

Dear members and friends of Mahadevi e.V.,

You received our last newsletter at Christmas 2024 – since then, many things have happened that are worth sharing.

A few days ago, some of the 14 participants reported on their trip to our schools in Nepal in April 2025. They said they were still processing their impressions of this other world, the conversations with the pupils and teachers, with our project supervisors in the Kathmandu Valley and in the mountain villages. They were also very impressed by the deep spirituality, the warmth, serenity and contentment of the people despite their often great poverty.

The question: Are we still doing the right thing? Everyone clearly answered YES! Without external impetus, women in particular would still have too few opportunities to lead a decent life in one of the poorest countries in the world. The gratitude of the students is immense, according to the tenor of the reports.

Enclosed is a report by Christiane Riedel, who is an active member of the association's advisory board and who took part in the 2 ½ -week trip, which was well prepared by Detlef Gründel and Robin Chamlin:

"On 17 April 2025, a 14-member travel group set off for Nepal. The group consisted of members and friends of the association Mahadevi e.V., which campaigns for education and literacy for women in Nepal. The age range was wide: two families ventured on the adventure with a total of four young people aged between 14 and 18, the senior had already passed the age of 70. The programme was put together by Detlef Gründel and realised together with his Nepalese partner Robin Chamlin. The first starting point was, of course, Kathmandu, which unfortunately lay under a thick haze these days. Here, as later in Patan and Bhaktapur, an interesting cultural programme awaited us, which was explained to us in detail by our German-speaking guide. Among other things, we visited Durbar Square, the ghats where the Hindus



**MAHADEVI –
Verein zur Förderung von
Frauenprojekten in Nepal e.V.**

Reinhold Keller, 1. Vorsitzender
Konnenbergstr. 10
73614 Schorndorf

Telefon: 07181 - 64 78 0
info@verein-mahadevi.de
www.verein-mahadevi.de

Bankverbindung

IBAN
DE05 6025 0010 0015 0415 66

Bank
Kreissparkasse Waiblingen

burn their dead and, of course, the great Buddha stupa. We were just as impressed by the culture as we were by the lively, lived and everywhere visible spirituality of the people. Countless larger and smaller temples and places of sacrifice characterise the cityscape and are heavily frequented.

Life takes place mainly outdoors, with people working, sewing, gossiping and trading. There is a lot of traffic on the streets, and we particularly noticed the many scooters. Most were occupied by 3-4 people, whole families were travelling through the city on them, although the helmet requirement obviously only applies to the driver. Traffic usually flows smoothly, all gaps are utilised. Often a policeman controls the traffic, there are hardly any traffic lights in Nepal. We also rarely saw road markings and crash barriers.

From Patan, we first visited the Mahadevi Women School, where we were warmly welcomed. The speech we gave in English and Nepali created a great atmosphere among the women, who spontaneously cancelled their lessons in favour of singing and dancing with us. The next day, we travelled to the mountain villages in 3 off-road vehicles to visit the other schools. The journey there to was an experience in itself. After a while, there were hardly any tarmac roads left, we often only made progress at walking pace and were really shaken up.

After 8 hours we reached Valche, about 80 kilometres away, where we received a very friendly welcome from Buddha Ghale and his wife. With our khatas, Nepalese welcome scarves, which we were given here at, we matched the colours of the Nepalese people's colourful clothing. It was not our first khata and there would be more to come. We were impressed by the simple but functional premises of the sewing and literacy schools, the gratitude of the women who can learn to read and write here and their creativity in dealing with the limited resources.

From here, we also went on our first short hike through the fascinating mountain world of Nepal and met our guide for the subsequent 5-day trekking tour. He was characterised by great calm and thoughtfulness, knew a lot about the country and its people, flora and fauna, customs and traditions and led us safely along the newly opened Tamang Heritage Trail. The weather played along well, mostly dry, but unfortunately mostly cloudy, so that we celebrated every view of the spectacular mountain giants.

We concluded the tour with a lavish party, which we celebrated with good food, music and dancing together with guides and porters, and travelled back towards Kathmandu - now by bus, but still over bumpy gravel roads and close to the edge of the precipice (without crash barriers). This was followed by three days of relaxation in a beautiful hotel complex.

On the return flight, we were then able to marvel at the full splendour of the Himalayan mountain range, as we were now also above the clouds. We landed safely in Frankfurt and all knew that this trip would leave a lasting impression."

You can find some photos on the extra sheets attached. Participants of the trip are expected to show their pictures in Esslingen and Schorndorf in autumn/winter. Details will be sent by email.



**MAHADEVI –
Verein zur Förderung von
Frauenprojekten in Nepal e.V.**

Reinhold Keller, 1. Vorsitzender
Konnenbergstr. 10
73614 Schorndorf

Telefon: 07181 - 64 78 0
info@verein-mahadevi.de
www.verein-mahadevi.de

Bankverbindung

IBAN
DE05 6025 0010 0015 0415 66

Bank
Kreissparkasse Waiblingen

We can look back on the past months of 2025 with satisfaction: our membership has grown to 75 people. Our work is supported by these members and financed with a fixed basic amount. We are also very grateful to have two generous sponsors on board: the [Georg-Kraus-Stiftung \(GKS\) in Hagen i.W.](#) and the [Rotary Club Esslingen-Neckarland](#). The GKS has been funding our sewing and tailoring courses since 2011, while the Rotary Club Esslingen-Neckarland has been supporting our literacy courses since 2024.



Thank you very much!

We have also been cooperating with the [Eine Welt Plochingen Association](#) for a number of years, whether through joint events at or through information exchange and sales.

