

Basic Education for Children in Northern Ramechhap, Bhandar and Khumbu, Nepal

(Status and progress report, January 2020)



Learning with friends at school is much better (Photo: Abishek Thapa, Ramechhap, 2018).

2019 - Our educational projects in Nepal in figures:

56 schools were equipped with teaching materials

100 teachers were trained in new teaching methods

4,600 pupils have been improved

monitored

Successful change in the region: The Nepal project of Childaid Network has its roots at the Helene Lange School, Wiesbaden (formerly "Children of Bhandar", now part of our foundation) and at the Kronberg 96 Initiative. The support for the Bhandar region began more than 30 years ago. The Kronberg Initiative, which merged with Childaid Network in 2018, supported schools in neighbouring Khumbu for over 20 years. While at the beginning of the project almost no children in the region went to school, since then, with the help of many active and supportive people, it has been possible to get almost all children from the poor mountain villages to school and to provide sustainable, holistic help, including vocational training and health care.

Northern Ramechhap - a remote mountain region: Our project area is located in the mountains of Nepal about 230 km northeast of Kathmandu and is difficult to access. The region is poor, many people live from the yields of agriculture, which means hard work on steep slopes. Until a few years ago, all loads had to be carried by people or animals.

social workers were paid

She wants to go to a good school.



Fun and games are part of a good, holistic development.

By now, there is a simple but often poor network of unpaved roads that can be used by tractors or trucks in the dry season. During the rainy season, it is often impassable due to landslides. Far from doctors, good teachers and jobs, survival remains difficult. Many young people therefore migrate to the capital or to the Gulf States for work.

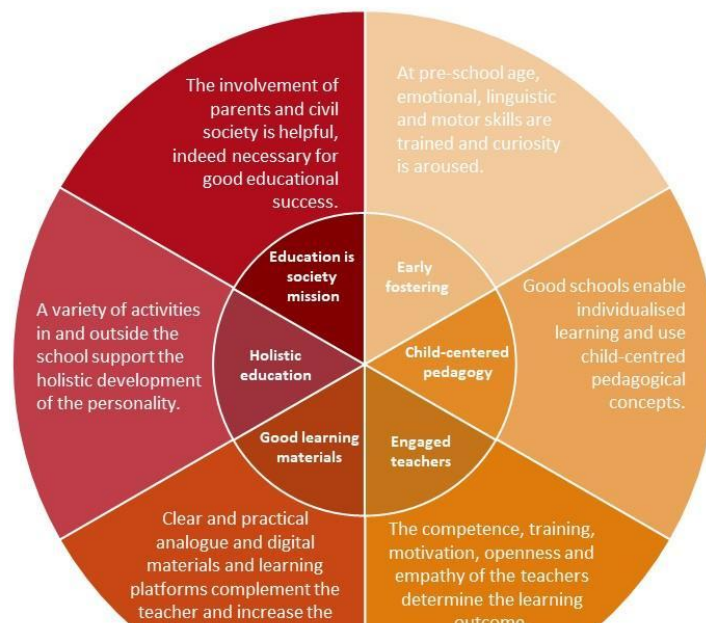
Reconstruction after the earthquakes successfully completed: On 25 April 2015, a devastating earthquake hit Nepal with a magnitude of 7.8, and on 12 May there were strong quakes again. Buildings, schools and infrastructure in the region were almost completely destroyed. Within two years, the Initiative Kronberg, Children of Bhandar and Childaid Network succeeded - as the only one in this region - to rebuild solid and earthquake-proof school buildings and a children's house. After the inauguration of the ten new schools in 2017 and 2018, the remaining work, especially in the outdoor area, was completed in 2019.

The children go to school, but the teaching is often not effective: But good buildings are not enough, it is important that children also receive a good basic education. Unfortunately, tests carried out by us show that in the 8th grade only 25% of the pupils understand a very simple English text. Only 15% can divide. Reasons for this are, among others, the inadequate training of teachers and high absence rates. It is very difficult to find good teachers for remote mountain regions. The parents are mostly illiterate and can hardly influence the quality of the teaching or help their children.

The dimensions of good education

For education to reduce poverty, schools must prepare children well for life. This requires the interaction of many factors. Only the consideration of all dimensions of good education guarantees learning success. This is

our exactly
goal!





Practicing writing in sand is more fun than with pen and paper.



Child friendly classroom.



The children learn in a playful way in newly furnished pre-school classrooms.

