

News from the School

The Tapriza School in Phoksumdo is running well and undisputed thanks to a stable team of teachers and staff who work smoothly together. Many new children joined. Thanks to support we could admit three children from the very remote village Mo where until now there is no school. In the beginning they were shy and suffered several childhood illnesses due to the first-time contact with so many children. In the meantime they have settled in well.

The highlight of the school year for the middle and the upper grades was the summer excursion to the sacred spring of Lama Chumik in the Gunasa valley. In celebration of the pilgrimage year which recurs every twelve years, the spring and the meditation caves of several religious masters were visited together with other pilgrims. The students stayed in caravan tents. They were taught in the history of the region by present Bon lamas, decorated themselves with flowers, crawled through caves to rid themselves from their «sins», drank holy water, picked medical plants and fulfilled the corresponding rituals – all in all a true-to-life lesson in local culture and history.

In the meantime another batch of students has successfully graduated from school. A new group of class 10 students reached Kathmandu for the first time and is visiting the winter school in preparation for the final exams in spring. Two girls and a boy qualified to start their studies to become a health assistant with our support so that they can in future also work in the health projects in Dolpo. Pasang Dolma, our former student, received her diploma as nurse and skilled birth attendant. Since then she has been working in our health post in Phoksumdo.

In the Tibetan Horse Wood Year – starting from the 2nd of March 2014
– we wish you luck and blessings! Marietta Kind



Events

Trekking to the Tapriza School: During a trekking to Lower Dolpo organised by Claudia Schmid, www.bergfrau.ch, interested people can visit the Tapriza School and our current projects from 18.10 to the 6.11.2014.

General Assembly: The Tapriza General Assembly is on Friday, the 6th June 2014, at 7 pm in the Quartierbetreff Hirslanden, Forchstrasse 248, 8032 Zürich, Tram 11 to Burgwies. We will be screening a documentary film on Dolpo.

You can find information on the Tapriza School, the current health projects, scholarships for the further education of former Tapriza students, the yak project or the conservation of cultural heritage under www.tapriza.org.

Fotos (Semduk Lama, 2 and 3 by Hans Marty)

- 1 Pasang Dolma at her work as a nurse in the health post Chunubar.
- 2 The nurse Yungdrung Magli treats the abbot of the Ringmo monastery.
- 3 Dr. med. Hans Marty in action during his travels in Dolpo.
- 4 Yundrung Magli and Pasang Dolma while treating patients in Ringmo.
- 5 Pasang Dolma at her work as a nurse in the health post Chunubar.
- 6 The water intake channel of the micro hydro project.
- 7 Transportation of wood for power transmission poles..
- 8 Powerhouse with downpipe.
- 9 On the pilgrimage in Gunasa.
- 10 Tapriza students at the destination of the pilgrimage, the spring of Lama Chumik.

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TAPRIZA VEREIN Bahnhofstr. 35 CH-8001 Zürich
mail@tapriza.org www.tapriza.org

NEWSLETTER 2014

Increased Efforts for Better Health Care



In spring 2012 Dr. med. Hans Marty travelled to Dolpo together with Claudia Schmid, the owner of the trekking agency «Bergfrau». They returned with the resolution to put increased and sustainable efforts into improving the local health care system. This resulted in a fruitful collaboration with the Tapriza NGO. Here Hans Marty's impressions:

For the first time I had the opportunity to travel to fascinating Dolpo with Claudia Schmid. Claudia was guiding a tour there, so I joined them on my way out. As a pensioned doctor, I travelled into the region around the Phoksumdo lake on behalf of the Dolpo Tulku Charity Foundation – one of the local NGOs – to see the conditions of the local health care situation and also to pass a report on my observations to the Fondation Nicole Niquille. This foundation is already active in the Khumbu district of Nepal and in future intends to additionally support health projects in remote Dolpo. Taking two inland flights we journeyed from Kathmandu to Juphal. Then we walked for four days to Ringmo, a village on the banks of the

crystal clear mountain lake in the Phoksumdo VDC.

On the way there, Claudia who is also part-time active in the health sector, and I could visit the hospital in Juphal, the district head quarter of Dolpo. What we saw there, opened our eyes to the grave difficulties in providing adequate medical care in this large and sparsely populated district. The term «hospital» led us to make wrong associations. In the structurally unstable institution, there is not sufficient water or electricity supply. Additionally, not enough medicine is available to fulfil the needs. In their diagnosis and therapy decisions the doctors nearly exclusively need to rely on clinical support. At times, the «hospital» had to fend to the needs of the people without a doctor at all. On the way, shortly before reaching Phoksumdo lake, we then passed by Chunubar. Here there is an official health post which however was closed because the official health assistant prefers to spend most of his time in Nepalganj. Later, I came upon a similar situation at the health post close to Do Tarap in a neighbouring valley. These health posts are already peripherally located, but it often still takes the local population several hours walk to reach them.



