

# Lifechanging experience in Nepal December 2019





# Arrival Tuesday December, 10th

On this day, most of the travel group participants are sitting on the plane and are on a long journey from Germany. Some of them change planes in Turkey, some in China and some in Doha, as there are no direct flights from Germany to Nepal. Damaris is the first person who arrives. She is the first guest to arrive on Tuesday at noon in the not yet opened Boutique Hotel in Kathmandu and is very warmly welcomed. A flower necklace is put around her neck according to an old tradition. The hotel is beautiful and does not look like a hotel, but more like a family farm with small individual buildings.

A few hours later, Yolna, the second guest, arrives. One of the two supervisors/professors, who, like all the other later arrivals, is warm and welcome. This beautiful part of Nepalese culture will always accompany everyone on this journey: heartily, open, cordial, and always concerned about the other's well-being. On this day, we will rest and arrive while the majority is still on the plane. There will be the first dinner together with the Nepalese hosts with typical Momos and later the legendary Dal Bhat in the evening.

Day 0



# Receive Wednesday December, 11th

A new day. By noon all participants and supervising professors have arrived at their accommodation in Kathmandu. Everyone moves into their room, is welcomed warmly with a traditional chain of student flowers; they rest and admire the surroundings.

Until dinner, the luggage is unpacked, and we get to know each other. During dinner in the glasshouse of the accommodation, where a tree was wonderfully integrated during construction, we get to know our guides for the next days, as well as the most important people involved in the FDEP. Together we had the traditional Nepalese Momos, a kind of dumplings, for the first time and afterward, Dal Bhat, lentil curry with rice and chicken, was served.

All this was cooked freshly before our eyes by the family of the accommodation. Roshan from the FDEP taught us how to eat correctly with our hands, as it is common here in Nepal. We had a charming, long evening together with great conversations.



Day 1



# Sightseeing Thursday December, 12th

Today a sightseeing tour was on the program. The destination of our tour were three temples in Kathmandu. With a minibus, we first drove to Pashupatinath (literally: «Lord of Life» or «Lord of all living things») - one of the holiest and most important temple sites of Hinduism in Nepal. Thousands of Hindus, who arrive from far away, worship Shiva as Pashupati («God of Life»). It is assumed that a holy place existed here already in pre-Christian times. The actual temple is only accessible to Hindus, but the outer temple is open to everyone.

On the way to the temple, there were some souvenir stalls with beautiful, handmade things. Already at the entrance of the temple complex, we met some monkeys. They were scattered all over the place. Hundreds of monkeys sat between the partly heavily damaged buildings and waited for someone to give them something to eat.

The temple district lies on the banks of the Bagmati River, which flows into the Ganges via the Koshi. As we approached the river,

our guide asked us if we would mind experiencing traditional cremation. This irritated us a bit. He told us that for many believers, this place has special meaning as a place for the «last rites» and that it is considered desirable to have one's body burned here. On the other side of the river, we could see a kind of pyre that had been lit. Many people were gathered around it, and there was a weeping to be heard. This was a very intense and emotionally moving moment for all of us. The subject of death is not so openly integrated into life in our western culture. It is largely repressed and presented as abstract and surreal. So the students of our group experienced this moment very differently. Some were in a sad mood and found the situation strange, others felt spiritually moved, and through the situation consciously turned towards life.

Later we learned that the corpses are carried to the stake on stretchers, mostly wrapped in yellow cloths. There the corpse is covered with damp straw. The pyre is lit near the head with a tuft of straw soaked in liquid butter. The family members of



Day 2





Day 2



the deceased remain nearby during the entire cremation. The whole ceremony lasts up to four hours. After the corpse is completely burned, the ashes and logs are pushed into the river. The river is murky and grey, and the idea that so many ashes flow in it and that hundreds of souls had their last rite at this place creates a devotional atmosphere. The rest of the temple complex radiates much peace and strength. Everywhere there are small temples for individuals where one can pray. You will also meet Sadhus, who cannot be missed because of their distinctive appearance. The colorfully painted and decorated men are wandering Hindu monks, who are considered holy men and live on alms from the population.

