

Dear all,

This is the second [SAIHELPNEPAL](#) newsletter we want to send out to all those interested in post-earthquake Nepal and what the SAI Help Nepal initiative has been doing and is planning to do since the last newsletter and until the next one in October 2015. The struggle of Nepalis hit by the earthquake in May and June is ongoing – there are still aftershocks on a daily basis, and many people have not been able to return to their homes, either because they do not exist any longer or because they are unsafe. The degree of traumatising across generations and social strata is immense, but so is the remarkable energy invested in reconstruction and humanitarian help in Nepal at the various sites, both often overlapping. Monsoon has arrived, rice plantation has begun, there is an urge, and a need to return to everyday life. In many ways, this is hard, and many people still lack the basics, many children can still not go to school because the buildings collapsed, many injured are still in hospital – or waiting for treatment. We hear as many devastating stories as we receive rewarding and encouraging ones – and without wanting to downplay the first, let us convey a few glimpses of hope and perspective.

On-going and new projects

For us, a crucial point is that we have been able to support long-term and short-term projects that engage in humanitarian help (e.g., supporting elderly people, women's empowerment, children's workshops) and in the reconstruction of temples and other public sites of social relevance for locals. We have included one project run by **ArTree**, an artist collective from Kathmandu, in a badly hit, less privileged neighbourhood in the city of Bhaktapur (see [here](#)), where the focus is on women's empowerment, children activities and education as well as the shaping of community sites such as Camp Hub. ArTree has been working with over 55 children between the ages of 3 to 20 at the temporary camp where Thulo Byasi inhabitants relocated after the earthquake, much emphasis is also on creation and nurturing of communal spaces.



Children engaging in transporting material for the construction of a communal space in Thulo Byasi, with Subas Tamang, member of ArTree.



This 84-year-old lady from Bhaktapur was rescued from debris and was unresponsive for several days. She has no family members. Diese 84jährige Dame aus Bhaktapur wurde aus den Trümmern gerettet und war für mehrere Tage nicht ansprechbar. Sie hat keine Familienangehörigen. Photo: Pramila Bajracharya Thapa

Relief for elderly people is one of our foci: one of the projects we fund is the Hope Hermitage Provision of residential post treatment rehabilitation, care and shelter for helpless older people wounded in the earthquakes. We have an [update](#) by Roberta Mandoki and will continue funding the institution that is also looking after underprivileged elderly people with dementia, some of them 'stranded' from as far as Sindhupalchowk, one of the worst-hit regions outside the Kathmandu

valley, because only they could be transported by helicopter and are now looking towards a very unsure future. Food, clothes and care-taking is provided through our funding.

Related to this topic of old age and memory-sites is our short-term project ***Patis-in-Patan*** which seeks to create attention to the importance of *patis* (or *phalca*, arcaded platforms), a typical element of public urban life in the Kathmandu Valley. For the project we collaborate with local citizens, engineers and architects and we currently develop an independent research project on the social, religious and cultural role of the *patis* – in the past, and mainly after the earthquake. These public sites have proven to be important public shelters for civilians.

The [Charnarayan Temple](#) at Patan's Darbar Square has proceeded: work is ongoing in the garden of the Patan Palace to reassemble the old pieces, and start carving new ones. To get this quality of wood right now is demanding, starting from organising, transporting to paying for the valuable. This project is also supported because through KVPT we also want to ensure that local craftsmen, who have inherited their art from their fathers and forefathers, are encouraged to continue their work.



Assembling and preparing material for reconstruction. Photos taken by Rohit Ranjitkar.

[Rebuilding Bungamati](#) has made much progress – the shelters and sanitary sites are built, and the faculty from the department of art and design and volunteer students as well as additional supporters, have now begun to get involved with local participants. They collect oral histories, help develop strategies to further promote and innovate the remarkable local craftsmanship, and additionally engage children and youth to be active, hopeful and keen to learn.



Volunteers from Kathmandu University's Art & Design Department.

Help provided to the **Early Childhood Development Centre** is another project we have supported. On 14 May 2015, Rajan Khatiwoda from our Heidelberg group visited the Early Childhood Development Centre (ECDC) situated at Chapali, Kathmandu and handed over the donation to the coordinator Ms. Pushpa Basnet. The Centre currently facilitates 42 children who would otherwise be devoid of proper care and education. The ECDC house was badly damaged in the earthquake, the children were living inside a plastic tent. The donation was meant to provide the Centre with immediate relief including the food and medical supplies. More instant humanitarian help was provided to the *Future Hope Nepal* Children's Home by Rajan Khatiwoda (HD) in May. The orphanage houses some 20 children who are mainly from the earthquake-hit Dolakha region. With the additional children, the orphanage too is in need of support, including daily food and other supplies.



Monsoon has begun in Tsum too.

The [Rebuilding Tsum](#) project in the affected region of Tsum is proceeding well: Since May, we were able to send eight helicopters of 400-450 kg supplies each to the community of nuns at Gompa Lungtang. Located in the remote Tsum Valley on the border with Tibet, the area continues to be accessible by helicopter alone due to frequently occurring landslides that block the walking trails along the Budhi Ghandaki River in the lowlands. The nuns received rice, lentils, oil, salt, blankets, tents, and tarpaulins. We are further in the process to set up a team of experts (architect, engineer, geologist), active youth, and local community members in order to utilize local natural and human resources to

rebuild sustainably and more earthquake proof habitations. Stonemasons will soon start to do the preparatory work so that rebuilding can begin after monsoon in October.

