

Partnership for Sustainable Development – Nepal

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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, previous volunteers, and long-term 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!

It is with great pleasure that we present you our new quarterly newsletter. Please read this, Issue from year 14, designed to keep you updated on PSD Nepal and our activities, projects and future plans! Any questions and/or comments regarding the newsletter or about PSD-Nepal are more than welcome. Please forward this newsletter to any friends who may be interested and please also send us any news or materials which we can publish in our next issue. We heartily welcome your views, comments, and queries regarding the work of PSD-Nepal! You can send us an email to psdnepal@gmail.com or call us at (+977)-1-4411648

Bishnu H. Bhatta

Latest PSD Nepal News

The last 3 months have seen several new interns joining PSD Nepal, with expansion plans in the works both for our summer projects & our ongoing environmental project in plastic PET recycling. This summer we'll be hosting students from Canada, UK, Australia, the Gulf States, & Germany. In this issue we showcase projects in Bungamati & Rasuwa.

ICE Manhattan (Institute for Collaborative Education)

'ICE: use multiple perspectives // use evidence // analyze information // make connections // take risks'

Head online to watch the videos of the ICE Manhattan NYC group on the 'Youth Media Project' in partnership with Tri Ratna Co-Operative School in Bungamati, Kathmandu Valley. 14 American students (aged 16-17 years) and 2 staff from ICE partnered with the school for 2 weeks, recruiting 32 Nepali students and 10 teachers for a photography workshop and media training. The project culminated in a fantastic exhibition of 'Youth Media' with over 368 photographs taken around Kathmandu exhibited. The school in Bungamati was devastated by the 2015 earthquake, and ICE - in partnership with PSD Nepal - have provided long-term support and assistance to rebuild the school and equip teachers and students alike. Thanks to ICE & all the partners ! Watch online; www.instagram.com/psd_nepal/

14 USA Students		368 photographs exhibited
32 Nepali Students		2 new wall paintings
50,000 pictures taken		10 Nepali teachers trained

PSD Nepal Internships

Elisabeth Avery & Isabelle Chan

Working at FSB Health Clinic (Friends of Shanta Bhawan), in Bouddha, north east Kathmandu, Elisabeth & Isabelle are contributing as kinesiologists to the workings of the health clinic, & also supporting fundraising for health camps. Watch this space for the update on their internship, at the end of their placement in Nepal, this coming Spring 2019!

Daniel Ozol, PSD Nepal Office, Kathmandu

From the depths of the libraries of SFU, Vancouver (Simon Fraser University) to the congested streets of Kathmandu in Nepal, Daniel has joined the PSD Nepal team for a 4 month internship. He is working as a 'data scientist' on data for a host of PSD Nepal projects from data on national parks to PSD work in the Kathmandu Valley. Watch this space!

PSD Plastics Program Update - PET Recycling in Langtang National Park

Samuel Johns, project lead on PSD Plastics

The air is changing, yet the temperatures remain well in the single digits on the mercury. Winter is still here, with over 9ft snow base at 4000m, and glacial winds blowing through the valleys. A piercing sun announces the coming of spring, nonetheless, with deep blue skies animating the high Himalayan landscape.

Why work in such hostile terrain? Field visits for the PSD Nepal team this week - to Langtang National Park, Rasuwa - brought forth a new angle of importance to the work of PSD Plastics in the high Himalaya. This revelation came in the village of Domen, perched perilously below waterfalls and steep-sided rock walls in the base of the Langtang Valley. Minor tremors and landslides have ruined the local footpaths, destroyed the steel cable bridge over the river, and reminded locals and tourists alike that this is a dynamic landscape. Heavy monsoon rains ravaged local roads and footpaths. The valley is shaped and re-shaped season after season, with new river routes, winding paths, and house-sized boulders that have toppled from 2000m above. Anything but dead, this landscape is active and changing - constantly on the move. Only last week, a tremor of 4.0 magnitude (epicentre Kirtipur, Lalitpur) was registered.

So why work in Rasuwa? The terrain is hostile, the mountains are indifferent, and the very altitude is inhospitable to life. The road itself to Dunche, the regional headquarters of Rasuwa district, is only 120km from Kathmandu, yet takes over 6 hours to drive. The steep sided valleys & deep river basins make infrastructure a veritable challenge.

The dignity of work. This struck the PSD Nepal team with renewed importance this month, in amidst the busyness of a 2025 vision for a circular economy on plastic. Visiting Langtang Valley, in the villages of Syabru Besi, Domen, and Bamboo, the importance and veritable dignity of work came to the fore. Though plastic recycling only yields 1npr per bottle (approximately 1p), the elderly, local co-operatives, women, and young students home for holidays all participate in the scheme. For a country with a GDP per capita of \$835 USD (\$70 USD/month or \$2.24/day), adding \$3 or \$5 (300-500npr) per week by means of waste re-purposing is both a viable and profitable activity for locals.

