



## From the building site Schule macht Schule Newsletter August 2023

Dear supporters and friends of the Medical Centre School in Jharkot, dear students, parents and teachers at the Muisches Gymnasium,

Six months have passed since our last newsletter and a lot has happened in just half a year! After many years of searching in vain, Mustang House, our home for the winter, is now under construction. This and the first Bhakunde winter are the main topics of this newsletter.

As always, we wish you happy reading!

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### 1. Arrivals

The last newsletter had barely been sent before we – Wolf and Christina – were on the plane to Nepal at the end of February. Freezing in Dubai (!) on the bus between terminals, sweating on the bus between Kathmandua and Pokhara – a ten-hour trip to cover 200km ... And then on to Bhakunde village, which is now incorporated into Pokhara, but still seems very rural. The FWHC\* Children's Village has been there since 2000: home for around 80 children. Our boarding school children spent their first winter there on the huge, beautifully designed grounds. It was somewhat improvised, as the former workshop building had already been adapted for future school use, but also had to act as living quarters this time. (We went into more detail in the 2022 newsletters.)

*\*: Forum for the Welfare of Himalayan Children, Nepalese branch of the German Freundeskreis Nepalhilfe e.V. association (>> [www.nepalhilfe.de](http://www.nepalhilfe.de))*

At the beginning of November, Jharkot projekt director Tsering Dolkar and Maxi Ehart, our delegate at the time, had organised the best usage of the rooms and moving the children in. And now we were to see how our joint ideas for the "new home for the winter" had already proven themselves ...

Of course, we are pretty exhausted when we arrive. But that is quickly forgotten with the heart-warming welcome from our children with kataks, tea and dance. And then Children's Village director Tanka and the house mothers (2 house mothers care for 20 children respectively) welcome us with flowers from their gardens: welcome home. Home!

That really imparts the most important thing that we have all experienced here – our children, our caregivers and us too: we all belong. That's what Tanka and his deputy Season say and show us, that's what all the employees in Bhakunde and the children of the Children's Village convey to us.



## 2. Winter life at the Children's Village

Life has gone well here in the last four months. On the playground, where it was initially impossible to tear our children away from the swings and slides, friendships were quickly established with the Children's Village children: *Miss Christina, this is Nirmala from house D. She is my new friend!*

There's always something going on at the Children's Village and the children from Mustang are included wherever possible: there are ceremonies and performances, a football tournament between the Jharkot kids and two Children's Village teams. First of all, those two teams play each other and then the winning team plays "our" team, with the losing team cheering on the team from Mustang!

The baby of our family, Sonam Tsering, is still very playful and challenged by our first-year lessons. He is well looked after and is very capable in the pre-school class of the Children's Village. And by mid-March when it is time to go home, he is sent off with a tikka and lots of little letters. He doesn't let go of his little rucksack, filled with tokens of affection from his classmates.



*The former workshop building, now hostel and school in one, but future use just for classes*



*What a way to live: enjoying ice cream on the slide with friends from the Children's Village*



*Christina with girls from the Children's Village and Jharkot as football fans*



*Task for classes 1-3: daily sock-washing*



*The "hall" on the upper floor: classroom during the day, dormitory for the girls and younger boys at night. The older boys sleep in one of the tiny classrooms on the ground floor.*



My goodness, how can we share all our experiences in a report that's still of a reasonable length?

The warm "Namaste" from all sides and the little conversations we have as we make our way from the guest room at the top of the grounds down to the workshop building, the Holi festival, the ice cream party to which we invited the Children's Village, beautifully organised by Season and the house mothers, the drawing and crafting lessons with our children, the trip to Barahi temple on the island in the middle of Lake Fewa ...

