

**Wanted:
Volunteer
doctors, nurses,
dentists and
teachers.**

Future Plans

During monsoon the wooden bridges annually get destroyed by floods and have to be rebuilt after the monsoon during which time crossing is impossible and thus traffic is seriously disrupted. On vital crossing points we would like to build concrete bridges..

Finally:

Our NGO has grown over the years a lot with a quite a few realisations and plenty more ambition to come. This is only possible of course with your aid. Despite our benevolence and minimum functioning costs in Belgium we have a lot (financial) responsibilities in Nepal. The two primary schools, medical hall and sub-posts, student-house and boarding-school and finally the orphanage makes that we nevertheless keep having fixed costs to maintain permanent good results and service in our projects. For this reason we hope that the regular sponsors continue to support us and furthermore some mouth-to-mouth advertising would be more than welcome. We don't spend any budget on expensive advertisements but as a result, we reach few new possible sponsors. Sometimes a sponsor drops away for whatever reason and our family- and friend-circle is exhausted. Regular donations do not easily rise with the cost of living and spending in Nepal and it is not easily asked for. Currently the advisory monthly price for the sponsoring of a student is now 15 euro but many still pay the 10 years old price of 8 euro. At our annual travel to Nepal we must advance all funds already for the coming work year. Therefore this appeal, by no means mandatory. Each support, in whatever size, remains of course as welcome as any other. Furthermore are also welcome: benefiets, dinner-parties or if you know a school which wants do an action. We are ready with support material and Nepalese also our hapjes natural. Thank you for your attention and support!

*As Mother Theresa once said in India: "We are but a small drop of water but after all the entire ocean is made of waterdrops".
Our slogan remains: "Ripples in a vast ocean of mountains".*

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Nieuwsbrief 2009

Namaste dear sponsors and friends,

First of all may we thank all of you on behalf of all schoolchildren and their parents and other families in our care for your support this past year. We wish you all good health and the very best in 2009.



*In this newsletter there is a lot to read about: the most important fact chronologically being the last: on 27 December 2008 **Dag Bahadur Buduja**, a 16-year old boy and one of our then first students of our first school in Chitre was successfully operated on for a kidney transplantation. Just the third*

succeeding in Nepal and especially thanks to the extra commitment of numerous our faithful sponsors. You can read more on this story further on. On the photograph you can see him with a Nepalese thank you gesture (NAMASTE) to all that come to his aid.

*Also this year our first project birthday coming up: this year we can celebrate **10 years** of operation of our **`Shree Lali Gurans Primary school** in Chitre, our first independently set up project. Also there is news concerning a student boarding school in Kathmandu, an orphanage in the south, the primary school in Khibang and let's not forget our Medical Hall and Dental Lab is now in its third year running.*

May we wish you all a nice reading!



Saving a boy's life.

When we set off mid- July to Nepal, being full monsoon-season, we were immediately approached with an urgent call for help regarding the life-threatening situation of one of our first students from the Chitreschool: **Day Bahadur Buduja Pun** years now 16 and already more than one year seriously sick.

Gotten ill a year ago he was originally diagnosed with minor illnesses and given some pills which would cure him within the year. This was in Kathmandu, Nepal's

capital. By the time we arrived in Nepal his situation was so bad he was taken to a hospital in Lucknow, India where he was given the news that his kidney's only worked for 3% and would soon fail altogether. A transplanted was the only option to save his life. Never been successfully done in Nepal and there they had to go and stay in India quite some time. On top of that there exists no general sickness insurance and the families must cough up the complete pré-, operation and post-operation costs themselves, which could run up to 12,000 euro. Not counting the weekly dialysis of 100 euro prior to a transplanted. In the meantime that boy misses out on his school career and his middle school diploma. Exactly which where we minimum children already our sponsored to pursuit.

