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OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD NEPAL



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HEALTH CAMPS IN RURAL NEPAL BY RACHEL STEPHEN FROM NEW ZEALAND

I recently undertook a Pro Physiotherapy placement for two and a half months based in Bharatpur, Chitwan. One of the definite highlights of my time in Nepal (among many other things!) was attending the rural health camps that were set up by one of the local hospitals. The camps were held in various places surrounding the



Chitwan region and were aimed to provide resources and treatment to rural communities who could not access the healthcare to which those in the city had available. On one occasion, a small group of volunteers also visited a rural care facility for the aged.

Getting to the camp location was often an adventure in itself! We were driven various distances from Bharatpur (I often had no idea where we were!) and at times had to cross long bridges (one which was very precarious!) or walk steep hills to reach the destination of the camp. One particular camp was based on the

banks of the Tribeni River at a Hindu festival, where one hundred thousand litres of milk was poured into the river and money and flowers were dropped out of a helicopter to the people below.

Volunteers were given different roles, separate treatment rooms and often within half an hour the location of the camp would be flooded with people. Vital signs were taken by volunteers and patients were referred to specific departments. Boxes of clothes and medicine were also distributed.

The Physiotherapy treatment areas were very different from my native New Zealand – they varied from chairs in school rooms to outdoor wooden plinths under trees. Local nurses were our interpreters and were a wonderful help at gathering the history and details of the condition. Many injuries reflected the working conditions, e.g. patients who had fallen out of trees, and a lot of lower back pain! I was impressed at how flexible the Nepalese were in the hips and knees (I have been told the toilet squatting position may have something to do with this..?) The Nepalese would often laugh at my attempts at communication of Nepali, but it was surprising how much the patient could be instructed to do with such little language.



On arrival, I enjoyed surveying the area to see what might be available as exercise equipment – I learned that rocks could be used as handheld weights or wooden sticks for shoulder exercises.



We were always welcomed enthusiastically by the local people and given large amounts of food and Nepali tea. On one overnight camp, the hospital organisers approached a random house close to the camp, where the local family allowed us to stay with no hesitation. Children would often stand at the treatment doors to see what we were doing and other spectators included cows! A little distracting, but amusing!

Overall, the health camps were a special experience to practise Physio and meet closely with the Nepali people in their rural communities. It was a time to

appreciate how lucky we often are at home in terms of healthcare facilities. I would definitely recommend visiting a health camp if the chance arises!

NEPALESE GREETINGS FROM DANISH VOLUNTEER ADAM SILFVANDER!

Namaste!

My name is Adam, I am 20 years old and I come from Charlottenlund, Denmark. I finished high school last summer and I am now working as a care volunteer with Projects Abroad in Nepal. I will volunteer for 3 months.

I arrived at the beginning of February and was transferred to Co-operative Society House of Bungamati (A hostel just outside Kathmandu). I work at the Clark Memorial School, teaching English with children from nursery to 5th grade.

In Nepal you can't ignore the poverty – it was one of the first things I noticed. Nepal overall, and especially Bungamati, seems to be living in very basic conditions. There is certainly no luxury. Instead of footballs people kick about elastic balls, and seeing children playing with wheels from broken cars is a strange feeling. Even though it seems primitive, people are always smiling and friendly.





So far in my teaching, I have seen that the kids enjoy attention and love. They really appreciate it when you play along with them! They seem to lack attention and when you give them the attention and love they need, you will get rewarded with hugs, smiles and laughs. I think it's amazing teaching and playing with the children; they are so pure and openhearted; always wanting to have fun, even when they have no toys or materials. They can easily burst out laughing, and are generally happy.

The children seem to enjoy my lessons, and they really want to learn! It's amazing how fast you bond to the children - it seems like the students in your class are your little brother or sister. I'm a big brother at home in Denmark, so I feel like every student brings the love as a real brother or sister. It's really an amazing feeling being loved by so many children as well as giving love back to

them and making them smile. Having that feeling after a month here is an amazing feeling, but that is the effect the children and people of Nepal have on you every day.

Though there is a lack of western necessities that I am used to, I have come to understand how you can have the same fun and enjoyment with a lot less, as long as you walk around openhearted, humble and with a smile. The people of Nepal and the beautiful view of the Himalayan Mountains every morning can be described with one word: stunning.

NEW STAFF: DANIELA CRISTEA, OPERATIONS MANAGER

My name is Daniela and for the next 6 month I am the Operations Manager for Projects- Abroad in Nepal.

I've worked with Projects - Abroad for a little more then 6 years, mainly from Romania but also from Moldova, Togo and Burma, coordinating the Care and Teaching projects and using my skills and experience to help develop our projects in these countries.

