



## Newsletter September 2023

### CWA Kinderheim in Pokhara, Nepal

Dear friends and supporters of the CWA Children's Home

We are happy to send our newsletter this year directly from the CWA Children's Home itself. We have been in Nepal since mid-July. After arriving in Kathmandu we first organized and ordered the Nepali handicrafts (for our sale at the Basel Autumn Fair).



As last year we sold a lot of felt animals at the Fair, larger repeat orders from our suppliers were made. We hope that at the end of September all products will be ready and that we will receive the goods in time for the Autumn Fair.



Like always, the children and staff gave us a very loving welcome. After arrival, Barbara started translating letters written by Ukrainian children attending the integration class in the Niederholz School in Riehen. The Home's children in Pokhara always look forward to receiving mail and drawings from Switzerland. And they started answering the letters right away.

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In mid-August, a bacterial eye infection (conjunctivitis) spread very quickly in Nepal. Like Corona, it can be easily transmitted. This made intensive hand washing mandatory again. Towels and pillowcases for the infected had to be changed often.

Nevertheless, many children and most employees fell ill. They suffered from red eyes, increased sensitivity to light, fever and headaches. Fortunately, enough antibiotics (like eye drops) were available. The suffering, though, was usually overcome within five days. During this time, schools in Nepal had closed down for three days.

We ourselves only had light itchininess of the eyes and were therefore able to go without antibiotics.

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In our workshop the children were busy crafting again. Here is a selection of different Christmas decorations that, for the benefit of our Children's Home, we sell at the Basel Autumn Fair.



Every year it is a big effort to take group photos of the children in which smiling faces abound. Since on schooldays all children from 10th grade onwards head to



school as early as 6.30 in the morning, group photos are only possible on the only day without school, i.e. Saturday.

So we used one of the first rain-free Saturdays for the photo shoot. While wearing their freshly washed school uniforms, smiling and looking at the camera, while not forgetting to say Namaste, then change into other clothes and do another round. Afterwards, many more individually requested photos are taken.

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In April, Bishal, Nishan, Sapana and Aleya took their 10th grade final exams. Three months later they received their results. Since everyone passed the exams, they could all be registered for higher education. Sapana is attending college for natural science. The other young people chose to go and study at the Management College.

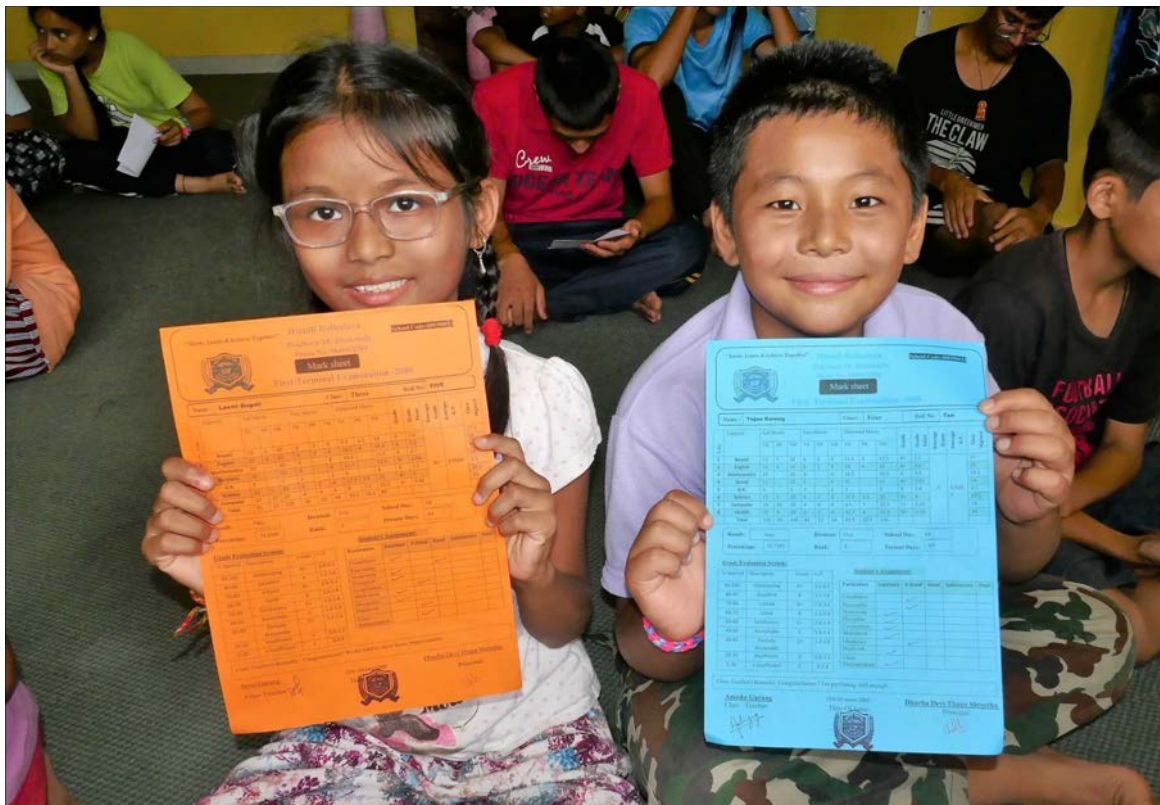


Likewise, the final exams for Binay, Bipin, Jeevan, Bipana and Kumari were held in April. They completed their two-year college and had to wait four months for

the results. Jeevan and Kumari passed their exams. Unfortunately, the other three have to repeat the exams in one subject.