Unnecessarily to say: time for action. By e-mail our sponsors were asked for extra donations. Also two fundraising-parties were organised spontaneously by two sponsor-couples (thanks TOMs & Corinne and Francis & Liesbeth). Thus quite quickly several thousands euro were gathered abroad but also some 4500 euro was raised by the Nepalese family and friends of the boy in Nepal. A enormous and sign of solidarity in that poor country. Solidarity came of it also from a Belgian travel-organisation 'Te Voet' and Shangrila home, a Flemish npo which manages an orphanage in Kathmandu. An experience which strengthened our heart .

The financial package is however not yet entirely finished and we could still use some specific support for this boy. An extra aim is to provide him with a private tutor so he can still get his School Leaving Certificate. So, once again: **'With a little help from our friends?'**

And in the meantime in Belgium...

Here too a lot is happening. At several world-happenings we will be present with our information-booth, workshops en educational material and sometimes even with our Nepalese cooking-stand.

However to definitively once put our educational material in perfect shape we started a joint-venture with the **BSCJ - Bruges Socio-Cultural Young People**, a youth movement under the expert leadership of the music-teacher Ingmar Ricquier. He and his volunteer-staff will not only help to improve our existing workshops, power-points and other educational tools to adapt to several target groups but also help to develop new material. Thus we will make also a miniature-landscape tableau with typical Nepalese scenery and puppets, a photograph album concerning living a child in Nepal and in Belgium and for ex. also a workshop bloc-printing (mantra-flags and decorative Nepalese patterns). We also bought six Karim boards and are slowly acquiring different sets of typical folk-dresses. In cooperation with the BSCJ finally, we will organise a ten day exhibition with different workshops and displays especially aimed at schoolchildren and this from **20 up to 29 November** in the **'Hof van Langals'** in Brugge.



We are also an active executive board member of the North-Southcouncil Bruges, an advisory council of the city of Bruges which implies a lot of extra work. There this year we will be celebrating 20 years of our **Festival in 't park** and this on **Saturday the 27th of June** in **Minnewaterpark** at **Brugge** where we will be present with our **information-booth** as well as our **cooking-stand**. On other festivals we will also be present: ASIA FAIR in Wemmel on 19 and 20 February, 11 april in OC De Stekke in Moorsele, May 1st in Herent, May 9th and 10th in Mano Mundo-festival in Boom and 30th of May in Leuven on the Bruul. Concerning other events you get later given full details news.

To stay in touch: give us your **e-mail address** so we can pass you news much quicker and save a lot on printing and mailing-cost.

Our computer-supplier is collecting **old ink-cartridges** to be recycled. The financial proceedings from this are donated to our projects. You also can help to collect these and deposit them at this shop (www.luckyspc.com/) or at our home. All small ideas that can help can only benefit more Nepalese people.





After this 2-weeks of trekking we travelled to the Annapurna's (500 km west) to visit our school and medical hall and dental lab in Chitre. Then we were surprised by a dance party on the Holi-festival where at the end colour powder was smeared generously on our faces.



Our next goal: we plan an already long nourished dream: in 2010, we will be trekking in the former kingdom of Mustang on the Tibetan high plateau in the North. Later in the south we'll have an extensive visit to Lumbini, the birthplace of Boeddha and a jungle walk in Chitwan National Park. (foto: the group on 5600m/ Everest close Pangboche)

Crisis or no crisis?

A delicate subject? When I returned to Belgium and therefore for 4 months unaware of Western/Belgian news the first hot news-item i heard that it was crisis here. My first response was: crisis, what crisis? Admit, one comes from of worldly poorest countries where almost everything seems must still happen or whatever has been done no longer exists or scarcely works. A country where millions flee to serve as a labor-slave in opulent oil states. In Nepal proper it still resorts to survival farming or - if lucky - a min-mal wage job in government or tourism and in some small industrial plant. Where children and young little girls disappear daily direction India to brothels and `sweatshops. So, a crisis then, in proportion blown up sky high, from speculators with virtual money so it seems. In the meantime (just like here?) politicians keep on squabbling over positions amongst themselves in Kathmandu. Does it ever change?

Meanwhile there is no electricity for 8 hours a day and the only solutions they can come up with is a diesel factory which will certainly help to sustain Kathmandu reputation as Asia's dirtiest city!