Next, we went to the biggest Stupa in Nepal - the Big Boudhnath. With its 40 meters in diameter and 36 meters in height, it is the largest Buddhist building in the world. This -2500year-old Stupa with its four painted pairs of eyes of Lord Buddha looks in all four directions. Countless colorful prayer flags flutter here in the wind, and it smells like incense sticks. Around the Stupa, there are circular monasteries and houses with many small shops.

Here you can get souvenirs of all kinds. Many pilgrims and tourists cavort here, go left around the Stupa, pray or turn at the prayer wheels. Music and singing can be heard. It is an enchanting place and through the life that could be felt there and the beautiful colorful splendor very contrary to the experience in the temple in front of it.

We were driven to the Svayambhunath Temple. This temple is also called «Monkey Temple» and lives up to its name. It is already dark, and there are monkeys all over the temple. This temple also plays a central role for the Buddhists. From a hill above the city, the eyes of Buddha look over the Kathmandu valley. Three hundred sixty-five steps led up the hill to the Stupa. From there, we had an unbelievably beautiful view of the illuminated city. A beautiful, intensive, but also an exhausting day full of impressions lies behind us.



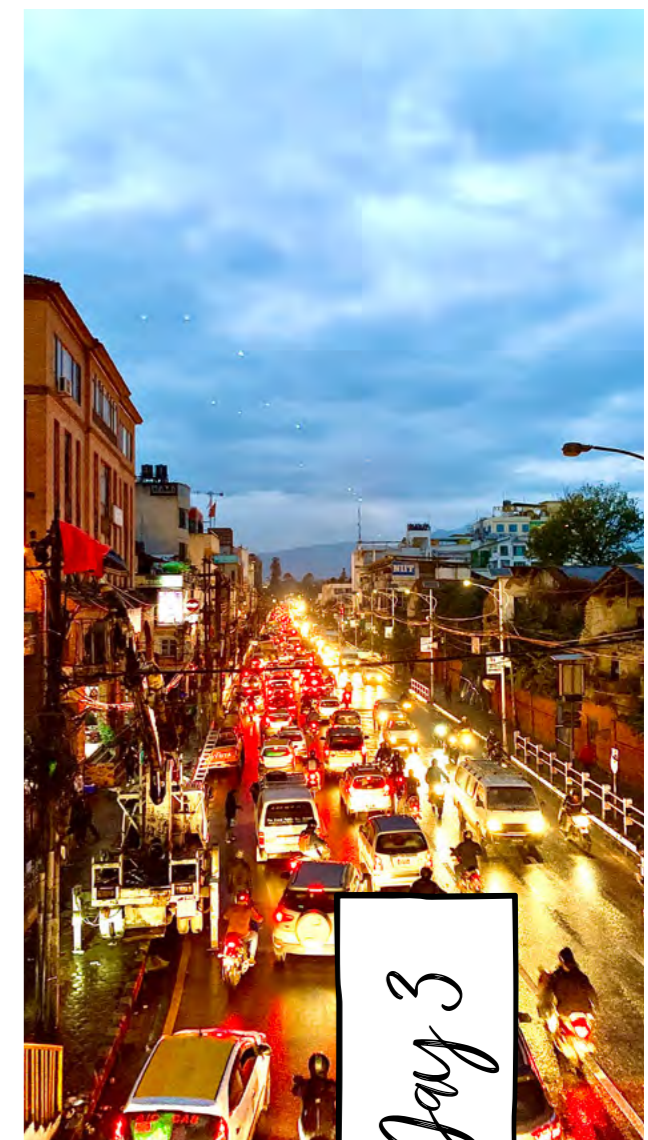




# Youtube & SchooTime December, 13th

On the third day, we were invited to the Nepalese YouTube channel Kendrabindu Creation in the morning. Yesterday we were surprised about the high curbs, but today's weather allowed them to fulfill their purpose. In spite of the rain we walked and got to know the Nepalese traffic. For an outsider European who is used to traffic lights, it is the sheer insanity to cross a road. There are no marked road markings, and if there are, very few people follow them. The pedestrians' right of way at a crosswalk does not exist. And although it may seem chaotic to us, the Nepalese system works. Because of the Nepalese show consideration for each other. They don't insist on their own right, and they don't do anything out of principle to educate their counterpart. So if a pedestrian decides to cross the road, the car drivers show consideration and brake. This consideration has impressed me very much, the more incomprehensible for me the division of the Nepalese society into castes. We questioned exactly this state of affairs on the YouTube channel and received the surprising answer that