The road to quality education © Graphic Childaid Network

Initial successes in the model school project: In 2019, seven schools were intensively supported by our partners. We activated the parents with social workers. Teachers were trained in child-centered methods and supported in the implementation of what they had learned in regular visits by project staff. The teachers, who had little experience with modern pedagogical methods, gratefully accepted this assistance, and so the first progress was made in improving the quality of education.

Early childhood education in focus: Experience in other project regions has shown that early support can have a lasting positive influence on school success. At pre-school age, emotional, linguistic and motor skills are trained, and curiosity is aroused. The opening of the new Montessori day care centre in the former children's house was not the only way to promote the youngest children in the region. Together with our new partner Seto Gurans, the quality of the preschools in the seven model schools was improved. Sustainable improvements were achieved through the child-friendly furnishing of the classrooms and the training of the teachers in child-oriented pedagogy. This was supported by courses for the parents and a close cooperation with the school management and the parents' councils.

Grown structures are difficult to change: The work in the model schools has also made clear the challenges the projects face. Often the teachers are not motivated to do more than what is necessary to keep their government job. Head teachers lack the organisational skills that are essential for successful integration into the project. In some cases, local government representatives look for benefits for themselves first and foremost. To bridge these cultural peculiarities, a holistic approach is needed.

Parents and the local administration are involved: All project activities are carried out in close cooperation with the government contact persons, because there is also a great need to catch up in the understanding of school quality. We try to build this up by involving the regional and local councils in project visits. In addition, the School Management Committees (SMCs), which are made up of parents, are being promoted at the schools. Step by step, they are getting more involved in the organisation of the schools and the allocation of funds. Their job is also to remind the local government of its responsibility.



His curiosity should not be curbed by bad teaching methods.



Big rush at the 1st literature and art festival in Bhandar.



With good lessons, the children are eager to learn.

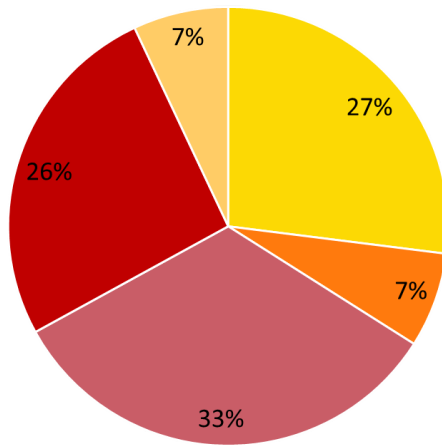
Promoting the joy of writing: In 2019, the project also brought the first literature and art festival to Bhandar, which was attended by more than 500 children from 13 different schools. Workshops were held to compete in writing, painting pictures, and the children could exhibit their own works of art and recite their stories and poems. This was a great success, as confirmed by the local government, which has already pledged support for a literature and art festival in 2020.

Outlook

The model school project is entering its second phase: After testing in the model schools, the introduction of modern teaching methods in combination with close supervision of the teachers will be continued. While the schools supported in 2019 will continue to be accompanied by project staff, another seven schools will be added in 2020. In these schools, the project concept, which has been adapted and improved with the help of the experience gained, will be applied to further promote the quality of teaching in rural regions.

Our vision and next steps: Just as we have been successful at several hundred state schools in Assam and northern Bangladesh to achieve good school quality, we also want to gradually integrate all local schools into the program in Ramechhap. We are starting to mobilize parents, ensure regular school attendance, empower and motivate teachers for child-centred teaching, and help school principals to raise the necessary government support. We are phasing out the payment of salaries for regular "government" teachers, but with mobile teams and "school-in-the-box" solutions we are making a concrete commitment.

We provide holistic and sustainable aid: In 2019, the health situation of the children in the schools in the project area was assessed by a team of German doctors in cooperation with Nepalese colleagues. Particularly in the areas of nutrition and hygiene, serious drawbacks were identified, which often lead to children being malnourished or ill. The causes are complex, but the consequences are often the same. The children are set back in their development, are absent from school or have difficulty concentrating. Together with our Nepalese partners we have developed a concept that counteracts these causes in a sustainable way and works closely with the schools. The project was launched at the beginning of 2020.



- Material and Equipment
- Scholarships
- School Quality Program
- Teachers' Salaries
- Project Management

Expenses 2019 school education
Nepal: 196.760 €

There have been many advances in the education system in Ramechhap, which have been brought about by the Kinder-von-Bhandar and Initiative Kronberg projects. But our work will not be complete until the children receive a good basic education that will enable them to live independently. Please continue to support us in our efforts to give the children in the Ramechhabs mountains a good future.

January 2020, Silke Geissert