Work provides meaning. Work prevents boredom. Work consolidates coherency. Work even boosts civic values, including unity, justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and societal harmony. In a circular economy, all resources are productive resources, no matter their touted 'market value'. As such, all the way from cottage industry to capitalist enterprise - the dignity of work is ring-fenced & protected. In the depths of the rural Himalaya, this revelation came like a clarion call. Surely this is an inspiring vision to pursue.

Volunteer Testimonials:

Some testimonials from PSD volunteers

Being a volunteer in Nepal has been one of the most exciting and most enlightening experiences I have ever had. It's the one thing to study the developing nations of the world at school or university; it's a unique experience
– Michael Griffiths

I would really recommend PSD as an organization to volunteer with and Nepal as an amazing, welcoming, fascinating country to come to. A really rewarding time feeling part of the community. Even when there is a language barrier, it's really possible and great fun to communicate and work with local people and children.
– Jennifer Andrews

It's definitely a worthwhile & unforgettable experience that I would recommend to anyone considering doing the project. PSD organizational skills were fantastic and they went out of their way to help whenever they could.
– Anne Beh

PSD Nepal Notes from the Field - Chitwan National Park

Chitwan National Park, Terai, Southern Nepal

The terrain of endemic species and endangered wildlife - from the one-horned rhinoceros (pictured above) to the endangered Bengal tiger, Indian pangolin, grey langur monkey, and basking mugger crocodile. Flowing waters of the Narayani-Rapti river system animate a landscape alive with noise and boisterous animal life. The squawks of monkeys are heard overhead, as docile crocodiles rest lazily in the baking midday heat. The pound of elephant feet can be heard nearby, transporting tourists deep into the jungle for a sedate safari. Birds circle overhead, just as mammals roam the tall grasslands underfoot. Unsurprisingly, the 'king of the jungle' in this diverse ecosystem is the Bengal tiger. Protected since 1973, and granted World Heritage Site Status in 1984, Chitwan National Park means literally 'the heart of the jungle' in Nepali. With close to 254,000 annual tourists visiting in the coming years, Chitwan is crying out for a waste logic and recycling process that protects this landscape of vitality.

How does PSD Nepal fit into this ecosystem? Chitwan National Park covers almost 1000km squared in the subtropical lowlands of the Terai, in south-central Nepal. The alluvial grasslands and moist deciduous forests are a haven for bountiful flora and fauna. Yet the establishment of the National Park in 1973 was not a pain-free process. Hundreds of Tharu communities were relocated, traditional lands were doused in DDT to eradicate malaria, and many were left landless, homeless, and poor. Rhinos almost went extinct from hunting and poaching in the lead up to 1973.

In numbers, Chitwan is home to over 700 species of wildlife; with 17 species of snakes, 113 fish species, 68 mammal species, and 543 bird species. Equally amazing is the waste. With over 200,000 annual visitors, the numbers are staggering. 38,000kg of PET plastic waste accumulates in Chitwan every year - with no facilities to be recycled or re-purposed. That equates to around 1.52 million plastic bottles of water, coke, fanta, sprite, etc.

Endemic species are one of the remaining ties, globally, to the local richness and diversity of place. In Chitwan, long-nosed gharial crocodiles are world famous for their endemic status. The gharial is now extinct in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, and Bhutan. In Nepal, in 1950, 235 gharials lived in the Narayani River. By 2003, only 38 wild gharials were still alive. The IUCN has elevated the risk of this species to 'critically endangered'.

How can we spark local involvement, global support, and private-public partnerships (PPP) to work toward environmental sustainability & economic viability? Can such programs even help protect & prosper endangered species like the fish-eating gharial crocodile? Partner with PSD Nepal to work on this, with our PET waste logic.

Our condolences

PSD Nepal would like to express our heartfelt sympathy & deepest condolences for the untimely demise of Tourist Minister Mr Rabindra Adhikari & our friend Mr Ang Tshering Sherpa, in the helicopter crash on 27th February 2019.

Vote of Thanks

PSD Nepal would like to express its thanks to all those who have contributed in one way or the other to make our projects & programmes successful. In the last 15 years, PSD has accommodated 1,175 volunteers to Nepal & worked on more than 200+ projects in Nepal. PSD Nepal is looking forward to work with all our partners in the future.

New subscribers

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Working up to 4,000m altitude in Langtang, Resuwa



Recycling 40,000 PET bottles per month

Partnering with 7+ local groups



Over 8,000+ kg plastic waste recycled in 2018

Education to 250+ school children on recycling



Landfill space of >1,230 cubic metres saved