Until mid-November they have time to decide on vocational training or a course of study based on their exam results. They are then officially released from our Home. If needed, further support will be provided directly from our association in Switzerland. Jeevan and Bipana have lived in our Home for 16 years. The whole CWA family showered a lot of loving kindness on them for years. We wish them great success, great happiness and a lot of confidence in the new phase of life they are entering.

It certainly won't take long for their places in the Home to be filled with new children. Soon, we will be taking in two girls, six and nine years of age. At this moment, though, some of the necessary documents are still missing for the admission process to be completed.



Laxmi (3rd grade) and Yujan (4th grade) proudly present the results of the first exam of the new school year. Both were able to improve and passed with more than 75%.

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At the beginning of March, Samjhana left our Children's Home. After nine years abroad, her mother suddenly showed up in Nepal and demanded her daughter back. Samjhana agreed to move in with her. As Samjhana was about to complete her 10th grade, we suggested that she stay in the Home until the exams were completed. Her mother insisted, though, on the immediate return of her daughter. Fortunately, Samjhana passed her final exams. Unfortunately, however, the mother has totally broken off contact with our Children's Home management.







At the end of July we took all the children on a sweaty day trip to the mountain range opposite [our Home]. First, we went through a beautiful, shady forest up to the Peace Pagoda. Then we went further up to 1,500 m and the large Shiva Statue. The children always look forward to this type of trip and greatly enjoy the picnic carried up. Despite the extreme heat, everyone managed the steep climb and descent well. A donated ice cream and fruit juice on the way back made the hiking a little easier.

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The children learned a lot from regular music, dance and karate lessons. Under supervision of the karate teacher, Anjali, Regina, Mamata, Aleya, Milan and Sanjeep have already received the orange-green belt.

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This year we were once again able to give the children great joy with new games and picture books. Their enthusiasm was always evident when shaping planets out of plasticine, playing new games of skill, tying ribbons, or listening to the story of *Friederich the Frog* (translated into English by Barbara).

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The older children practice cornering on their scooters in front of our Children's Home. For the practical driving test, it is sufficient to drive on a designed course. Niruta is also practicing hard!





The Rakhi Festival took place on the full moon day at the end of August. On this important Hindu Festival, the beautifully dressed girls and women tie a rakhi, a blessed ribbon, around the wrist of their “brothers” and give them a tikka, a blessing sign, on their foreheads. He then presents her with a small gift and promises her his support in life. In this way, friendly connections are strengthened.

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This year, Barbara didn't have to be back in Switzerland at the end of the school holidays. Consequently, we were able to attend the Annual General Meeting of the CWA Nepal Association for the first time in four years. This occasion is often used to draw attention to the situation of children in Nepal. Representatives from society, politics and the press are invited, and everyone would like to give a speech.

During this event honors are granted to recipients. We, ourselves, were honored for our 21 year commitment to the needy children in Nepal. And we had to give a speech too. In our speech we emphasized that our work has only been possible thanks to the great and continued support of our sponsors.



For the children, like always, the highlight of our stay is the big birthday party. We played many fun and exciting group games on our covered balcony: among other things, balloon relays were held, slaloms were run with ball and plate,





table tennis balls were shoveled blindfolded, and paper cups were blown across the table.



In between delicious ice creams were enjoyed. Then tires had to walk through the rows



and chocolate candies had to be unwrapped with toothpicks. The team of winners celebrated with gusto.







Late in the afternoon, Peter conducted a quiz with the older children to win more points. The little ones continued playing for their teams with Barbara.



After a delicious dinner, a “good wishes” ceremony and a delicious birthday cake, gift bags that Barbara had put together individually for each child, were presented to all. The annual birthday party always takes a big effort for us and requires a lot of preparation. But the many shining children's eyes make all the effort quickly forgotten.





The Teej Festival is currently taking place. Over a period of two weeks, many women sing and dance in smaller and larger groups on various occasions. At Himali School there was a Teej singing and dancing competition in which some of our girls took part. They got third place, out of 16 participating groups. They were very proud of the award they received.



Indira, a member of the CWA board, invited us as guests to a meeting of her women's group at the Teej Festival. We were asked about gender equality in Switzerland and honored for our social commitment in Nepal. Afterwards there was also dancing - Peter alone among 50 women.

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Last week our manager Bijay attended an international conference in Kathmandu on “Alternative Care for Children in Asia”. The is a bi-annual event organized by the Better Care Network. In his role as secretary of the National Children's Home Network and as child rights activist, he reported on the situation of children with disabilities in Nepal.

It is shocking that over 10% of children in Nepal live with physical or psychological disabilities. They barely participate in social life. They only rarely are able to attend school.



This year the monsoon again brought heavier rain than before. As a result, the area in front of our Children’s Home turned into a mud pool in which the school bus got stuck several times. All attempts to drain the area with ditches have brought no improvement. Now, at the approaching end of the rainy season, around 50 cm of soil is being removed and used in agriculture. The area is then filled with gravel, and compacted.



At the request of the children, this construction work will include a small basketball court with a hoop in front of the playground. Planned for next spring is the expansion of the photovoltaic system: this is to further reduce gas consumption for cooking, as it has to be imported at great expense from India. We aim to increasingly cook with self-produced electricity.

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Presently, 32 children are living in our Home who, thanks to your support, receive good school and vocational training, a balanced diet, and good medical as well as loving care, from trained staff and therapists.

On behalf of all children, employees and ourselves, we would like to thank all sponsors, and wish you all the best, great health and a wonderful autumn season.

Best regards  
Barbara and Peter