

School Lunch Project

In 2018, the Nepalese government decided to progressively establish a school lunch program for children from kindergarten to grade 8. The objective was to initiate the program in a few districts, then to expand it to the whole country. In 2023, all school children up to the 6th grade now benefit from this program.

In Nepal, almost all families with a medium or high revenue send their children to small private schools. If these schools are too far from their home, parents will often lodge their youngsters, for the school term with a member of their family: an uncle, aunt or grandparents who live near the school. Where roads are passable, sometimes children will be transported by bus.

Contrary to what happens in Quebec, children who attend public primary schools are almost all from poor or marginalized families, some even living below the poverty line. This means that it's difficult for some families to supply a uniform, paper and pencils and lunches.



Thus, to encourage school attendance, the Nepal government program consists, amongst other things, in supplying 15 rupees/day/student. Normally, the school manages these funds, allowing it to offer lunch, often prepared by the janitor or else a parent living nearby, who cooks a meal and brings a large pot to the school at lunchtime.



The menu varies from day to day and corresponds to a 'light meal', for example rice seasoned with *tsiura*, cooked eggs and hard biscuits, ramen-style noodles, etc.

Having visited a number of schools in February 2023, I was able to observe the roll-out of lunch. This is an excellent measure, which is already showing positive

results, according to the

teachers. Before this program, only some of the students arrived with a lunch while others left school on an empty stomach, sometimes before the end of the school day.

This program is alleviating many problems. All the children eat the same menu and can finish the school day without suffering from hunger.

3.2 million Nepalese children benefitted from this program in 2023. However, the allotted amount of 15 rupees per student (15 cents CAD) being minimal, local governments or NGO's are solicited to increase it.

Quebec is not free from this same problem. The Breakfast Club indicates that there are children from here who need help. There's sometimes talk of offering a meal to all youngsters in Quebec schools. It's not an easy problem to solve.

In Nepal, the program for a light lunch instituted by the government truly meets the needs of children in public schools who come from low-income families. Bravo to the government for this positive initiative! ✨

Michèle Legault



A Word from the President

December 2023

Hello Everyone!

CQN has had a busy autumn preparing two great projects: one for potable drinking water and the second for schools.

During my visit to the villages in February 2023, I could see the effect of inflation on the poorer populations. The cost of food and the cost of bus travel, for example, pressed families into more and more precarious conditions. This year, our school project takes into account this reality.

In the field, we were accompanied by three young people aged from 30 to 40 from the Damai community. Ratna and Umesh are secondary school teachers while Rita is now Director of the Chetana school. Ratna, SPSWO secretary, is responsible for purchases, Umesh is responsible for the distribution of material in the field and Rita, who lives in the Damai community, will head a special aid project for 20 students from this community. (See the details in the Projects article.)

Despite laws that attempt to eliminate discrimination towards people from lower castes, differences continue to be seen on both economic and social levels.

An extra helping hand this year would be of major assistance to twenty young people from this community. In fact, it's due to the fact that they received outside help that the three young people responsible for our programs have become important models for their community.

On a more planetary note, the secretary of the UN, António Guterres, recently visited Nepal for the umpteenth time to warn the entire world about climate change. In fact, it is easy to see the glaciers retreating all over Nepal. The visuals support his words.

« The consequences will be massive in this region of Asia », he warned us. What more can you say? The ball is in our camp, that of rich countries who produce this infamous CO₂ in excess. It is our politics, our capacity to limit negative actions, that could also assist people of little means on the other side of the globe. Thank you, Mr. Guterres. ✱



Michèle Legault

CQN Board of Directors

The 2023-2024 CQN Board of Directors is composed of (left to right):

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CLIMATE CHANGE

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL: “I AM HERE TODAY TO SHOUT OUT FROM THE ROOFTOP OF THE WORLD ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE”

Climate change is gathering attention as one of the most pressing environmental issues worldwide. The Head of the UN (United Nations), Secretary General António Guterres visited Nepal from October 29th to November 1st, on a mission to

raise awareness around the globe about climate change. “I am here today to shout it out from the rooftop of the world: Stop the madness. The glaciers are retreating, but we must not”, he said. He is worried about Nepal losing almost a third of its ice volume in 30 years, with glaciers melting 65 % faster in the last decade than in the previous one.