castes are not a problem in Nepal. Also, during our subsequent visit to K&K International College, we were told that the caste system was a problem in the countryside rather than in the urban area. These statements underline the first impressions of Nepal as an open, colorful, and friendly country, and I want to trust them, but the end of the day makes me doubt their credibility because we had tea in a shop right next to the school. A little girl of elementary school age cleared the guests' dishes there. We gave her attention and sweets. She was very surprised that we were dealing with her. Her question to us, which caste we would belong to, throws a completely different light on the statements in our official appointments. Much more, the castes seem to be digging much bigger trenches than expected. Especially after these experiences, I am sure that our topic Equality will cause a lot of discussion at the Future Festival and I am looking forward to this exchange.



Day 3





Day 4

# Future Festival December, 14th

The most important day of our Nepal trip begins, and we excitedly walk to the venue in the morning to take a deep breath and arrive decelerated - if that is possible, in Nepalese traffic. Having arrived, we hang up our posters in the courtyard of the Nepal Tourism Board, where the Future Festival 2019 will take place. We look for a few decorative objects and use them to build our innovative stand. Then we start discussions about the topic of equality here in Nepal and how inequality and discrimination can be counteracted. The discussions deepen, and the festival visitors write their ideas on our tablecloth, which is designed for this purpose. Our aim was to contribute to the future of Nepal with the aim of generating sustainable new ideas. We got great help from the student of the K&K International College, whom we met the day before and who volunteered to support us all day long at the stand because the topic was a matter of the heart for her. Afterward, we can finish the festival with the band KANTA dAb dAb and review the talks. We learned a lot of new things. For example, a woman explained to us that you could tell by her name that she comes from a worse caste, and therefore, she never has the same job chances as competitors, no matter what her qualifications are.



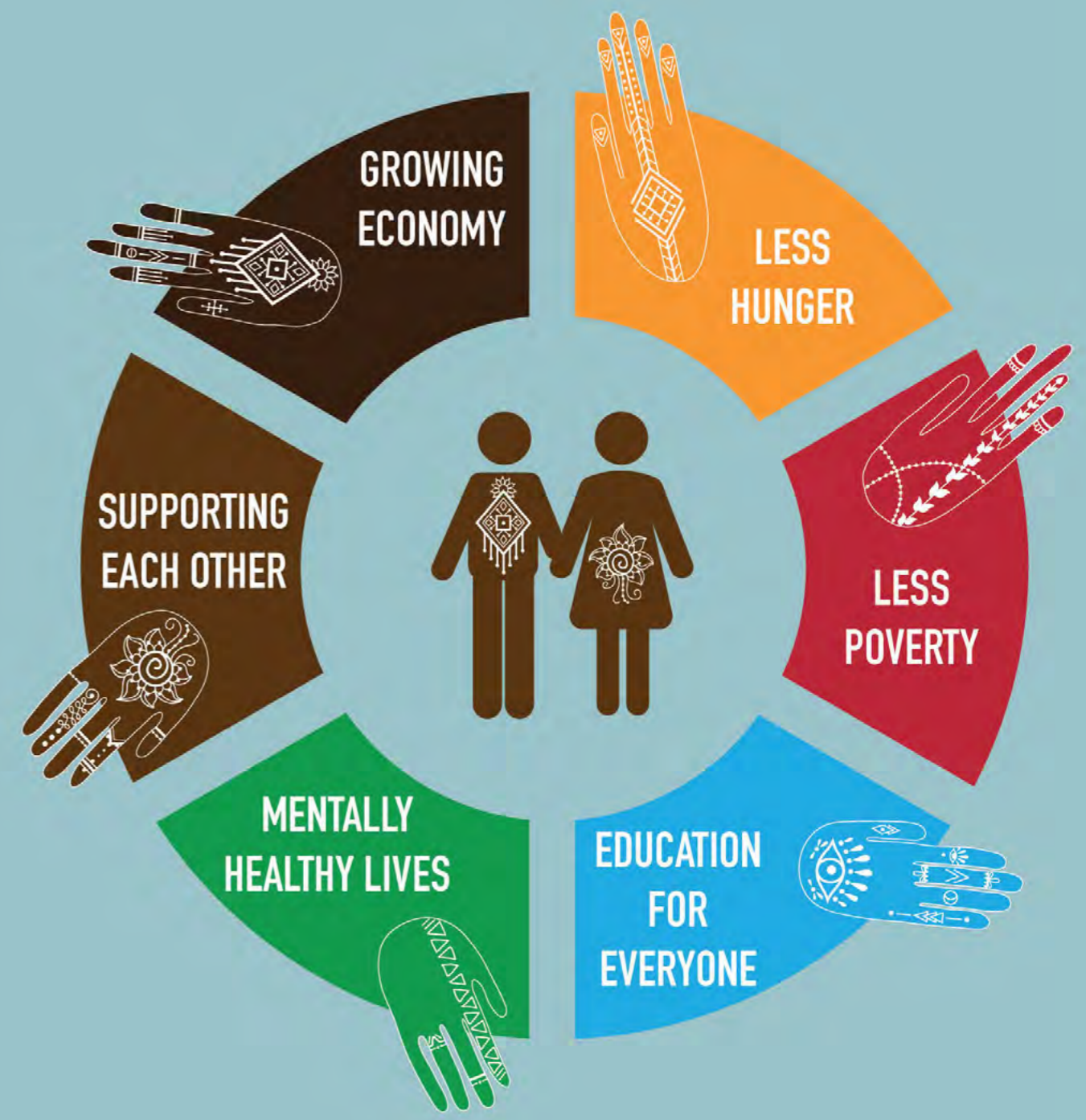
# TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