But in the meanwhile we and a lot of other small provide NGO try to implement structural improvements to small mount communities, an orphanage and boarding school for street-children plus what medical aid for people who generally never go to a doctor or when it is almost too late.

Meanwhile thanks to a Nepalese surgeon who normally resides and works in Australia came to Nepal for six months to introduce kidney-transplantation techniques. Dag was therefore Nepal's third successfully kidney-transplant patient. Thanks also to his own mom who ceded one of her own kidneys. After mother and zoon stayed together in absolute confinement for one month in a hospital-room in Kathmandu because of large danger for contagions and complications they have returned to a family-house in Pokhara where they are currently doing well. We wish them both much luck and strength in their healing process.

10 years `Shree Lali Gurans Primary school!

It is up to that point: a first important anniversary announces itself . Our first full independent project runs will be 10 years running this year. On 31/10/99, we could open this primary school after merely two years of preparation. Where formerly this village had no school and only part of its children's population could manage to go to a another school further down the path we can now boast the fact that 100% of the Chitre children effectively go to school (unfortunately still a rarity in Nepal). From the start we not only set up the school to be built in long lasting materials but also chose a strategy of continuing maintenance work and perhaps most importantly gradual quality advancement of the educational value of this project. As a result our school was rewarded at the very beginning with a reward for best built school but with the end-results of the 2008 examinations, our school has been nominated best school of the whole valley (7 schools)!

Since 2008 we took on a fully trained principal-teacher (sister of our local nurse and at right in picture) and later on we hope to be able to engage English Medium voluntary teacher for a period of two months to our school. This is the start up of a cooperation with the English NGO HELP (Himalayan Education Lifeline Programme). If this goes successfully we hope to involve more profession people from other study-fields, such as medical, dental, computer, Internet, electricity, wood and plumbing subjects.

As from 2009 we also started providing adult education because a lot of parents cannot read nor write which is unacceptable to us.

Anyway, by the end of October a celebration is planned in Chitre. (Photo: on the left is Ganga, our nurse - see next story - and her sister our new head-teacher.)



Finished: Khibang school.



In 2006, on the way to Chitre with a group of sponsors, we passed by in one of the original villages of the valley and saw with our own eyes that the school was threatened by landslides. With financial support of our local Belgian District-authority we built a new shoulder with drainage canals which now protects the local primary school. Additionally, we provided them with some recreational materials on the new playground.



Our medical hall in Chitre.

Our pride-project is now in its third year running and reaches more and more people. Ganga, our local Nepalese nurse is getting on well, handling all cases and situations cleverly. All alone apart from a little non-medical assistance from a young girl who comes to help some hours per week and walks along if she has to visit the sub-posts or people at their homes.

Since the end of 2007 an entirely equipped dentist cabinet can now also be used but only from visiting dentists but also by our local nurse who received some basic training for simple fillings and extractions.

Next we aim to install a basic laboratory as well accompanied with adapted training for our nurse. Thus nearing the completion of our long term aim to offer complete basic medicine to the local mountain-people.

Currently we also started subsidising the full staff-nurse courses of a Sherpa-girl who is now in her second year study in Kathmandu where she had highest marks for her first year. In return she promised to work in our medical post for 2 years at least after finishing her third year. It will be better for the continuation of our post when they want to follow extra courses, staying at sub-posts or take some leave which means that at the moment the main-post is regularly closed due to absence of staff. Another matter is the instalment of phone- and internet access along with computers for not only the benefit of our staff who will be able to contact the outside world (read: town hospitals, suppliers, our and doctors there and abroad) but also we will be offering IT-courses to the local people as well.



In March 2008 we left with a small group sponsors to Nepal to visit our projects and as we were near: why also not one time to one of the greatest of mounts: the Everest, or more correct called the Sagarmatha! (Tibet.: Chomulungma)

The local flight to Lukla on 2800 meters was already a thrill, bouncing on invisibly air layers we were eventually thrown down - as how it felt - on the tiniest and shortest of landing-strips with a vertical wall on one end and a total void on the other! Later with both feet on the ground we stepped to Namche on 3600 meter where we acclimatised three days to minimise the altitude impact which succeeded very well. Splendidly beautiful all and especially the walking way and accommodation complete well developed. The Sherpa-people are however somewhat more reserved than peoples in the Annapurna-area but nevertheless they remain helpful and correct.

The physical peak on this travel were the Gokyo-lakes around 5,000 meters and we have touched at the fifth out of six on 5,600 meters. For that morning's excursion we were started at 4.30 a.m. because it was a one-day return trip as higher up they were no hotels or restaurants and high altitude and weather could play an important part. However, we were lucky to start early and saw Everest in all its wonderful glory. Clouds set in mere 15 minutes after our arrival. The size and scale of surrounding mountains was truly overwhelming. The only sad point and clear proof of the rapidly changing worldclimate was the almost total disappearance of more than 25 km's of the famous Gokyo-glaciers. (photo's: Lukla/Namche/Pass/Gokyo/ Everest) e/pas/Gokyo/staff/ Everest)

Concerning an orphanage in Rupandehi

For a second time we visited an orphanage in the south near the border with India and Lumbini, the birth-place of Buddha. It took an entire day with my scooter, with extra gasoline in cola-bottles as there was a fuel-shortage, to travel from Pokhara to Butwal where after we had to sit tight for an entire day as that day there was a total ban on traffic in that area (politics, what you know). On top of that there was no electricity the whole day as well and being over 35 degrees without ventilators and extreme humidity: hard on Northern white folks. There was also no telephone but that didn't matter so much. We took the longest siesta ever. However the next day we could travel to the orphanage and were happy to see some slight improvements to the previous year with less children but better taken care of. A very young poor family lives there now also and helps with taking care of the 22 homeless and orphaned children. The care-taker lives in a small hut on the premise. However before we want to embark on a regular sponsoring-basis many important questions remain still unanswered. It takes more than some money for food and clothes to take care and properly raise children. F.e.: How the children are selected. Is there medical accompaniment? What with educational training? What happens there later with them? And especially with the little girls? These matters still need to be sorted out.



Also the local organisation must bring its papers in order. With a new governing board and rules and controls. Local politics and religious aspects (the care taker is a Brahman who reveres Shai Baba, a notorious Hindu sect-leader) cannot interfere with our companies principles of total social, political and religious neutrality. So, some water still has to flow under this bridge but we hope one day to permanently adopt this orphanage and built them a proper kitchen and living room as they eat outside now under a straw-roof. Their sleeping quarters as well need furnishing and separate beds for the children. In the meantime we hope still address sponsors for this project and possible also volunteer teachers to help a hand there. This story will undoubtedly continue as it unfolds...

Luckily we found a young bright student, the daughter of a long-time friend and Sherpa-guide from Solu-Khumbu, who finished her first year of the full Staff-Nurse course in Kathmandu with excellent remarks and took on sponsoring of her three-year studies; After which she promised to work a minimum number of years in our medical post. With eventually a staff of two, each in turn will be able to take on specialised courses, do more house-calls and manning the sub-posts - and take a holiday as well - without having to close the medical post. Ganga especially likes to train further for dentist and with the instalment of a laboratory in the medical post she will need a training course of well in lab-techniques.

A boarding school in Kathmandu.

This year also, we visited regularly some children from the Langtang region that stay in a boarding house in Kathmandu under the care of Tenzing Tamang, a former guide and now social worker. These poor children of the northern high mountains, some of them orphans as well, get shelter and good schooling here. After the regular government school-hours they also get special tuition on their own proper mother language (some Tibetan dialect) by a Tamang-teacher. They are also buddhists and have a distinct culture. In the future we hope to provide these children with some new attire and we want to patch up their sleeping quarters with extra beds and cubbards. Currently we can slip them only some extra money for badly needed food because they obviously lack



sufficient calories and diversity in their food. Hopefully, eventually we can find some donors who want to sponsor these children. A regular monthly allowance as a fixed income-source guarantees a stable upbringing and growth, both intellectually as physically. (Photo's: Tenzing 'Sherpa' Tamang and the girls sleeping room where up to 6 have to sleep in one bed!)