

Instead of a travel report in the Corona year 2021

Dear members and donors,

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, again I cannot visit our project in Nepal this year. The DZI has agreed to the suspension for another year. This time, however, I must first report on the Donkey Initiative as an Association. The Donkey Initiative has become a victim of cybercrime. Your donations are not affected by this. However, we had to close the donation account and open a new one.

Cybercrime

Since April 2021, we have been receiving remittances from people who did not want to donate to our project but wanted to invest money through an investment advisor. In doing so, they have fallen into the clutches of a group of perpetrators operating from abroad, who are accused of cybertrading fraud. Why the money ends up in our bank account is completely unclear. It happens without our knowledge or intervention.

To date, we have received about 340 such transfers, which we book and deposit separately. When the first aggrieved party came forward in July, our treasurer took all necessary steps to refund the money to the aggrieved party, retroactively checked other similar deposits by complete strangers and filed a report with the criminal investigation unit of the police in Bonn. In addition, she contacted various other police stations and headquarters, the public prosecutor's office in Bamberg and the public prosecutor's office in Bochum because similar cases are being investigated there. We immediately informed the DZI, changed the message on our answering machine and put information on our website that those affected should contact us. The advantage that the investment fraudsters derive from this matter is not yet clear to us, as no money has been illegally debited from our account so far. However, apart from a lot of additional work (bookkeeping, but above all research), we are facing increased costs for refunds and for legal advice. We cover all additional expenses through membership fees, donations continue to go 100% into the project.

Injured parties have filed charges against us without first consulting us, and in order to do everything we can to prevent further damage to people, we have closed the donation account and opened a new one. This is the only measure that will stop the fraud, at least for a while, but it jeopardises one of the purposes of our association: collecting donations for the project in Nepal. If you would like to continue donating, please ask us for the new bank details. We are deliberately not putting bank details on the homepage for the time being and are also only sending the circular to a much smaller circle than usual. The perpetrators have not been caught yet, and we want to prevent abuse of the new bank details. You can pass on the new bank details to friends, colleagues, relatives etc., but we ask you not to put it online and not to display the info letter publicly.

Corona in Nepal

I was very much hoping to see the many mothers and greenhouses in Upper Dolpa this year, but the delta variant of the coronavirus is spreading rapidly in Nepal, despite weeks of lockdown. So far, 21% of the people in Nepal have been vaccinated, but whether any, or if so, how many, have been vaccinated in the remote high mountain regions I do not know. I would not get a travel permit for such a remote region at the moment. The hospitals are completely overloaded, the situation is chaotic. Very many infected people die. The official figures only show the tip of the iceberg, as people in remote areas and the many many poor people have hardly any opportunities to get tested and treated. Some infected people travel 500 km to get medical treatment. In May 2021, the government of Nepal made an urgent and very impressive appeal for help to the international public, especially to Great Britain and the G7. For a long period now, Nepal (total population approx. 29 million) has had over 8,000 registered new infections per day, and the number of unreported cases is very high.

The project for single mothers in the Himalayas

Despite Corona, Sahayog Himalaya Nepal has completed 79 more greenhouses in Upper Dolpa, which was extraordinarily difficult. This means that all single mothers from Upper Dolpa who had been selected have now received their greenhouse.



Sark – without a greenhouse, the only all year vegetable, but in high mountain regions like Upper Humla it can grow in the open only for about two months. In the greenhouse it thrives all year round.

Saput Schechschen, Laxmi's most experienced staff member, has gone to Nepalgunj several times this year and has tried to travel from there to Upper Mugu and Upper Humla to select single mothers for the allocation of greenhouses. He has spent a total of almost three months

in Nepalgunj, but the onward journey has failed each time. As I write this letter to you, Laxmi and Saput are once again trying to organise Saput's trip to Humla so that the mothers to be selected can start the groundwork for their greenhouses before the frost sets in. That would speed up construction a lot in the coming year. Saput should also clarify on site whether we can use bamboo instead of wood for the roof construction, because bamboo would probably be easier to get from the lower altitudes.



In the greenhouse you can also harvest courgettes, cucumbers, tomatoes, cabbage, beans, herbs and many other things over many months, even cherry tomatoes, for which guest houses pay a very high price. Sark can be grown in the greenhouse even in winter.

We have transferred 600,000 € to Sahayog Himalaya Nepal this year. On 20/8/2021 we again received an exemption certificate from the German tax office (i.e. we can issue donation receipts). Anyone who would like children's books, postcards, the 2019 Humla trip report, the slide presentation, or the exhibition, please get in touch. The board has decided to continue using the existing info materials and send them out with a note about the new bank details. This is much cheaper than reprinting everything.