## 3. Because nobody is perfect

Of course, there are sometimes points of friction when living together. Sometimes things aren't promptly discussed or are misunderstood. The feeling of belonging here was so unusual for our colleagues that they simply made do with whatever they faced. For example, the fact that the sparrows in the hall (the big room under the roof, where most of the children sleep) fly in and out, because there are boltholes between the wall and roof. It's quite cute, but not exactly hygienic. Or the fact that the light doesn't work in the toilet on the top floor, which is a problem during nights. Nothing was said, even though Tanka and Season had asked everyone to bring up any problems and uncertainties. So we sit down together and talk. The light is repaired straightaway. The roof will be sealed in the summer. "Next winter we

know better," Tsering Dolkar says with a smile, showing that everyone from Jharkot now really feels like they're at home.

Basanta Subedi, who has worked with the Children's Village for a long time in the role of play therapist and adviser, and is also an adviser and contact point for *Schule macht Schule*, is working with our staff for the second time, addressing rules, consequences, non-violent parenting, and prevention of abuse. In order that they can meet in peace, we keep the children occupied. We show them the building plans and 3D views of Mustang House, clean up the building site, draw and paint ...



*Showing the children the 3D views of the new building. They were amazingly good at orienting themselves and blew us away with their questions*



*Kunga Tashis (7) sketches life at the winter school: momo, his favourite food is being cooked in the gas-powered steamer*

#### 4. Building begins!



The children's long holiday break starts in mid-March. Relatives from the various villages collect the children in groups.

There is no goodbye for us – on the contrary: we meet civil engineer Rajendra Paudel, who will be coordinating the building project. Together with Tank and Season, we ponder the details with him and are there when the future building is roughly measured out, talk about official channels, financial performance ... We learn a lot about how things are planned, allotted and built in Nepal.

The real surprise comes when we return home five weeks later: everything goes (almost) like clockwork. The building starts as planned with the relocation of the rainwater channel, and step by step – with lots more hands-on work and much less use of machinery than in Europe – House Mustang begins to grow.

You can follow the building progress under

[News: Stein auf Stein at News: Stein auf Stein >>](#)

*Civil Engineer Rajendra Paudel and Christina clarify building plan details on-site*

#### 5. It's crunch time – here come the numbers

It's exciting and things are progressing well. It's just the financial side where things are jammed up and we really need help:

The total cost of construction will be about €150,000 – for a 205m<sup>2</sup> living space made in good quality by local standards.

In August, here's how things stand:

- Support from Salzburg State 2023 20,000 €
- Donations received, including ARTificial building blocks 13,060 €
- Sponsoring received 7,500 €  
promised 7,500 €
- Legacy from Reinhard Fischer 5,541 €
- Auction of donated pictures at Kinsky auction house 2,580 €

In total, that's € 56.181. We have already transferred € 98,500 to Nepal in line with the building progress. Where will the difference come from? From the



*A shock just after our return: our travel companion and friend Reinhard Fischer, Norbu Tsering's godfather, died after a long illness. His legacy: a request to make donations to Schule macht Schule in his name in lieu of flowers*



*Left: Norbu with photos of his godfather Reinhard. Right: the digger makes a start.*



reserves kept for securing the boarding school. These need to be replenished – so please contribute! You can help with a donation, turn art into building blocks or open a door for us!

## 6. Donations and ARTificial building blocks

Every donation helps – simply transfer your chosen amount to the *Schule macht Schule* account. Use the reference "Winterschule" and we'll direct the donation to the winter school. Otherwise, we will assume that the money is intended to support the ongoing work with the children. And what is an ARTificial building block? Budding and established artists have donated more than 100 pictures and objects to represent building blocks for the winter school for us to give away. If you donate € 100 or more, you can choose one of these ARTificial building blocks as a thank you. Take a look for yourself on the building's website in the [Kunst & Helfen section >>](#)

(By the way: if every newsletter recipient donated € 50, we'd be halfway out of the woods...)