Together we arrived at Ringmo, the Tibetan influenced village at Phoksumdo lake, from where Claudia and her trekking group carried on towards North Dolpo. I stayed there for two weeks to work together with the local nurse Yungdrung Magli in the sparsely equipped outpatient clinic which she had been running since a year. There, and during ambulant visiting hours in the surrounding villages, I learnt the most common disease patterns. They were similar to the ones I was already acquainted with through involvement in previous projects in Tibet and in the hospital Lukla of the Fondation Nicole Niquille. Just like there, the main problems are with the locomotor system, the cardiovascular system (mainly high blood pressure) and the gastrointestinal system (mainly stomach trouble). An important aspect of consultation work is family planning. Worm infestation also poses a considerable problem in the population. In Yungdrung I got to know a dedicated nurse interested in gaining further knowledge. She has the wish to, if possible, study medicine. During my stay in her home, I could engage in every-day life of the population of Dolpo. It mainly builds on agricultural self-subsistence, while rituals of the Bon religion also are an integral part of the daily routine.

The impression of the life of the Dolpo-pa and especially the deplorable health care preyed on Claudia's and my mind. We thought about how we could utilise our resources and abilities to sustainably contribute to the improvement of the situation. Lastly, we concluded that it would best be achieved within the scope of an organisation which is already active and well established in Dolpo. So, we got in touch with the Tapriza NGO which was very interested in our focus on the health care system. Since then a fruitful cooperation has developed: We financially implement the suggestions for meaningful projects gained through the local experience of Tapriza board members, and support them with our professional knowhow. I am in a regular professional dialog via email with the former Tapriza student and Yungdrung's successor Pasang Dolma.

These correspondences assist her in her every-day work in the local health care system. She regularly sends us statistics of treated cases and I can give her advice regarding their treatment. Through our experience in regions with similar problems we can also contribute sensible and affordable solutions to other projects – such as the extension of several health posts. Specifically the health posts in Ringmo, Pugmo and Chunuwari are going to be expanded so that during the habitable season, from April to October, an adequate primary care can be offered. Since 2013 Pasang Dolma works at the health posts. Her salary is paid by the Tapriza NGO (with support of the Soroptimist International Club Zürich). The same organisation also supports the education of three former Tapriza students to become health assistants so that in the future local successors can work in the government health posts. It is planned that the Nepalese government will finance these functions in future. The collaboration with the health ministry of Nepal and other NGOs active in the region (One Heart Worldwide, Dolpo Tulku Charity Foundation, Action Dolpo and others) is an important requirement for a sustainable improvement of the entire health care in Dolpo.

Besides several private people and the Soroptimist International Club Zürich now and in future the Fondation



Nicole Niquille will support the health care in Dolpo financially. We are also in contact with further donors. Any support for the health care projects within the scope of the Tapriza NGO, described briefly here, is welcome. A special bank account has been opened:

Tapriza Verein, Gesundheitsprojekte
Credit Suisse AG, 8070 Zürich
IBAN CH81 0483 5029 8535 9100 0

Pugmo has Power!

After two years of intensive building, the micro hydro power project on the Karmara river is completed. All houses of the village Pugmo are finally on the electrical grid. With the construction of the micro hydro plant a dream came true for the villagers. The power makes every-day life much easier, as work can also be done in the evening after sunset. Previously, over kerosene lamps, this was not as efficient and harmful for the eyes.



The construction works did not always run smoothly. The funding promised by the government was not paid out. It was difficult to transport the large and sensitive components into the remote region. Resources and skilled labour were at times also hard to get. Without the enthusiastic commitment of the local population and the tireless dedication of our school manager and TASHI-D. president Semduk Lama the construction would not have been possible. The Tapriza NGO eventually could, thanks to fundraising by Marietta Kind and Jenny Bentley, secure the financing of the micro hydro project. We would like to cordially thank all the institutions and private people who have supported the project.

The micro hydro project also opened up local job opportunities. A full-time job was generated for the maintenance of the machine house and the surveillance of the power supply. Additionally, at present five young men from Pugmo are participating in a training to learn the specific skills for dam construction and maintenance. Thereafter, they can be employed for servicing and other works.