



MAHADEVI_{e.V.}

Alphabetisierung und Bildung
für Frauen in Nepal

Mahadevi aktuell – December 2025

Dear members and friends of VereinMahadevi
e.V.,

One of Bob Dylan's most famous songs is called "The Times They Are A-Changing." This motto applies to many areas of life and the world—and, of course, to us as an association. There have been changes in our work in Nepal and also in the board of directors.

But first things first.

What has been happening in the Mahadevi Project over the last six months?

Gitte Spieth and Detlef Gründel conducted an evaluation of the sewing courses in the Mahadevi Project, designing questionnaires, having them completed, and then analyzing the results. Among other things, they asked the sewing students about their short-term and long-term goals.

The result:

The students were very satisfied with the skills they had acquired and felt well prepared for the job market. Of the 14 women, 11 had their own sewing machine (!). After completing the course, 10 women were interviewed. Only one woman was unemployed.

Last year, we set up a medical fund:

The individual support was very well received. Unfortunately, however, it also led to envy among the women. That is why the project was stopped. Instead, as part of our Friday activities, we offer medical check-ups and consultations by medical professionals, which benefit all women equally.

The project "Promoting Gifted Women" in an apprenticeship or secondary school is being continued.

There were five interested women, but they did not accept the offer due to time constraints. Behind these rejections lie massive economic reasons. The economic pressure in Nepal continues to be so immense that many women have to take on short-term jobs as day laborers in order to help support their families.

The good work of the Mahadevi School and the sewing school is mainly thanks to Beena, who enables consistently good work through her personal and warm contact with the students and teachers.

Anupendra and Beena's proximity to the school and the daily needs of the adult students is what has made this project so successful over the years.

The Friday activities are important for the women's community, and the excursions are enriching, as most of them would not have the opportunity to take part in such activities in their everyday lives.

What has been happening in our mountain schools over the last six months?

Saraswati School in Valche Gaun: Since 2018, around 50 women have been taught in literacy courses. The teacher reports that there are currently only four to five students left, and even they do not attend regularly due to household chores, children, or work in the fields. The teacher has tried to recruit new students, but without success. It seems that our services have been exhausted in this small village – all interested women have been able to take advantage of our courses over the past 7 years.

With a heavy heart, we have to close the school on December 31, 2025.

There may be a need in a nearby mountain village. Our local contacts are currently looking into this possibility. The school furniture and all other equipment could then be moved there.

There was also no longer any need for the **Saraswati sewing school**. In February 2025, it moved to Nupchet, where the Laxmi literacy school has been located since 2020.

Nupchet: Laxmi School

Teacher Mrs. Remika Tamang reports that her students are highly motivated, with 10-15 students typically attending classes. Sometimes up to 20 women come to class.

Here, too, the number fluctuates occasionally, but at a higher level than at the other two schools. The Laxmi School can continue to operate with a clear conscience.

Laxmi Sewing School

The sewing school was opened after the move on March 1, 2025. There are two courses with approximately 14 students each. The clothing produced is given to the women for a small fee. This income is used to purchase sewing supplies. Some women have already started their own businesses with their own sewing machines at home. Six former students are already running a small sewing shop!

Salme: Parvati School

The school has been in existence since 2024. Only a few women still attend. This is partly due to the very long distances the women have to travel. We are currently looking into whether there are more suitable premises. Otherwise, the school will have to close at the end of March 2026.

Farewell to Barbara Erhardt and Reinhold Keller

After 10 years of service, Barbara Erhardt is no longer standing for election as secretary. Many thanks for her consistently thoughtful and precise work, not only in discussions at meetings and in the minutes of meetings. She has also very often played an active role in the association's events. She received a gift basket as a token of our appreciation. Barbara will continue to be actively involved in the association's advisory board.

Reinhold Keller is no longer standing for election as 1st chairman. He is a founding member of the association. Reinhold was the association's treasurer for 16 years, from 2007 to 2023. He helped build and develop the association. In 2023, he stepped down as treasurer and became 1st chairman. He now wishes to step back from the front line, but will continue to play an active role on the advisory board. The association owes Reinhold a great deal. Beate and Detlef presented Reinhold with a certificate of honorary membership and a gift for his many years of service and diverse contributions.