- RACE 
- ETHNIC ORIGIN 
- GENDER 
- RELIGION 
- IDEOLOGY 
- DISABILITY 
- AGE 
- SEXUAL IDENTITY 
- PREGNANCY 

# EQUALITY GOALS

- By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average
- By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
- Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
- Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
- Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations
- Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions
- Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

# ARE YOU AWARE OF THE BENEFICIAL IMPACT OF GREATER EQUALITY?





# DID YOU KNOW THAT ...



» the Gapframe of Nepal regarding „Society“ is on average between critical and a threat?



» people who have experienced inequality or discrimination are more susceptible to mental illness?



» the United Nations Women rank Nepal 110th out of 145 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index?



» the increase in inequality has had far-reaching effects for our society?



» social and economic inequality is one of the main causes of flight?



» the bottom 40 percent of the population holds only 12 percent of the national income?

# WHAT CAN WE DO TO PREVENT INEQUALITIES AND DISCRIMINATION?







Day 4



# The first thing is infrastructure  
# we should help to fight for free education

# Don't wait something to be done  
for equality go out and make it happen.

Ensure cultural and linguistic equality  
In multicultural & multilingual society

Equality should be in  
the mind before its  
execution. Top priority  
economic development  
cultural conservation  
environmental conservation  
To ensure equality  
ask victim of  
society what actually  
going on in invisible  
form. Don't believe  
in the view of  
repressors.  
1. Control the resources.  
2. Infrastructure development.  
3. Awareness of health issues.  
4. Awareness of education issues.

# What can we do?

→ Equality is not just a word.  
→ People are born with unequal background.  
→ Equality policy is violation of human right.  
→ Equity is needed to level.  
→ Equity policy only can make equal world.

I am lucky to meet you.  
This program make a international  
brotherhood relation close. It support to  
increase visit Nepal 2020.

1. people integrity
2. self discipline
3. cooperation
4. practical law
5. making awareness
6. parity of employment to male & female

Claim your space  
& give other space  
Inform yourself about your  
rights and those of others!

- 1. Education
- 2. awareness program
- 3. Self Discipline
- 4. organize the awareness program & educate about the equality
- 5. organize the culture educational program
- 6. prepare for the future.

- 1. Cultural traditional education
- 2. Cultural exchange programme
- 3. Inter cultural Program
- 4. Inter generational dialogue between different caste.
- 5. Village education
- 6. Prepare for the future.
- 7. Empowered disabled people to take action.

Youths must play vital roles.

Why only me, why not us?

1. Education
2. Awareness
3. Equal opportunity
4. Avoid negative aspect from the culture.

Socio-economic upliftment of  
social group.  
Educate them to learn not to  
hate others

The way of thinking...  
Education...  
Being blind!





# Tourism Board & Bhaktapur December, 15th

December 15th began with a visit to the Nepal Tourism Board. The Tourism Board promotes and develops the tourism sector in cooperation with the government. We met the head of the Tourism Board on-site and learned from him about the primary tasks and goals.

