

Karlsruhe, April 27th, 2015

Nepal: Traumatised Children need Help!

After the devastating earthquake in Nepal, the Friends of Waldorf Education plans an emergency pedagogical crisis intervention in the disaster zone. The intervention is aimed first and foremost at the traumatised children and youths to support them in processing the catastrophe.

The 7.9 magnitude earthquake that hit on Saturday was Nepal's worst earthquake in 80 years. The National Emergency Operation Centre of the Nepali ministry of the interior estimates at this time a death toll to be over 3,200 deaths and the number of injured persons to be at 6,500. The number of victims continues to rise every hour. Countless people have lost their homes and property. Many have been traumatised by the earthquake; irregular aftershocks and heavy rains have prevented the affected persons from recovering and complicated relief efforts.

The lost of family and home as well as being confronted with suffering and destruction have left above all children with psychological trauma. Earthquakes in particular generate high psychological stress; the firm ground under ones feet is literally pulled away und turns into a threatening menace.

In cooperation with „Aktion Deutschland Hilft“ and long-time regional Partner „Shanti“ a Leprosy hospital with an affiliated Waldorf school in the capital city of Kathmandu, the Friends of Waldorf Education plans an emergency pedagogical operation from the 9th to the 23rd of March. With this mission, traumatised children and youth shall be helped to process their experiences of the catastrophe and it should serve to help prevent them from developing post traumatic stress.

Pedagogical First Aid after the Catastrophe

The emergency pedagogy of the Friends of Waldorf Education is based on Waldorf pedagogical methods and applied forms of therapy. A daily schedule based on children's natural rhythms, regulated eating and sleep times, and periods of rest and activation, serve to give children and youths a new orientation, a sense of security, and stability. Through the activation of the affected persons' self-healing power the coping process is supported. Trust in one's self and humanity are strengthened through experiential pedagogical exercises. In art and experiential pedagogical courses affected children have the opportunity to counter traumatic ordeals with new aesthetic experiences. Movement and clapping games bring joy, dissolve inner torpor, and support physical coordination. In the scope of countless operations worldwide many children have already been helped to process their traumatic experiences and post traumatic stress disorders have been lessened.

To finance their operations, the Friends of Waldorf education is reliant on support from donations.

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*The **Friends of Waldorf Education** is worldwide sponsors of a free education system. Since 1971 they advocate for Waldorf education and the freedom of education systems. Since 1993 the office in Karlsruhe organizes and supervises international volunteer services worldwide. Since summer 2011 it is possible to complete a 12-month civil service in anthroposophical institutions through the association.*

Since 2006 the Friends of Waldorf Education are 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), Kurdistan-Iraq (2013-2015), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (2014).



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.