

Karlsruhe, 08. August 2016

Nepal: Psychosocial Aftercare

After the serious earthquake of 2015 in Nepal, the Friends of Waldorf Education carried out an acute mission and a follow-up mission in cooperation with Aktion Deutschland Hilft. Now a team was once again on location. The mission was focused on working with especially traumatized children and on training parents and teachers.

Over a year after the earthquake, the external traces are largely removed, debris and rubble have been disposed of; the schools are open again. The internal wounds though can be felt just like before. Especially children have a hard time ordering their world after the shaking of an earthquake and struggle in dealing with their experiences. Helping these traumatized children, some of whom are severely traumatized, was a main goal of the mission in August.

In the first week, morning and afternoon offerings took place in the Tashi-Waldorf-School. This time less work was done in large groups here, instead special attention was paid to individual care of children who show severe trauma-related disorders.

A healing eurhythmist, a Waldorf teacher, and an art therapist supported the children with pedagogical-therapeutical methods, which re-strengthen trust in oneself and one's surroundings. In the courses, affected children had the possibility to work against traumatic experiences with new, beautiful experiences. Movement and clapping games bring joy, dissolve inner torpor, and support physical coordination.

A nurse and custodian traveled with the pedagogues. They showed the people there, how they can design their spaces with simple means and also encouraged them to not ignore this aspect for successful healing and a healthy soul.

In the afternoons, in addition to the offerings for the children, regular teacher trainings took place as well as coachings during and after lessons. In the second week, the emergency pedagogues worked additionally in the mornings in the school of the Shanti-Leper-Aid.

An emergency pedagogue reports, how after a few days, an employee in the school administration spoke her to: "He asked me, what was going on here and what we are doing here. It was so quiet on these days and the children seemed so relaxed and peaceful. It is wonderful to experience, that our work has an effect here and that it already helps the children after such a short time."

On the weekend 32 interested persons from 7 different initiatives and over 50 parents took part in teacher and parent days. The trainings helped to inform the participants about traumata and to show them methods, which can help with the processing of negative experiences. This therefore prepares them for coming earthquakes or other natural disasters. Just like at past missions, there was again a great need for support but also joy over new impulses could be felt.

*The **Friends of Waldorf Education** are worldwide sponsors of a free education system. Since 1971 they have advocated for Waldorf education and the freedom of education systems. Since 1993 the office in Karlsruhe has organized and supervised international volunteer services worldwide and has to date made it possible for over 7,000 people to complete a social service in over 350 projects in more than 60 countries. Now around 600 young*

people annually take part in the programme. Since the summer of 2011 it has also been possible to complete a 12-month civil service in anthroposophic institutions in Germany through the association.

Since 2006 the Friends of Waldorf Education have been active in the area of emergency pedagogy. Following the outbreak of a war or a natural disaster, they worked with psychologically traumatized children and adolescents in Lebanon (2006), China (2008 and 2013); Gaza (2009-2013), Indonesia (2009), Haiti (2010), Kyrgyzstan (2010), Japan (2011), and Kenya (2012-2013), the Philippines (2013-2015), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2014), Nepal (2015), Greece (2015), Slovenia (2015), Kurdistan-Iraq (2013-2016), Germany (2014-2016), Paris (2016), Brussels (2016), and Ecuador (2016).



Freunde der Erziehungskunst is a member of Germany's Relief Coalition, a union of German relief organisations that can provide rapid and effective aid in the case of large catastrophes and emergency situations abroad.