall experience. After interviewing some of the participating children it was found that they had experienced various new sensations which sparked a new interest and understanding of their environment. It seemed that the program was a milestone in connecting children with nature while highlighting the importance of nature in the human life from an early age. In fact, it is essential to lay the foundation of the eco-system in the life of children so that they can become good stewards of conservation of

the environment, finding the solution for the challenges of global warming and campaigning for saving our mother planet earth.

PSD Nepal was extremely happy with the turn out and hence we are attempting to make it an annual celebration throughout the nation. It requires additional programs and strategies, great enthusiasm, synergy and dedication to bring the dream of connecting at least ten thousands children per year to nature in meaningful, joyful and creative ways.



Articles from 2010 Volunteers

Memories from a BVDA Volunteer

This summer myself and eleven other students from The University of Bristol visited Nepal to volunteer with PSD in their summer projects. We lived in separate villages in Ilam for six weeks with a Nepali family and all came back with unforgettable memories.

We participated in a weeks training with PSD and learnt what a valuable charity they are to Nepal. They taught us Nepali which was extremely useful, and also taught us about teaching, first aid and cultural awareness. We learnt about the wide variety of projects PSD are part of and we came to really appreciate what they do and I am really proud to have been given a chance to work with them. We were split into two groups each group in a separate village and worked with a different school.



By the end of the project we were all very pleased with what we had accomplished, one group completing toilet blocks and a library, and another built two classrooms. We also painted and decorated existing classrooms so the children in the school had a better learning environment. We were so happy to be able to give the people we had grown so close to and come to regard as our Nepali family something that might change and improve their lives.

We also taught English in the school which was both challenging and rewarding. We did lessons on phonetics, family, colours, and included songs, games and colouring to make the lessons more interesting. The Nepali children were a pleasure to teach. We came to regard the teachers that we worked with as our friends and family.

The memories of the Nepali families that we stayed with will stay with us forever. They were so welcoming and we loved learning about Nepali culture and getting involved with the community and their celebrations. We especially enjoyed rice planting, tea picking and experiencing another way of life.

Ilam itself was beautiful and the people we met while on project reflect this. They were welcoming, kind, generous and an incredible inspiration. The rolling hills and tea gardens of Ilam are iconic images that we will keep with us and the people we met will always be thought of as family.



Storm Lawrence (Bristol Volunteer in Ilam)

My time in Nepal

I wanted to take some time out in between graduating and starting work, and so was looking to find a short volunteering placement. I wanted to work in Nepal as I think the combination of a large rural population, rapidly expanding urban middle class, and post-conflict reconstruction makes for a fascinating combination that can only be experienced first hand. I found PSD Nepal through Oxford Development Abroad (ODA) and together we arranged a programme of work in a small village in the Kathmandu valley.

The length and nature of the programme was very flexible and it was easy to design a scheme of work for the two months that I spent in Nepal. PSD were also great for arranging everything while I was out there. The frequent and lengthy festivals curtailed my project work to five weeks in total, during which I taught English at the village secondary school while also helping with small-scale renovation and repair projects in preparation for a larger group of volunteers arriving early next year. The staff at the school were very supportive and helpful, even though they did not speak English very well and I was still floundering with Nepali!



Being alone, I was naturally apprehensive about living with an unknown family for so long, but I **needn't have worried**. The villagers, and my host family in particular, were fantastically kind and made me feel very welcome. I will always remember the view that greeted me every morning as I woke up, to watch the sunrise melt away the mist in the Kathmandu valley, drinking sweet tea and trying not to think about it being 6am. My one week of language training and orientation was vital in allowing me to make the most of my stay, and I managed a few rudimentary conversations by the end – a very rewarding experience.

In my spare time, I managed a trip to the Chitwan National Park to see rhino (sadly no tigers), a trip up to Annapurna base camp and some of the most stunning views I have ever seen, and a visit to the birthplace of Buddha in Lumbini. I was also very lucky to come at the time of one of the major Nepali festivals, Dasain, for which the school had a day of celebration, dancing, singing and other performances by the children. The farewell ceremony was just as beautiful, and it was very difficult to leave the school. I strongly urge other volunteers to come to Nepal and experience for themselves the people and culture here.

Leonid Romanenko (Oxford University In Kathmandu)

In Volunteers' Own Words:

"Recommend it, was truly amazing experience. People are very friendly and helpful, the country is stunning, landscape and culture wise. Honesty one of the best experience in my life, and will be coming back as soon as possible."

"You will have the best time of your life and experience you will keep with you for the rest of your life."

"Get involved and jump in at the deep end. Be open minded and go with the flow."

"Volunteering is definitely an excellent experience that will open your eyes to a totally different culture. Be prepare to get involve, work hard and have no privacy go for it."

"I fell in love with Nepal as country with the people and the culture and definitely will come back due to my stay here. Walking to the school with the beautiful landscape, peacefulness of life in the village and absence of any stress due to village life was the best. Definitely must go- it is life experience."

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