

# Rural Assistance Nepal

## Visit to Deusa Secondary School and Health Post: September – October 2008

End of term and looking forward to the Dashain break, the students at Deusa Secondary School had to get through their end of term exams first. Once these were finished, work with an American volunteer, Roger Ray commenced to divert water overflowing from the water tank that supplies the toilets. At the same time, benches and desks were rearranged, putting larger new furniture in the wider classrooms and putting the narrower but old furniture into the smaller rooms. Now at least, teachers and students can move up and down inside the classrooms which were before too blocked.



Roger supervising the students



Raju teaching class 3 'Social Studies'

Since August, Ram Kumar Mahatt, a replacement science teacher (sponsored) has been teaching science and maths at the school. He has been settling in well. He comes from the Terai – the same district as the head teacher and other science teacher (teachers from the Terai have a very good reputation for hard work).

During the summer holidays, as well as giving extra English lessons to students early every morning, Mohan had been busy designing useful wallcharts and putting these up in the classrooms, along with posters and wallcharts brought from Kathmandu. Teachers have been encouraged to put the children's drawings up on the walls and now the classrooms are much more cheerful, despite the shabby walls.



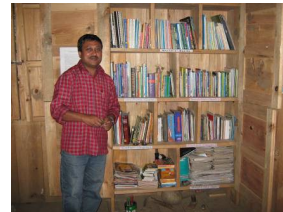
Ram teaching maths to class 9



Class 1 and their teacher, Nira Kumari Rai

Since last year, classes 9 and 1 have been split. So many of class 1 children are under 6, that a class of 'KG' or kindergarten has been set up with 57 children. The remaining 38 children form class 1. Class 6 will be split after the Dashain holiday, when an additional classroom becomes available in a new classroom block that is being built on the land acquired earlier in the year.

The books in the library were rearranged. Teachers' books, Nepali and English, fiction and non-fiction were clearly labelled for easy access. More dictionaries are needed, as well as a request for more story books in English. Class 10 students were introduced to using dictionaries and encouraged to use them to increase their word power. English is a third language for many students. Most children arrive at school unable to speak Nepali, having learned Rai, Tamang, or Newar in their homes.



Mohan and the 'new look' library



Class 6 (73 students) drawing

An art competition (classes 6 to 10) took place. Students were given the theme of 'My home' and drew pictures of their home, school and national symbols. Cards are to be made of some of the winning entries and pictures drawn at Garimudi Secondary School as a fund-raising idea. Some pictures are also being sent to a school in Arizona, London and Abu Dhabi where students have penfriends.



Arunjit roasting coffee beans over the fire

Arunjit Rai was busy roasting the last of this year's crop of coffee beans. More coffee was taken to Kathmandu for sale to raise money for the school. So far the coffee sold has funded the purchase of over 400 exercise books, 250 pens, colour pens, crayons and pencils.

This coffee is fine quality Arabica that sells at a better price in Kathmandu than at the local market. Arunjit has planted more coffee, which in a couple of years should start producing beans.

#### Plans for the coming term:

- Split class 6;
- Allocate one primary teacher per class rather than having different teachers for each subject;
- Extra maths, English and science classes for class 10 to prepare for SLC;
- Send dictionaries and English books for the library and classroom use;
- Volunteer from the UK coming in January to help at the school.

#### Adult literacy programme



Bhoj Raj Karki teaching numbers

Over 20 classes throughout Deusa are being run every morning from 6am to 8am to teach adults reading and writing. This project is being run by the Young Star Club and is teaching over 300 adults. One of the volunteer teachers from Deusa Secondary School is running a class near to the school.

A donation of some exercise books and pencils was made and some wall charts will be sent from Kathmandu.

#### Healthpost

Dev Kumari Rai, the nurse sponsored by a doctor from the UK arrived in June to run the healthpost. Open every day except Saturdays, 100 to 150 patients a month visit. Since she started, a dozen babies have been born. Dev, a qualified midwife reported all went through with no problems. Within the constraints of limited medicines, remoteness from decent medical care and ignorance – many problems could be avoided (hygiene, smoky atmosphere in the home, infections etc), Dev copes with a multitude of minor health problems. The function of the healthpost is more as a 'first aid station' and point of referral to the hospital, a day's walk away at Phaplu, which then invariably refers patients to Kathmandu.



Dev Kumari and some of her patients



Healthpost

Dr Sonia Basson visited the healthpost in August to give Dev Kumari some training and support which was much appreciated. Roger Ray gave valuable assistance in organising running water from the nearby standtap to the healthpost, so that a sink and running water could be put in the examination room, as well as running water to the toilets outside. Most homes in this village do not have toilets and there is a problem of ignorance in their use. Previously blocked, with running water and guidance, it is hoped that they will function properly now.

Some medical supplies will be sent from Kathmandu in the next few weeks, as the healthpost is short of bandages and material to treat wounds.

#### Further projects:

- Collect children's clothes in Kathmandu to send for the winter, as many children have no warm clothes;
- Teacher for lower secondary school (8 classes but only 7 teachers) and more teachers especially at primary level in the feeder primary schools;
- Primary level teacher at Deusa Secondary School to improve quality of primary teaching;
- Jalim Devi Primary School is looking for about £1,000-£1,500 for reconstruction of 2-3 classrooms that have collapsed;
- Deusa Secondary School need a hostel to accommodate students who currently walk 2-3 hours each way to school;
- More books, stationary and teaching materials are always needed.