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NEWSLETTER 2020



The Tapriza healthcare team in Dolpo, a travelogue

In spring 2019, Dr. Hans Marty and Dr. Peter Abbühl from the Tapriza healthcare team visited the health posts and the school together with representatives of the newly founded Swiss NGO DolpoCare. Hans Marty tells us about their trip:

Then, in Chunuwar, we met the nurse Pasang Dolma whom we have supported in her studies. She greeted us warmly and led us through the tidy and neat health post. We were impressed when she showed us her annual plan of her visits to the surrounding villages. In addition to the general check-up, she uses these visits to familiarise the population with health care issues such as vaccinations, hygiene and family planning. In order to increase her diagnostic options, we brought test strips for urine examination with us and instructed Pasang Dolma in how to use them. After visiting Ringmo, we let her perform a test to give her some practice and after some effort she succeeded. Pasang Dolma has just sent me her patient statistics from the month of April to November 2019 and mentioned that she was pleased to be able to carry out this examination now. Together with the health assistant Kesang Lhamo she conducted 943 consultations, another clear increase compared to the previous year with 538 consultations. It seems that the two have won the trust of the population and are now being visited more and more often.

In spring 2019, Peter Abbühl and I, both retired doctors with Nepal experience – including a several month assignment at the Lukla hospital in the Everest region – travelled to Dolpo. For Peter it was the first time, for me the third. Under the experienced guidance of Santaram Dolpali from Juphal, we first visited the main town of Dunai. We were particularly interested in the hospital there. With us were Rahel Planta and Markus Graf from the NGO DolpoCare. The association has set itself the goal of supporting the development of this only so far simple inpatient health facility in Dolpo into a functioning small hospital. That this is not the case today became apparent on the tour of the facilities, during which the young and cooperative hospital doctor accompanied us. We did observe some progress compared to my last visit; there is a functioning ultrasound device, the infrastructure is generally at a somewhat better level, but disorder and questionable equipment still shape the picture.

It was again a pleasure for us to pay a visit to the Tapriza School and see with how motivated the children

We wish you all the best
 in the Tibetan year of the
 iron mouse!

The Tapriza Team



Events

General Assembly: Die Tapriza General Assembly is on Friday, **19th June 2020**, 7.00 p.m. in the Quartiertreff Hirslanden, Forchstrasse 248, 8032 Zürich, Tram 11 to Burgwies.

Photographs (Peter Abbühl, Hans Marty, Semduk Lama und Team)

- 1 Students in the school yard. (PA)
- 2 Pasang Dolma at the Chunuwar health post. (HM)
- 3 Peter Abbühl explains a urine strip test to Pasang Dolma. (HM)
- 4 Yungdrung Droduling Monastery in Hurikot. (HM)
- 5 Two students on their loft beds. (PA)
- 6 The enlarged school area. (SL)
- 7 Students practice volleyball in the school yard. (SL)
- 8 Reception ceremony for the holy books at the school. (SL)
- 9 The children enjoy knitted hats. (SL)
- 10 The smallest of the Tapriza School. (SL)
- 11 Student. (SL)





and youth participate in the lessons. When looking into the tenth-grade classroom, the 15-year-old students were concentrated at work, then they answered our questions in good English, partly laughing, partly slightly embarrassed. We also saw the newly built boys' dormitory and happened to meet one of Santaram's sons. As in the previous years, the pleasant vice school manager Ramchandra Budha took out time from his busy schedule to talk to us. The impressive school complex exudes a zest for life and optimism. Thereafter, we had planned to visit the health post in Pugmo. However, due to the heavy snow, crossing the Kagmara Pass was not an option. So, we had to change our route and reach our destination, Jumla, via Suligad and Tripurakot. On this way, we could stop by the monastery in Hurikot. The monk Kalsang Janak showed us the premises and mentioned how grateful they were for the support from the Taprizia NGO.

We were pleased to find that the Taprizia NGO's projects are going well, especially the school that meets a great need. The health project provides relief for minor medical problems and can make important contributions, particularly in health promotion. We are also very glad that the former nurse Yungdrung Magli from Ringmo continues to successfully complete her medical studies in Pokhara. Af-

ter completing her training as a general practitioner, she would like to return to Dolpo, which is why we regularly support her studies with contributions. It would therefore be very important that a suitable and financed job exists for her in Dolpo as soon as she has her degree. However, it requires the will of the local authorities to create such a position. It would be a great achievement if future medical care could be secured in this remote region with her as a local doctor.

News from the school

In 2019, our students and our staff championed for environment and the cleanliness of the school and its surroundings. They chose eleven representatives for the new committee of the Taprizia Eco Club. The Eco Club regularly collects the garbage that trekkers, *yartsa gunbu* collectors and other passer-by leave on the way and at the campsite. The members also keep the school clean and sensitise the students and local population to environmental issues. This year, they opened a small shop in the school – a long-awaited request from the student body. The shop has stationaries, hygiene items, cookies, noodles and other food. The products are bought in Dunai or Nepalganj and sold at school prices, therefore cheap-

er than in the surrounding shops and market tents for trekkers. The students benefit from this opportunity and the Taprizia Eco Club can co-finance its activities with the small income. The Eco Club impressed journalists who visited the Taprizia School. So they reported about it in a children's new program of a national broadcaster. The program can be viewed on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqyyKSaQoCY>). The Club is planning a hygiene campaign from Sulidad to Phoksumdo Lake and reforestation activities for next year. We are very proud of our students and are happy that they are leading the way with their commitment to protecting the environment in distant Dolpo.

Another highlight of the last year was that Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche of the Triten Norbutse Bon Monastery in Kathmandu donated a major collection of sacred books of the Bon religion, the *kangyur* and *tengyur* (the words of the Buddha and the comments on them) to the school. He is the supreme teacher in the Bon tradition and the only initiate in the oral tradition of Dzogchen Zhangzhung Nangyud teaching, the most important form of the Dzogchen instruction. It is therefore a great honour to receive this traditional literature for our library from him. He has always supported our school very benevolently and kept

it under his blessings. In particular, he campaigned for the children not to be sent directly to the monastery in Kathmandu, but to first complete primary school with us. Our school manager Semduk Lama and our vice school manager Ramchandra Budha organised the transport of the books from Kathmandu to the school and covered the costs as a personal donation. We sincerely thank them for their generosity. The staff and students received the books ceremoniously at the school.

Our board member Claudia Schmid (www.bergfrau.ch) brought sports equipment to Nepal on her trekking trip, which was immediately used in a three-day tournament at the school. Throughout the year, the students played various sports such as soccer, volleyball or running. For the coming year, we therefore want to set up fenced-in sport fields and a playground for the younger children. Claudia also handed over hats and socks knitted by Mrs. Pfeiffer and her team. Thanks to an additional donation of children's gloves, the pupils are now equipped for the cold season. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the donors for their commitment. We would like to convey the students' gratitude for the products that warm their hands, feet, heads, and above all, their hearts.