In this context, we would like to draw your attention to a few events:

On Sunday, 20 July 2025, we will be taking part in the village festival of the community of Baltmannsweiler with an Information and Sales Stand. We can be found in the immediate vicinity of the Protestant church, selling goods from the One World Shop Plochingen and bracelets including bags made by the women of the Mahadevi School. We will be on site from 11.30 am to 7 pm and look forward to many visitors.



On Saturday, 11 October 2025, our traditional Club Hike will once again take place as a circular hike from Winterbach (11km) or from Holzberg Schorndorf (6km). The destination is Weingut Thön in Schorndorf-Mannshaupten, where we will have lunch together. Cordial invitation! Details will be sent out in a separate email.



**MAHADEVI –
Verein zur Förderung von
Frauenprojekten in Nepal e.V.**

Reinhold Keller, 1. Vorsitzender
Konnenbergstr. 10
73614 Schorndorf

Telefon: 07181 - 64 78 0
info@verein-mahadevi.de
www.verein-mahadevi.de

Bankverbindung

IBAN
DE05 6025 0010 0015 0415 66

Bank
Kreissparkasse Waiblingen

And: The Concert with 'Us and Them', which was unfortunately cancelled in spring due to illness, will be rescheduled! The date is 18 October 2025 from 7.30 pm in the parish hall in Baltmannsweiler. Don't miss it!

News from the schools:

Mahadevi MWEC/ Sewing School: Over the past few months, Gitte Spieth and Detlef Gründel have been collecting feedback from the students from the sewing and tailoring courses at the Mahadevi School via questionnaires. They were able to establish that the majority of participants want to learn sewing in order to find a job and earn money. Quote from the final report of 19 respondents from the current course on their plans after completing the course: *"Many of the respondents already had concrete plans for the time after the course: six participants wanted to open their own tailoring business, three planned to sew for friends or neighbours, while others wanted a sewing job or simply to earn money. Four people stated that they did not yet have any concrete plans."*

The situation of 10 graduates 3-6 months AFTER completing the course is also interesting: *"The majority of respondents are actually working as tailors after the course:*

- 5 people work in a tailoring business
- 1 person has set up her own tailoring salon
- 1 person works in a friend's boutique
- 2 people sew from home for others
- only 1 participant has not yet found employment as a tailor."

The entire survey, including the analysis, will soon be available on the association's website.

Saraswati sewing school in Bhalche Gaun: Due to a decline in the number of participants, the initiative of sewing teacher Ms Sanu Maya Tamang and our local cooperation partners made it possible for the Saraswati sewing school to move to the neighbouring village of Niupchet in February/March. The Laxmi literacy class has been located there since 2018. Here we were able to move into a beautiful room free of charge. The equipment from the previous sewing room was completely relocated. Here, too, the aim is to give the women a professional perspective. We know of 2 women who have set up their own small sewing shop.



**MAHADEVI –
Verein zur Förderung von
Frauenprojekten in Nepal e.V.**

Reinhold Keller, 1. Vorsitzender
Konnenbergstr. 10
73614 Schorndorf

Telefon: 07181 - 64 78 0
info@verein-mahadevi.de
www.verein-mahadevi.de

Bankverbindung

IBAN
DE05 6025 0010 0015 0415 66

Bank
Kreissparkasse Waiblingen

Last year, we set up a Medical Fund (Medfonds), which was generously supported by our donors. This has already enabled a number of women at the Mahadevi Centre to be treated: Grants for urgently needed medication, especially in the areas of high blood pressure and diabetes. However, this also gives rise to envy („Why does my neighbour get a subsidy for her medicine, but I don't?") For this reason, the Executive and Advisory Board have decided to focus the Medfonds on regular examinations and prevention events with doctors and trained staff as part of the Friday Activities. For example, the focus will increasingly be on examinations and checks or preventive check-ups, but also on topics such as health education or nutrition.

In this way, the financial resources should really benefit all participants equally. As a result, Anupendra and Bina, our head teachers, will no longer be confronted with discussions of envy and disfavour.

„When everyone helps to keep the sky high, no one gets tired.“
African proverb

With the request to stay with us, on behalf of the entire Executive Board and the Advisory Board, I would like to wish you a wonderful summer.

Best regards and Namaste,
Reinhold Keller



**MAHADEVI –
Verein zur Förderung von
Frauenprojekten in Nepal e.V.**

Reinhold Keller, 1. Vorsitzender
Konnenbergstr. 10
73614 Schorndorf

Telefon: 07181 - 64 78 0
info@verein-mahadevi.de
www.verein-mahadevi.de

Bankverbindung

IBAN
DE05 6025 0010 0015 0415 66

Bank
Kreissparkasse Waiblingen

Some photos of the Nepal trip in April 2025 by Katharina Kock



Women of the Laxmi-school in Niupchet in festive dress at the reception of the tour group in April 2025, in front 2nd from left the teacher Remika Tamang



View from the classroom in Niupchet at an altitude of 2000m to the south



The women of the Mahadevi School in Nakhipot/Lalitpur festively dressed during a joint excursion in the Kathmandu Valley, March 2025 (Photo: Anupendra Acharya).



The tour group with pupils and teachers at the MVEC in Nakhipot, April 2025



Parvati School in Salme, seated the mayor Binod Tamang, behind him on the right the teacher Bresh Maya Tamang



Dance preparations in front of the Laxmi School



Reception at the Saraswati Sewing Centre, which opened in March. Top centre: sewing teacher Sanu Maya Tamang. Next to her is our liaison officer in the mountain villages and co-organiser of the trip, Robin Chamlin



Bresh Mayu Tamang, (centre) teacher at the Parvati School in Salme with two pupils