Shelter in [Sindhupalchok/Dolakha](#) is another project supported by SAIHELPNEPAL. On Monday, the 18th of May, the SAI Help Nepal provided 25 bundles of pewter (jastaa paataa) and 10 kilos of metal accessories to Salmi village of Sindhupalchok for constructing shelters to prevent them from the monsoon rain and cold. The construction materials provided by us helped to build 25 shelters. For the first phase, we have planned to build ten shelters in the remote villages of Lapilang and Baruwa. For this purpose, my project coordinator in Nepal, Biraj Khanal who is an active volunteer of Kathmandu University, will mobilize 25 volunteers from KU and the local community. The next step will be to work with locals and school staff to construct a fifteen roomed school block at Sipaphokhari, Sindhupalchok. Once the restoration is complete, we will distribute all the collected stationary goods to the students. We expect the whole project to be completed within a month.

The Association [Bridge to Tibet](#) is also part of SAIHELPNEPAL and is engaged in a school project in the village of Thulo Dhading in Sindhupalchok District, a site severely affected by both earthquakes. Nearly all buildings were damaged and the Shri Dharmadaya Secondary Higher School, which is attended by approximately 400 pupils, was irreparably destroyed. SAIHELPNEPAL facilitated to finance and coordinate the construction of a temporary school building. The purchased materials (e.g. roof sheets) are of high quality and can be reused later. We could also finance the installation of sanitary facilities for the school, school books and stationaries. The initiative could be successfully finished just before the start of the monsoon rains and little after the official start of the school year. All the activities were done on a voluntary basis.



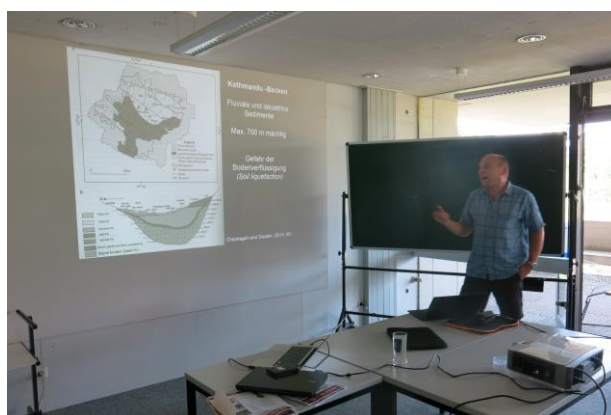
Staff and support team from the School.

Activities in Heidelberg

On July 3rd, the South Asia Institute organised a Nepalday. Highlights were the classical Charu dance performance by Ritu Bajracharya, short talks by ten scholars from the SAI and associated institutions on issues related to the earthquake in Nepal, ranging from historical or mythological perspectives on previous earthquakes in Nepal, on the geographical scale of the 2015 and earlier earthquakes, and on individual initiatives funded by SAIHELPNEPAL. Moreover, 1400 Momos were made and delicious cakes provided by volunteers. There was a Nepal-Bazar and we even managed to sell products made by the knitting women from our Bhaktapur project. Information desks allowed Nepal-based initiatives and projects to present their work. Despite the tremendous temperature (40 degrees Celsius), the Nepalday managed to attract a very good crowd of visitors throughout the day, and the event then turned into the SAI-Summer party, with the students' union donating their income to the SAIHELPNEPAL fund. Thanks to all involved – helping, listening, buying and engaging in many different ways! We received further money from the Students Union of the Institute of Geography who generously collected almost 1000 Euros at their annual summer party, the 'Atlasfete'. Thanks to them, too! The Heidelberg-based Fürst Foundation that seeks to provide help to education-based institutions in South Asia has generously granted funds to the *Rebuildung Bungamati* and *Community Project Bhaktapur* to provide support to pupils and students.



Making of Momos



Talk by Prof. Nüsser



Products by knitting women from the Community Project in Bhaktapur

The next steps

The end of this summer term is approaching and several from the SAIHELPNEPAL team are leaving for Nepal between August and October. Many of us will visit the sites, and thus we have decided to wait until October until we can get back to you with the third newsletter, to update you. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Let us reiterate that we are certainly aware of the fact that every project we fund means that we do not fund another. There is still, and maybe increasingly, need for a variety of initiatives. We from SAI Help Nepal have decided to support those projects we are in good touch with, projects where we receive updates and reports, and where, from our own personal and scholarly background, can claim some basis of legitimacy to say that the donations are invested well. By the end of the year, a detailed report on the funding sums will be published.

We hope that this newsletter both informs and encourages you to continue supporting SAIHELPNEPAL.

Kind greetings,

Christiane Brosius with Axel Michaels, Davide Torri, Manik and Ritu Bajracharya, Christoph Bergmann, Niels Gutschow, Rajan Khatiwoda, Roberta Mandoki, Marcus Nüsser, Nadine Plachta and Nike-Ann Schröder

Donation Account

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