A major topic is the campaign „Visit Nepal 2020“, which aims to increase the number of tourists from the current 1.3 million to 2 million. To this end, two new airports are being built, which will open in 2020. Increasing the number of tourists represents a major challenge in some areas, as the appropriate infrastructure is still lacking in some areas. A lively exchange between the students and the host has developed, especially on the subject of sustainable tourism.

After the visit to the Tourism Board, we continued to Bhaktapur, where we visited a temple complex. Large parts of the temple were destroyed by earthquakes. In the 1970s, the temple complex was restored and rebuilt thanks to the financial support of German projects. Even today, stone tablets with German inscriptions remind us of the project.

In the evening, there was again a traditional Nepalese dinner at our host family in Kathmandu.



Day 5





Day 5





# driving to Pokhara december, 16th

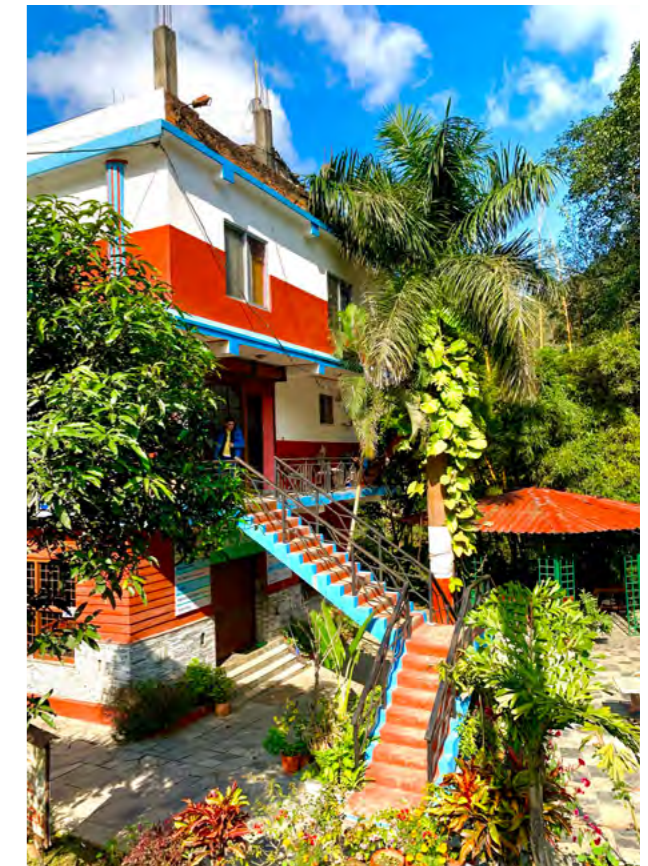
Full of excitement, everyone gets up before 5 am today and packs their suitcases and backpacks - today, we start our trekking tour into the mountains. Today we do not have breakfast in our accommodation, but get packed lunches for the trip. Ram, our guide for the next days, picks us up with a minibus, we pack our backpacks inside and leave Kathmandu for Pokhara. At first, we will cover about 200km, but it will take 6-7 hours because there is only one mountain road to Pokhara, the H04, which is very busy and consists of many serpentines.

The road is getting more and more uphill, the air is getting fresher and fresher, nature is getting greener and greener, and it is getting warmer and warmer from hour to hour. The colorfully painted trucks overtake at high speed again and again very close, and there is a lot of honking. Our driver Prokas has the bus under control and steers us safely around the tight curves. The road is mainly along the Trishuli River, which is currently very low in winter. Nevertheless, you can always see some rafting groups in the wild flowing river. We continue past suspension bridges over the river or construction sites for such; small villages where fires are made in front of the tin huts or the slaughter of a goat is prepared. After 4 hours, we are at the height of Bandipur

and take a second break. The landscape around us is already intoxicating here - a jungle with lianas and many other flowering plants.

After two more hours, we drive through Leknath in the valley to Pokhara and have a first enchanting view of the snow-covered mountain tops. We make a stop and look at the Phewa Lake with occasional small wooden boats. Afterward, we eat Dal Bhat together, which we all have already got to know and love. For the first time, some of us try the Dal Bhat with a fish side dish instead of a chicken side dish. The drive through Pokhara quickly shows us some differences to Kathmandu - it seems like a relaxed hippie town, which is well visited but not as hectic as Kathmandu. We have a look at another lake with an island with a temple on it, to which several wooden boats also go. In the background, we already see several layers of mountains, which resembles a painting.

