



Next Generation Nepal

## NGN Newsletter

May 2007

### Dear Friends of NGN,

In May we went back into the mountains to search for the parents of trafficked and conflict-displaced children. The previous few months have focused on families closer to Kathmandu, the capital where NGN's children's home is based. The majority of these kids, however, are trafficked from villages, places with no roads leading in or out, buried deep in the hills and mountains of Nepal.

So this month we put on our backpacks and went out and found them ourselves. I found the families of seventeen children. My colleague, Farid Ait-Mansour, found another seven on a separate mission. We are doing what we promised these children we would do for them when we started one year ago.

Speaking of which, **NGN has its one year birthday party/fundraiser in New York City on June 21<sup>st</sup>!**

Contact us by email and we'll send you an invite, or check our website for updates! Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Conor Grennan  
Executive Director  
Next Generation Nepal



Conor, sitting together with one of the families we found after several days of searching.

## NGN mission locates families of 17 children in northern Nepal

For ten days in May, our three-man NGN team trekked over the hills and mountains of Nuwakot district, the rural valley north of Kathmandu, to search for the parents of trafficked and conflict-displaced children. We never stopped moving, sometimes hanging on for dear life on the roof of a rickety old bus, but mostly we were on foot – down the



To find families in the remote district of Nuwakot, our team traveled on roofs of buses....

steeply terraced hills of spring corn and up the other side, walking an entire day just to reach a village of one of our children. There is no easy way to get to the remote villages of Nepal; there are very few paved roads and fewer vehicles, and nothing to do but simply hike up a mountain until you reach the village, then pray you can find the family.



And we did find them, though it was no easy task. The Nuwakot Valley is extremely poor and physically isolated despite

...and on foot across the steeply terraced valleys.

the fact it is adjacent to the urban sprawl of the Kathmandu Valley.

Rough dirt roads are slowly being carved into the hillsides, hewn out by hand by villagers and often swept away again during the monsoon.

Our first day in Nuwakot, we traveled as far as we could on a series of local buses, clinging to the side of a mountain, the driver coaxing our overloaded bus around hairpin turns. We took the road until it ended, then spent the night in a small village, where we picked up our porter, a man familiar with the region and the character of the people. Together, our team set off early the next morning to the village of Nuchhet. Nuchhet, according to our profiles, was home to one child in our care. Talking to the villagers

and going through the profiles and photos, however, we soon discovered there were in fact *five* children from the village.



While the men of the village gathered around us examining the photos and profiles, a woman carrying a huge basket of greenery on her back for her buffalos walked past. One of the men, a village elder stopped her, then took the photo from my translator, Sushil, and held it out. He called to her.

**Meeting a mother on her way back from working in the field, we told her we had news of her son...**

“This man has your son,” he told her, nodding at me.

She seemed to not understand at first what they meant. She had not seen her son in four years. She put down the basket, took the photo from him, a photo taken just days earlier of her now much older son, stared at it for a full minute, then broke down in tears.



**...and showed her the first photo of her son she had seen in years.**

Even within the same village, we found very different stories; each case was unique. In one instance, we met a father who had just visited his

children two weeks earlier – he was not even very poor by local standards. Ironically, his neighbor’s children, who had left a year later and since been lost to their family, were living in the same house as his own children; the families were never able to make the connection. When we discovered this, they were stunned, and grateful.



**Finding families with little information meant asking everyone you met. This man turned out to be the uncle of the two little girls in the photo.**

Like so much of the country during the decade-long civil war, Nuwakot district was

completely under Maoist control. It forced parents to seek desperate solutions for their children, sending them away with virtual strangers to the overcrowded sprawl of the capital city of Kathmandu. Children were then passed off to other strangers, while parents in the villages had no hope of knowing what was happening. As the child was moved around, the parents lost contact and were cut off from their child for good.



**Children in the village begin working in the fields at a very young age.**

When we arrived in a village, we were often (in a very real way) bringing a child back to life. At the same time, we

located parents who were once thought deceased. We found two mothers and one father who our profiles listed

as deceased. But the news was not always positive. In several cases, we found that a parent had passed away, the other one had left the village, and a grandmother was the only relative left. In that case, while it may prove



**This grandmother was the last surviving family member of the child – thanks to NGN both child and grandmother have a family again.**

impossible to bring a child back to live in his village under such difficult conditions, we consider reestablishing that bond between child and family absolutely essential, a basic right of a child, and well worth the effort it took to reach the village and find the family.

On this trip, we put a special emphasis on visiting the local schools, speaking with the teachers, and ensuring that our children will be able to continue their education



**The NGN team personally inspected the school in each village to ensure a returning child could continue his or her education.**

when they return. In most cases, we found the schools not only open, but

fully staffed up to Class 10, which meant children could return to their families without sacrificing the opportunity to get an education. These are children that can, and will, return to their mothers and fathers.



