



# CHILD ACTION NEPAL

## Newsletter No 14

October 2014

### Orphanages abusing children

Recently, we have seen more news about bad orphanages in Nepal. These are the types of orphanage our founder witnessed and why Child Action Nepal was established. Child rights experts estimate that there are about 500 registered 'homes' and 15,000 'orphans' in Kathmandu Valley alone. Sometime, the children have parents and are only portrayed as orphans to gain foreign donations. It's a hugely profitable, but highly unregulated sector. Many of the so-called 'orphans' have been lured away from poor families with promises of free care and education. Nepal's past unrest and continuing poor infrastructure led to thousands of families being made homeless with little to no support. Orphans and children abandoned by aged, sick or destitute relatives are still fending for themselves on the streets or are trapped in



the cycle of exploitation and abuse. Earlier, international adoption used to be the main source of revenue for these child care centres, but with countries like the US, UK, and Canada making it almost impossible for their citizens to adopt from Nepal, agents are squeezing as much money as they can from foreign volunteers and through child trafficking.



### Rashmi and Punam

Rashmi and Punam were born in a very remote area in Western Nepal. Their parents were farmers. They were not educated and worked hard to bring food back home. Their village is very remote, in a region where snow falls for four months each year and with no direct access by road. At the end of 2006, the village suffered a cholera epidemic and many people died as there was no hospital close by.

Although he was ill, Rashmi's father did not stop working as he had to feed his family. One day, he went to the jungle to get some wood for the fire and, as he did not come back, the villagers went to seek

Rashmi and Punam in April 2013, ready to go to school for sport day



him and found him unconscious on the ground. They brought him home, where he died the same day.

His wife was contaminated a few months later and died at the beginning of 2007, leaving Rashmi, 7, and her little sister Punam, 5, orphans. As their grand-parents had already died, their uncle took them in. He was already struggling with his own four children so he asked us to take care of Rashmi and Punam.

They joined LBU on May 2009. Rashmi started school in Upper Kinder Garden and Punam in Lower Kinder Garden. They are now both in class 7.



Rashmi and Punam in May 2009, when their uncle brought them to LBU



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### Healthcare: a major focus for our family

This year we spent more money on healthcare than usual. We are very careful with hygiene and nutrition so our children are healthy and full of energy. However, as they are growing up, some of them develop problems due to underlying genetic factors. First, it was our little Shila, who suddenly collapsed. We first thought she had fainted, but as she was not regaining consciousness, we took her to the emergency unit nearby. Her problem was actually psychological and she remained unconscious for 5 hours. In the following days she had even longer episodes and was hysterical at times. In the end, she stayed in hospital for a month. She is now back home and back at school but has daily medication and has to do yoga exercises to keep her level of stress down. At the same time, our Dalbir was also seriously ill with his kidneys and had to go to hospital for a few weeks and had to take medication which made him

Dalbir



Shila



Hari



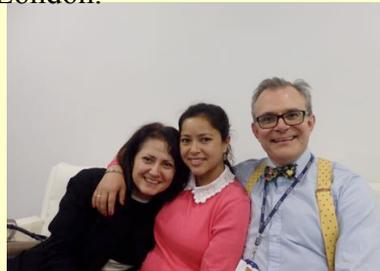
swell up. He is now back home but has to take medication every day and will need to be checked every 6 months during his whole life, because of the weakness of his kidneys. Finally, Hari had a serious ear infection and had to have an operation. It all went well but he has not yet recovered his full hearing capacity.

### Kalpana and Rolak in London



When she was seven years old, Kalpana suffered third degree burns over nearly half of her body, following an accident with boiling water. She then had many operations, which were more or less successful. She still had very deep scars disfiguring her upper body.

We wanted to help her and therefore contacted Dr David Gateley, a prominent plastic surgeon in London, who kindly accepted to operate on Kalpana for free and also covered the hospital costs. One of our trustees took care of flying Kalpana and our Manager, Rolak, to the UK. The operation was very successful and helped to rebuilt Kalpana's confidence. It was her first time outside Nepal, her first flight and first time she saw the sea. She and Rolak loved London.