Afterward, we change from the minibus into two jeeps and make our way out of the city on a dirt road that ends before the river Madi Nadi. The adventure jeep ride begins with a drive through the lowest part of the Madi Nadi; it jerks back and forth, flocks of birds fly over us, the water splashes,



Day 6





Day 6

and our driver gets us in the mood with his Nepalese music. The road leads past construction workers who live with their families on the side of the road on the mountain in order to be able to work daily and build a real road. The sun is slowly setting, and after many more serpentines, we finally see the snow-covered peaks of the mountains - an incredibly beautiful sight! From a run-of-river power station of the Kali Gandaki River, which we pass, the road only goes uphill over huge rocks and big potholes. It has become dark in the meantime, and the higher we get, the colder it gets as well. Around 18:30, we arrive at our destination - Tangting. The village consists of about 200 houses and huts, is situated at an altitude of about 1700 meters, surrounded by rice fields and jungle, and during the day a view of Annapurna II, Annapurna VI, and Lamjung. On roughly laid stone stairs, we walk to the lodge, because we are taken in here by a family for two nights.

We are warmly welcomed with the typical necklaces of student flowers and can enjoy some roasted peanuts right by the fire until

the two women of the house serve us, Dal Bhat. The mayor of Tangting and a teacher from a nearby school come to welcome us and have dinner with us. Meanwhile, we are already very practiced in eating with our hands. Afterward, we get a visit from the women's group from Tangting to meet the 15 women who have joined together to support each other, exchange ideas and plan projects. All these women have walked here in the dark especially for us and with their visit they give us one of the biggest gifts of the trip. They start to sing songs, in Nepali and also in the language of their village. This is where the so-called Gurung live, which is why they all carry this surname. The Gurung is considered to be very strong mountain people. After a Masala Chai tea to warm up, they ask us to dance. After a while, everybody dances together to their songs around the fire - an unforgettable experience with a very special atmosphere. The women from Tangting wanted to hear a German song from us, so we started with „Ich geh´ mit meiner Laterne“ and were then replaced by a blinking music box. After some hours of dancing





# Hiking in Himalaya December, 17th



On 17.12.2019, we can really perceive the breathtaking beauty of the view of our small village for the first time. After a night that was more or less exhausting for some and less for others, we had breakfast outside in the forecourt of our host. In Nepal, life takes place outside. Instead of being warmed up in the heated rooms, the camp fireman warms up; the washing up is done outside under cold water.

After we have fortified ourselves with coffee, tea, and spelled pancakes, we start up the mountain. The first stretch leads through the village and further up the mountain along endless stairs, always following our guide. Stefan gives us useful tips on what to look for in our shoes and backpacks. For example, the shoes should be

loosened up the mountain and tied tighter down the mountain. We take our first break at the 2015 m altitude. The view into the valley and the ever-approaching 7000 m peaks reward our ascent, and beyond that, the sun warms us so much that we can continue walking with a T-shirt. A little further on, we see an eagle in its full glory. It swings its wings and circles around us as if it knows quite well how impressed we are by it. We continue walking up the mountain to our second stop, including a wonderful view. At

2353 m, we make our second stop and are fed up with tea and snacks. While Janet and Damaris are resting on the stop and sleeping in the sun, the others are drawn further up the mountain. Today we will not make it completely. But at least getting to the snow is the goal. We find it already 100 m higher, and of course, snow angels are made. After the short snow trip, we have delicious noodle soup, cooked by the guides over the campfire. This is easy and, therefore, delicious and wonderfully strengthening. Since we have a three-hour descent ahead of us and want to be back before dark, we go down again. This time a different path that leads right through the jungle. The combination of snow-covered mountains and jungle is thrilling.

Back in the village, we are done with untrained trekkers. Showering is unimaginable for most of them, as the water is only cold. So we have to stay in dirty clothes and sit down at the campfire. Later we have Daal and Baatr again, the typical Nepalese dinner. After dinner, we sit around the campfire again, and there is a first feedback round. The travel group is especially impressed by the warm welcome culture of the Nepalese people. And also, the many individual conversations about Equality resonate in their minds. It is a difference to read from the box or to hear the personal experiences of the Nepalese in their own box. Another night in the sleeping bags without heating is imminent — a borderline experience and broadening of horizons.