## ...And a second NGN team finds 7 more families in central Nepal

Just days after I returned with my team from the Nuwakot district, my colleague Farid Ait-Mansour, with whom I started this organization, left for a separate mission, trekking into the mountains north of the town of Pokara, the tourist gateway to the Himalayas, and managed to locate another seven families.



Farid's translator speaking with one of the families they found. The father was thrilled to learn about his missing son – we are working to reunite them.

The story behind the trip was quintessential Farid. He was supposed

to be on holiday, his first since arriving in November 2006 – he intended to go trekking. Instead, he printed out photos and profiles of seven children from that region, hired a guide who knew the area and could serve as a translator, and went far off the beaten path into remote villages to find the families of the children under our care and the care of our fantastic local partner organization, the Umbrella Foundation, who look after 300 children in Kathmandu.

He trekked in similarly difficult conditions as my trip to Nuwakot. Except for the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal is almost universally undeveloped, and reaching even one village is exhausting.



Another mother of one of the boys of the Umbrella Foundation, making flour in front of her house.

In both Pokara and Nuwakot, we used the methodology we

developed over the last several months. Farid did an in-depth interview with the parents to determine the exact history of the child, who took the child, and where the child was taken to determine as accurately as possible the exact history of the child. From there, these interviews help us evaluate the security of the village and the economic conditions of the family to determine their ability to support their child.

To date, we have found the parents of 48 children, young children who had been trafficked years ago or displaced by the conflict and cut off from their families. But we can do find the families of more children. *Your support is the only way we can make these trips for the children!*



Farid taking photos of the children of Dhaulagiri House in preparation for a mission to locate their parents in the remote areas of Nepal.



## NGN reunites 2 brothers with their family

We never get tired of reporting that children are going home with their parents. In May, two young brothers, Deelay and Navaraj, went back to live with their own family. Their family live in Kathmandu, but were simply too poor to support them.



The Umbrella Foundation rescued them and brought them into their orphanage. Together we have found a solution where we can support them in their own home with their own mother and little sister. Those days of bringing children home are some of the best days we experience here!

Navaraj, the younger brother, getting a traditional blessing as he leaves the orphanage.

## Meet NGN's kids

At the center of our work will always be the 26 children of Dhaulagiri house – even with our long working days and seven day weeks, there is nothing better than taking a few hours each day to be with the children. Here are a few of them:

**Barke.** Barke Buddha is a famous kid, and it's not because he usually dresses like Spiderman. Farid and I first found Barke on the street in February 2006; before we could get him into an orphanage he was taken by child traffickers. It took us ten months to find and rescue him, but rescue him we did. You can read his story in the February newsletter on the NGN website.



**Nisa.** Nisa is perhaps the most mature 8 year old you will ever meet – it is a product of her having to look after her 6 year old sister, Beki after they were taken from their parents. She sneakily does Beki's homework and comes up with rather ingenious reasons how Beki could have done it so perfectly herself. She speaks a bit of English and thinks of herself as the translator for the littlest children.

**Bimala.** Bimala is about 11 years old, and works very hard to set a proper lady-like example for the younger ones. She always makes sure her hair is as perfect as can be, always wears a dress, and can often be caught checking out her reflection. Like all the kids, though, all it takes is the slightest provocation – a tug on her hair usually does the trick – and she will chase you around the field for hours, dress billowing behind her.



## Save the Date: NGN's First Birthday/ Fundraiser:

### June 21<sup>st</sup>, New York City!!!

More details at [www.nextgenerationnepal.org](http://www.nextgenerationnepal.org)

## How you can help the kids...

NGN relies solely on donations from the public to support our operations.

We operate on a **tight budget**, but we hope you have seen that a little can go a long way!

### Some sample costs:

- Basic **food** for one child for one month: \$20
- Basic **medicine** and hospital check-ups for one month for ten children: \$150
- The **full yearly cost** of supporting a child (including all food, school fees, school books, clothes, medicine, local staff, etc): \$750
- A **four-week mission to find parents** of trafficked children, including airfare to remote regions and local staffing costs: \$2500

There is no minimum or maximum donation – every dollar helps!

## Donating is easy and tax-deductible:

**Online:** Donate securely using your credit card via Paypal by visiting [www.nextgenerationnepal.org](http://www.nextgenerationnepal.org).

**By check:** Please make your check payable to “Next Generation Nepal” and mail to:  
1 Wing Road  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Please visit [www.nextgenerationnepal.org](http://www.nextgenerationnepal.org) to learn more about our organization and sample costs, or contact us directly at [nextgenerationnepal@gmail.com](mailto:nextgenerationnepal@gmail.com).

**Thank you for your continued support!**