### A very short holiday



In the cable car, on our way to the temple

This year we did not have enough funds left after paying the annual rent for the two homes so we decided not to spend money on the April holidays. However, the children had some good outings thanks to our trustees. They had a day out to go to the riverside resort and we also took the only cable car in Nepal to visit the famous Manakanama Temple. They also went to the movies and the swimming pool. Everybody was happy.



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### The first wedding at LBU

Since she was 12, Reshma, 22, always talked about being married and become a housewife. We managed to keep her focused on her studies until she passed her A-level. She gained a university place to study fashion design, but could not wait any longer to get married and asked her aunt to find her a husband. She was introduced to the eldest son of a family in Pokhara. He is living in Australia, where he is a cook in an Italian restaurant. Reshma and he talked over the phone or through Skype for three months before deciding to get married. Rolak and I would have preferred her to know her future husband for longer, but Reshma was determined. We visited her future in-laws to make sure that they will treat her well and that she will live in good conditions and then organised the wedding for the end of November. Reshma is now living with her in-laws in a nice flat in the centre of Pokhara. Her husband is back to Australia, but we hope



Reshma will be able to join him soon. In the meantime, she visits us often and we talk to her regularly over the phone.

### Our first Tihar in the new house

This year was our first celebrations in the new LBU1 house and there was plenty of space for our 36 children. Kalpana, as our eldest girl, prepared the ceremony for Bhai Tikka. All the boys sat on rugs we put on the basketball court, and the girls, wearing their best kurtas, blessed them with a special tikka. After the ceremony, we had a special lunch and rather than staying in the living room, which is a bit dark, the children took their plates and sat on the lawn in the sun. Usually, we distribute the gifts that day too, but the cargo arrived late and we did it one day later.



### A new Generator at LBU1

There are still up to 16 hours of power cuts a day in Kathmandu. This is in a country which has so much hydroelectricity capacity that it should be a net exporter. From 2002 to 2009 we were like any Nepalese household, using candles at night. In 2009, one of our volunteers raised funds which allowed us to buy a generator. After five years of intense use, it is breaking down all the time and is costing a lot of money to repair. Therefore we did an appeal to replace the generator this year. Our supporters responded with a lot of generosity and we have now a brand new generator with a bigger capacity. Below is the delivery of the new generator at LBU1.





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### Thank you being such good sport!

Last year, with the move to the new house and more children going to college, we had to dig deep into our reserves. Therefore we are really grateful for the supporters who chose CAN as a charity for their sport challenges. Harmeet ran the Marathon of the Medoc in Indian traditional costume, Sabina, Vinita, Dominic, Karl and Ravi (photo below) run the London 10k, Ben, Ross and Sam completed the 100 miles Prudential bike ride and trustee, fundraiser and sponsor Franco and my friend Marco are going to run the New York Marathon at the beginning of November, so do not forget to support them on <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/FrancoMancini> and <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/marcoderossi>.

If you are interested in running the London 10k for CAN next year, please do not hesitate to contact us as we have 6 places. We will also be happy to support you with your fundraising and provide you with material.



### Hot shower for LBU1 this winter

Our organisation is non-religious, our children are following the same religion as their parents, who were for the majority Hindu and/or Buddhist. Still we are very lucky to have the support of the Catholic church of Pfäffikon in Switzerland which donated us CHF 2,000 to buy a new solar panel for LBU1 and the Protestant church of Auriac in France, which has been supporting us for many years. This winter, our children will have hot showers.

### Sponsoring a child

Any donation is welcome and even £10 or £20 makes a difference. However, should you wish to sponsor a particular child and follow his/her progress as he/she grows up, the cost is £40 a month or £20 if you wish to co-sponsor a child with friends or family.

### Follow us on Facebook!

Please do not hesitate to write to us on Facebook. We are always interested in your comments and knowing how you are doing. Please also have a look at our website which is updated regularly and will give you all the information you need about our orphanage and our children as well as how to help us



As every year, we celebrated the New Year which is mid-April. We booked a large room in a nearby restaurant and took all our adolescents for dinner followed by hours of frantic dancing. All my girls were very excited preparing themselves with their best outfit, make-up and jewellery and they were really looking stunning. My boys were also very handsome and "cool". I was feeling very proud and lucky to have such beautiful children!

*Florence Krief*