Day 7





Day 7







# discover the Himalaya december, 18th



Day 8

Time to say goodbye to our loving hosts in the village of Tangting. After a tasty breakfast with the magnificent view of the snow-covered peaks, we have to say goodbye, which is very difficult. We receive a blessing sign from our hosts, called Tilaka or Tika, something extraordinary, which is only done on festive occasions. With this Hindu tradition, a sticky rice mass is applied to the middle of the forehead. At this point, the third eye is assumed to be the energy center and should thus be protected. This is also why one waits until the rice grains fall off by themselves and why one does not remove them on purpose. Besides, we get the traditional chains of orange marigolds put on. We are all very touched.

glide over it. On the other side is a fish farm station. At the picnic area in front of Begnas Lake, we are invited to dance to Nepalese music and spend a few minutes dancing with them before continuing our walk. An excellent, exceptional attitude towards life, which is transmitted here. After a refreshment with delicious Dal Bhat in a restaurant at the lake, we continue by jeeps to our accommodation. This is located between Begnas Lake and Rupa Lake, which gives us a new, great view. Arrived and unpacked, we have a delicious Momo soup in the evening. The rest of the evening, we all spend together on the roof terrace, with an incredible starry sky, moving conversations, and lots of happy feelings.

With the packed jeeps, we now take an adventurous way downhill to the river Kali Gandaki. On the way, we take a break to enjoy the view from a suspension bridge. The scenery is breathtaking, down the steep path, which our jeep drivers master brilliantly. After a route briefing at the river's dry edge, we start uphill again towards Begnas Lake. Arrived at Begnas Lake, we take a walk along the lake. Light fog lies over it, and a few wooden boats





Day 9

# back to Kathmandu december, 19th

After a lot of alcohol and little sleep, not everyone wakes up so refreshed on this day. The more exhausting is the hour-long drive home on the only highway between Pokhara and Kathmandu. Most of us sleep on this day if it is possible at all. Our calm and excellent driver drives us safely through not always safe roads. Hour by hour, we approach the dirty Kathmandu again. The air is getting worse bit

by bit, the traffic denser. It is not easy to drive from Pokhara to Kathmandu. The many button vices with their even more colorful honking sounds are encouraging. Beautiful, we always have to laugh and rejoice in the strange noises.

In the evening, we rest from the long drive and are again provided with typical Nepalese delicacies by our host parents.





# slowen parting december, 20th

One last day in Nepal and Kathmandu. We use the time to roam through Kathmandu once again. At first, we end up in a café where only deaf and dumb people work. What a delightful discovery and experience that social projects are also being established step by step in Kathmandu.

Then we move on to Thamel's old touristic town, with its thousands of traders and salespeople, to get some souvenirs for our friends and relatives in Germany. We have learned a little bit about trading now, and we know that you can always go out with the goods 50 percent below the price mentioned if you are smart. We split up, and the time flies by like a flash.

Afterward, we decided to explore a new way through Thamel to the hotel and start another adventure. While it slowly gets dark, we walk through the increasingly crowded alleys, maltreated left and right by motor scooters, through the hectic crowd. We enjoy the atmosphere to the full.

Meanwhile, our professors leave Nepal already today at noon and in the evening. In any case, they try ...



17 July 10





departure  
Saturday  
December, 21th

The last day of our journey is here. The first one has already left. But Yolna didn't get his connecting flight and is still on the way. And also, Stefan is still in Kathmandu. Meanwhile, the group becomes less and less. I, Damaris, set off for the airport in the morning in a taxi. I am pleased that the taxi driver avoids the big streets and makes his way through the small alleys. So I get the full drone of Kathmandu's life once again.

I pass living chickens and turkeys, traders on their bicycles and women in their shining dresses sitting and chatting in front of their doors. I have already arrived at the airport. I get out of the colorful little taxi. It's from Adidas. :-) At least it has the logo on the outside. At the airport, everything goes fast. I am checking in. Security check. Stamping out the visa. Boarding. And goodbye, beautiful Nepal.

Not you change Nepal.  
Nepal changes you.

Day 11