This is my second work visit in Nepal and it was a pleasure to meet my Nepalese colleagues and friends again, and see all the changes this country went through in a year.



NEW STAFF: TESS SADATIAN TEACHING AND CARE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Hi everyone! :)

My name is Tess and I'll be the new Teaching and Care Project Co-ordinator for volunteers in Kathmandu. Since studying BSc Anthropology in the UK and spending almost 2 years living in rural China, I have grown a passion for learning more about people around the world. I have also managed my own volunteering group in England to tackle the negative stigma of nationwide social issues such as youth homelessness and believe strongly in helping others from understanding different perspectives impartially. As I have gained life changing experiences from volunteering overseas and throughout the UK, I am keen to encourage others to join Projects Abroad Nepal. I'm looking forward to meeting more volunteers, learning Nepalese and ensuring that everyone makes the most of this wonderful opportunity!



NEW STAFF: CONSERVATION CO-ORDINATOR SOPHIE JUGET

Namaste!

My name is Sophie; I graduated in Nature Management in Switzerland. I worked several months in Tanzania monitoring wildlife. After this first amazing experience I worked for an NGO in Bulgaria.



I then went back to Switzerland where I obtained a certificate in Geomatics at the University of Geneva. Then I left Switzerland again and spent 2 years in South Africa, where I graduated as a Field Guide and worked as a guide in the Kruger National Park. I worked this past summer in Botswana with Projects Abroad as an assistant manager for the conservation project, and I had an amazing time! So when I was asked to work as a Conservation Coordinator in Nepal I didn't hesitate for a second. Here I am in a new country, a new continent and ready for some new and amazing experiences. I am sure all together we will have an amazing and unforgettable time.

NEW STAFF: ALISA GANTNER - CONSERVATION, CARE & TEACHING DESK OFFICER

I started working for Projects Abroad in 2012, starting off in the beautiful coast of Thailand and relocating to Nepal in March 2013 for a new adventure! Ethnically, I am Thai, German, and Italian. I grew up in the jungles of Thailand, the deserts of Kenya, the wild savannahs in Tanzania, the coasts of Indonesia, the



hustle and bustle of Berlin! I obtained my BA in Multimedia Design in Singapore. I take great pleasure in witnessing and creating all forms of visual and performance art; especially spray painting. Only a week in Nepal so far and it has already blown me away with its religious and street art. I believe though, that the greatest art is the natural one, the great outdoors, and I'm sure Nepal has an abundance to

offer in this realm! I have worked with environmental funding and volunteering for various projects in Southeast Asia, and finally arriving here at Projects Abroad. I can't wait to discover Nepal and soak in its influence and I hope I can assist future volunteers gain an experience of a lifetime!

NEW STAFF: PRO AND INTERN COORDINATOR SUZY ADAMS

I am the new Pro and Intern Coordinator for Nepal. Before coming to Nepal I worked with Projects Abroad in Ghana, as a Teaching and Care Coordinator. I worked with a great team, in the beautiful Eastern Region, for just over a year.

I have a BA in English and History and Post Grad Certificate in Poverty Reduction. After university, I spent several years working as an English teacher and taking part in voluntary projects in Asia and the Middle East. This is my first time in Nepal, however. I was over the moon when I was offered this position, and have been looking forward to seeing the Himalayas and trying my first dal baht since then!

I will be based in Chitwan, but also coming to Kathmandu to visit the Pro and intern volunteering



there. I am excited to start a new challenge, in a new country. I am sure I will enjoy my time here as much as I enjoyed my time with Projects Abroad in Ghana.

SHIVARATRI HINDU FESTIVAL BY ALEX COURT

The tenth of March saw Kathmandu flood with devout Hindus for the “Shivaratri” festival. During this day the Pashupatinath temple at Gaushala in Kathmandu pulses with life, and sacred men or “Sadhus” worshiping Lord Shiva in their orange robes.



The Himalayan Times says “Shivaratri literally means the great night of Shiva or the night of Shiva and it is believed that this day is Lord Shiva’s favourite.” As Shiva is known as the Lord of the Lords the celebrations are gigantic!



Crowds swarmed around the temple complex lighting small bonfires to show their love for Shiva. People had clearly come from all over Nepal and India to worship at this holy site. Music blared from speakers spread around the complex and spicy-smelling curry was being handed out left right and centre. As the crowd mingled around the temples ringing bells to wake up the Gods, there was a peaceful but charged atmosphere.



With monkeys dancing around the shrines, some of which had been painted with bright colours, and the powerful mountains making an impressive backdrop, it was a truly fantastic day to be in Nepal.