He called upon the world to act now to protect people on the frontline and to limit the global rise in temperature to avert a disastrous climate scenario. He added that with rising global temperatures due to climate change, compressed glacial snow over centuries is melting faster than ever - not only in the Himalayas, but also in crucial areas such as Antarctica and Greenland.



UN Secretary-General António Guterres visits Syangboche in Solukhumbu district, Nepal.



Mr. Guterres warned that in the future, major Himalayan glacial rivers like the Indus, the Ganges and Brahmaputra could have a massive reduction in

their flow and, in combination with saltwater, could decimate delta regions and hence exacerbate the challenges of local subsistence.

Low-lying countries and communities are more vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and they are in grave danger of being destroyed. Millions of people are on the move and competition for water and land is fierce with floods, droughts and landslides accelerating worldwide.

Knowing that almost 84% of the world’s energy is produced by burning fossil fuels, which release massive quantities of carbon dioxide and many other harmful substances, polluting the air and causing a rise in temperature, he concluded by emphasizing the need to end the fossil fuel age so as to protect people on the frontlines of destruction caused by climate change. *



Barsha Lamichané



Projects to Finance

Water Project for three villages (GRACE Nepal)



This project is not new but rather the continuation of a project that began in 2020 and was implemented in several stages (see our Newsletter #22). It was initially intended for a single village. However, over time, it was modified to include two neighbouring villages in order to provide water in quantity and quality for 132 houses, instead of the original 27. During the first stages of the project, two intake tanks, a reservoir tank for the village of Masrangi and another one for its school were built. A portion of the pipeline between Masrangi and Majuwa were installed and materials were distributed so that each house could build its own tap stand.

Unfortunately, the water system, as it presently exists, is not sufficient for water to reach all of the houses. The Construction Committee therefore decided to add a second water intake belonging to the village of MasrangiTar. MasrangiTar is ready to share its water source in exchange for the construction of taps for its 32 houses.

This last phase of the project will improve the intake at the Mulkhola river (second water source), build 32 tap stands for MasrangiTar, improve the pipeline and replace the old reservoir tank in the village of Majuwa.

Project cost: \$12,760 *

2023-2024 School Project (SPSWO)

Since the very beginning, CQN has supported schools in the Roshi rural municipality with various programs. The objective is to allow children from poor families attend school. The present project will provide 1) basic school materials (paper and pencil program and school bags), 2) warm clothes for the winter months, 3) a snack program for the 6th grade (given that the government is only providing funds up to grade 5) and 4) extra help for students from the Damai (Dalit) community by providing food and tuition (tutoring).



Project cost: \$9,180 *

Anna Van Ermenagen

A heartfelt thank you to all our sponsors and donors

Ongoing Projects

Enhancing access to basic education for children of marginalized communities (GRACE Nepal)

Eight schools are presently benefiting from this project (the April 2023 – April 2024 school year). The objective is to permit children from deprived and marginalized communities to go to school by distributing school supplies. These children, from 5 to 11 years old, come from poor families that lack the financial resources to pay the various fees. This project provides children with school bags and various educational materials (for reading, writing, etc). *



Purchase of equipment for schools and the Community Centre (SPSWO)



The objective of this project is to purchase equipment that will be shared by the Syauri Community Center (once it is built), the Chetana Secondary School and smaller neighbouring schools, along with 3 Youth Clubs.

The project consists of the purchase of a projector, a laptop with keyboard and mouse, a white board, a sound system, a

kitchen table, a big tent that will be used to hold different activities outside and two metal boxes to store the tent when it is not being used, given that there is a rat problem in the villages. *



Anna Van Ermengen



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