*Above right: "Green Tara" by Sonam Wangyal, who studied Thangka painting after his time in Jharkot and has donated this picture to be one of the ARTificial building blocks*

*Left: Christian Lang received "Nachtflug" (Night Flight) by Günter Minimayr as a birthday present from his wife Nora – and the winter school received a wonderful donation*



## 7. Sponsoring: Open a door for us!

Martin Seibt, communication trainer and business consultant, is a long-term supporter and friend of *Schule macht Schule*. He has put together a package for companies who are willing to invest € 10,000 in the winter school project. In return there is a great opportunity for media





cooperation and a building block for the Corporate Social Responsibility/Environmental Social Governance activities of businesses.

*Schule macht Schule* isn't a big player, we only have the chance of gaining the attention of a company if someone smooths the way for us. Which is why **we ask that you:**

Put us in touch with people who might be interested in stepping in as sponsors. It's useful to have a link, a point of connection, for example if the other person is already interested in the Himalaya region, in mountain climbing or the subject of development, or the company is involved in construction. The personal connection is certainly the most essential thing: the fact that you know us and are convinced that *Schule macht Schule* has been doing good work since 2008 – and has a future ...

- We posed a few questions to our first company sponsor, Motorwerk Berlin, as to **why they were supporting the building project >>**. We were delighted with their response...
- You can read an article about *Schule macht Schule* in the *Unser Salzburg* magazine online **here >>**
- Summary of **sponsor package and media cooperation >>**

If you don't speak German, we recommend using Google Translate for fairly accurate translations of sections of text, or whole websites: <https://translate.google.com>

*Salzburg architect Christoph Brandstätter's plans in 3D...*

*... and what has become of them by the end of August*



## 8. Calling all adventurous souls!

One reason we can be 100% sure that our project is being run properly, honestly and conscientiously for the good of the children, is the (almost) constant presence of volunteers in the project. Katharina and Theresa, two young teachers, are on their way there now – volunteers 63 and 64!

From school-leavers to retirees – all enthusiastic people with a good level of fitness are welcome. Experience with children and adolescents is advantageous. English to Matura (B2) / A-Level



*Volunteer Maxi Erhart spent a few days between summer and winter school with Tsering Gonpos' family in Phaylak village – and learned a lot in that time, such as how to make butter, and milk goats*

*At the winter school she then did yoga every morning with the children – they loved it!*

standard is required. Naturally, *Schule macht Schule* does not ask for any money for the placement and support of the volunteers.

The volunteers are enormously important for the children – not just for their English, but for their communication and social skills too. The volunteers raise new topics and have unexpected points of view. They enable the untiring staff to take a break and help us closely follow developments in the project. Two volunteers can work in the project at the same time. From mid-September onwards we have room for at least one volunteer – please spread this





Volunteer Philipp during computer lessons ...

information and keep your ear to the ground for any helpful leads ...

Any interested party should send a short email to [team@schule-macht-schule.at](mailto:team@schule-macht-schule.at) or call: +43 680 220 9956 (Wolf Pichlmüller)

You can see how much this support is valued with this request from the project management:

*Please try to get volunteers for all open periods, without them we would have no one to impart the valuable education usually given by the guests, especially speaking and listening. Our students get such skills mostly from the volunteers, and also with them they are developing confidence.*



... and watering the vegetable garden with Norbu Tsering

## 9. Please and thank you

Your ongoing loyalty to the project and continued interest and trust delights us. As always, we thank you for this and for any financial support on behalf of the children and everyone involved in the project!

Kind regards,

Wolf Pichlmüller

Christina Klaffinger

PS: From time to time, we hear that our newsletter has landed in someone's spam folder. You can prevent that from happening by adding our email address to your whitelist.



The football kits were donated by Hagenbüchach football club in Bavaria at the request of volunteer Inge

[www.schule-macht-schule.at](http://www.schule-macht-schule.at)  [www.bau.schule-macht-schule.at](http://www.bau.schule-macht-schule.at)

**Donation account** at Volksbank Salzburg:

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