Elections: Election of 1st chairperson

No one is standing for election for the office of 1st chairperson. Beate Ternberger will take over the office of 1st chairperson on an interim basis for one year. According to association law, an association needs a 1st chairperson. The members at the general meeting on November 21, 2025, at the Schorndorf Family Center are unanimously in favor of this.

Many thanks to Beate for making herself available for this opportunity. This gives the association the chance to put a good succession plan in place within the next 12 months.

The division of tasks that has already been established and the support of the advisory board will ensure that the work continues smoothly.

Verena and Armin Lutz stand for re-election as treasurers and are unanimously elected for a term of two years.

Christiane Riedel stands for election as secretary and is unanimously elected for two years.

Many thanks to everyone for their support in their voluntary roles.

We held a number of events during the reporting period. Worth mentioning is our participation in the village festival in Baltmannsweiler on July 20, 2025, where we successfully ran a stand selling goods from Nepal: handmade bags and bracelets made by the women from our Mahadevi School in Nakhipot/Pathan. There were also a number of goods from the One World Shop in Plochingen, one of our cooperation partners.

Our annual club hike on October 11 took us from Winterbach to Mannshaupten to the Thön Winery and back again—it was a lovely tour with several club members and supporters, planned and carried out by Beate Ternberger.

The concert on October 18 featuring music inspired by Pink Floyd performed by the band "Us and Them" at the Evangelical Community Center in Baltmannsweiler was an absolute treat for the ears! More than 70 audience members agreed and were thrilled. The event raised a significant amount of money for our schools, AND the band spontaneously agreed to perform for us again next year free of charge! Thank you in advance for this. We are also very grateful to the Protestant parish for providing us with the parish hall and kitchen free of charge.

What are your plans for the new year?

On March 21, 2026, as part of Esslingen Women's Week, there will be a chanson evening with Jeschi Paul and Heidrun Speck at the Begegnungskirche.

Another concert with Us and Them is planned for the fall, and at the end of 2026/beginning of 2027, we hope to be able to show the film by Anna Baranowski and Michael Moritz about their stay in Mongolia, probably again at the Manufaktur Schorndorf. Two years ago, the two showed their film "Namaste Himalaya" about their stay in Nepal during the coronavirus pandemic with great success.

We then hope to be able to stabilize our mountain schools for literacy in the village of Kispang Rural Municipality. We are confident about this.

In addition, the challenge of finding a new chairperson will arise in 2026. We are confident about this as well.

Our supporters:

We have reliable partners in the Georg Kraus Foundation, the Rotary Club Esslingen-Neckarland, and the Weltladen Plochingen, who provide us with reliable support for our schools and sewing courses. The Rotary Club Esslingen-Neckarland generously supports our literacy courses, while the Georg Kraus Foundation in Hagen i.W. supports our sewing courses. We are very grateful for this. The Weltladen Plochingen supports us with advice and assistance, allowing us to sell goods there or take goods on commission and sell them at events.

Members: We currently have 78 members, more than ever before.

We recently started selling a calendar we produced ourselves with photos from our trips to Nepal – perhaps as a Christmas or birthday present? What makes it special is that it is a perpetual calendar. It can be purchased for €10.

In Esslingen: Beate Ternberger at vorstand@verein-mahadevi.de, in Plochingen at the One World Shop, Marktstr. 30, or in Schorndorf via Reinhold Keller, info@verein-mahadevi.de.

Finally, on behalf of the board and the advisory board, I would like to wish you a peaceful Advent season, a wonderful Christmas, and a peaceful 2026 full of beautiful moments.

Reinhold Keller

"Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world." (Nelson Mandela)

If you no longer wish to receive the "Mahadevi aktuell" newsletter (which we regret), you can unsubscribe by sending an email to: info@verein-mahadevi.de.

Some photo-impressions for „Mahadevi News December 2025“



Farewell of Barbara Ehrhardt & of Reinhold Keller



Our booth at the village festival in Baltmannsweiler on July 20, 2025



Dashain Festival at Mahadevi School



Students at the sewing school in Niupchet enjoy their first successes



Concert with „Us and Them“ on October 18, 2025



Cover page and February page of our perpetual
Mahadevi calendar

Format 41x21cm, Cost €10

Our supporters and cooperation partners:

