

HELP RURAL NEPAL



November 2009 Newsletter

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HELP RURAL NEPAL was launched in the summer of 2009 and I arrived in Nepal in late September.

Jane, our first volunteer followed and after a few days of sightseeing in Kathmandu we travelled to the village where Jane was going to teach English in the primary school that was severely damaged in the landslide in August.

The journey takes about 7 hours on the local bus, the last three hours are on very rough unmade dusty tracks

We reached the village safely and were given a wonderful welcome by Shital's family.



On arrival at school we could see the damage done following the landslide – huge cracks in the walls and a sheer drop where the play area used to be. The new building was unusable but we did manage to use the old damaged classrooms although some parent were keeping their children away. The news of the new teacher arriving however soon brought them back!

The school has only 2 teachers for 3 classes so our help was very welcome! Jane taught the children for three weeks and everyone found it a very rewarding experience and friends were made for life! There was a beautiful ceremony on her last day, flowers and tikka were given and the children sang all the songs they had learnt.



The ground for the new school was being prepared while we were there. There was great excitement and all the villagers turned out to watch the dozers and diggers at work. Six year old Sunil stopped to watch on his way to school and never managed to get to school at all that day!!

Sunil's hand is recovering well after his operation and he can now use most of his fingers though he has to keep his hand in a splint for a bit longer. His confidence has grown in this short time and he is now doing well at school

We were also lucky enough to be in the village for Tihar Festival and joined in all the celebrations with the family.

During this visit I was taken to see a baby with a severe cleft lip and palate. His parents were desperate for help I could only take photos and said I would see what help there was in Kathmandu. On our return I discovered that a visiting surgical team was at Shreer Memorial Hospital operating on such cases. After contacting the charity that was organising it we were told that if baby Pooa could be there in 4 days they would operate on him. Well...somehow it all happened, mostly thanks to Shital and his family.

Catherine & I visited the baby a few days later in hospital. What a transformation and what a wonderful moment. HRN funded the transport to Kathmandu and accommodation for the family- the rest was funded by other agencies to whom we are very grateful



Catherine and Fliss joined me in November. We had the most amazing camping trek together to Ganesh Himal region which ended in the village in Dhading. They met Shital's family, visited the old school and could see for themselves the work on the new school ground which is now finished. Building work will start after the rice harvest is finished - this essential work is keeping the village very busy now.

We all visited Baby Purna- now home with his family again. His parents are overjoyed with the operation result. He needs to return to KTM for one check up and all should be well and a life changed for ever. His father came to see us off when we left on the bus- no words were spoken, his hands held in prayer, his face said it all.

We took out a volleyball net & balls and as soon as word got around, children of all sizes

appeared to clear the area of stones. By nightfall the posts and net were up and the first ball was thrown! The older boys who play in a volleyball team took charge of the equipment and are going to teach the smaller boys (and girls?) to play and will organise competitions. We were all presented with malas (garlands of marigolds) as thanks and there was more singing and dancing that evening. A wonderful end to our stay and a reminder of how little things can mean so much.

Catherine and Fliss have now returned to the UK and I am about to return to the village to help at school for two weeks and I can't wait!!

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