



Next Generation Nepal

Newsletter

January-February 2010



Executive Director Hallie Tamez (left) with Country Director Julien Lovera in Nepal

Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to officially introduce the newest member of the NGN team, our Executive Director, Hallie Tamez. Hallie has a depth of experience working with underserved populations and children in need, and was an educator for many years. She also comes to us with experience in Nepal and a passion to serve its people.

Hallie spent five weeks with the NGN team on the ground in Nepal. An avid outdoorswoman, she went straight into the mountains of Humla with our team to lay the groundwork for getting the children home,

enduring the hardship of the remote areas of the country. She's already part of the family!

In this newsletter, we have a difficult story to tell. The final story, Voices of the Children, is the story of tragedy, of unspeakable loss and hardship of two of our children. This is the story behind the smiling faces, of what these children must endure, and how in the end, they remain so hopeful of their future.

Hallie also shares her experience in Humla, in planning the return of the children to the place of their birth for the first time in years, and she updates us on how one of our reunited children is doing.

The children need your help. Please take a look at this newsletter and visit our website at www.nextgenerationnepal.org, and donate now to help us reconnect children with their families.

Sincerely,

Conor Grennan

Founder, Next Generation Nepal



Next Generation Nepal

Moving a children's home back to Humla:

The NGN Search Team ventures into Humla to plan a historic transition

After 20 hours of overland travel on buses large and small, crammed with humanity, a small sixteen seat plane flew low over the mountains and deposited Hallie Tamez in Simikot, the district headquarters of Humla, one of the most remote regions in Nepal.



New Children's Home in Simikot

Several hundred children have been taken from Humla by child traffickers during the civil war. NGN is working to get them back home, starting with moving our children's home hundreds of miles, all the way back to Humla.

There is something quite spiritual, serene, and peaceful about Humla. There is no motorized transport of any kind, so all that is heard are the sounds



A trip to Humla and a big brother and little brother meet for the first time

of children, roosters, farming, washing and all manner of labor necessary to survive. The local children are busy, happy, engaging, and inventive. They have so little, but manage to play contentedly with bottle caps, rocks, paper scraps, and old rope.

The NGN field team, led by Hallie and County Director Julien Lovera, set off to see the parents of the trafficked children, located several days walk south of Simikot. There are no roads in Humla, so they carried backpacks, sleeping bags, coconut biscuits, a bag of rice to help feed the families, and water, and traveled on foot.

The hospitality of the Humli people was astonishing – they have very little, but what they have, they willingly shared with the team. And even though they only shelter they could provide was on roof tops and in storage sheds in sub-freezing weather, our team was incredibly grateful.

The goals for Hallie and the field team was connecting with families of children who had been taken years ago by traffickers, and finding a suitable house to move the children from NGN's Karnali Home in Kathmandu to Simikot in time for the new school year in April, assessing school options, and securing sufficient food supplies for a year.



School days



Next Generation Nepal

Hallie and Julien were able to secure the rental of a relatively large stone house with 10 rooms and a kitchen. This will provide ample space for the children to study, eat and sleep as a large family while re-learning about life in a rural village.

Best of all, they will be able to see their families on a regular basis, after being taken from them years earlier.

NGN is one of the only organizations in Nepal actively working to open a children's home outside of the densely populated Kathmandu Valley, far from communities and families, back to the home region of the trafficked children. This project is an enormous undertaking and will require significant resources. We need your help!



Hallie and Sundup are surrounded by family listening to news from their child in Kathmandu.

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Thriving at home with his own family:

Gopal's life in Dhading

Last month we told you of the rescue of Gopal, a 3 year old boy. We told you how we found his family, and how we were ultimately able to reunite him with his own family.



Gopal's father helping him dress for school.

Just days after returning from Humla, Hallie Tamez and the NGN field team set off to monitor the progress of little Gopal, to make sure he was safe and well cared for by the family that wanted him back.

The journey to Dhading began with 4 hours on a cramped micro bus. Then the walking began. Hallie navigated steep rocky trails as well as river crossings, removing her shoes and rolling up her pants to get across slippery rocks.

After half a day's hike, they reached the foot hills of Gopal's mountain. An hour and a half climb brought them to Gopal's village. Unfortunately, Gopal was off with his sister visiting a local Shaman for treatment of a minor rash on his back. So Hallie and her team waited with his family, drinking sweet tea.

Gopal returned by late afternoon looking healthy and well fed, although a bit shy at first. It was all a welcome relief for the team, and after tentative hugs and gentle



Next Generation Nepal

reassuring touches, he was soon sitting on their laps and chatting happily. All was well and Gopal seemed content and safe in his family and adapting to village life.



Gopal with Julien and NGN field manager, Sundup

Gopal's family cooked their traditional evening meal for the team, rice and lentils (known as *daal bhat*) over an open fire. Like most villagers, they had no electricity, and when night fell, they went to bed. After a hard day's walk, Hallie and the team collapsed for the night in warm sleeping bags next to the oxen.

As morning dawned, the team was roused by the smoke of the morning fire. After another round of *daal bhat* and washing at the single water tap, the village children all began to descend on Gopal's house anxiously waiting to start the trek to school together.

The team set off with Gopal and his ragtag band of village friends to make the walk to school. This involved a 15-20 minute hike on a rocky trail just to get to the school house.

The children all wore old and ill fitting flip flops, or just went barefoot. They all donned varying iterations of smudged blue shirtsthe school uniform! Despite the ill fitting clothes, and lack of footwear, the children delighted in our participation in the trek to school and singing, laughter, and running footsteps could be heard the entire way.



Gopal and his village friends ready for school

After speaking with Gopal's teacher, Hallie and Julien said goodbye to Gopal and shouldered their backpacks once again and began the journey back to Kathmandu feeling contented and satisfied that Gopal was where he belonged.

Voices of the Children

A brother and sister share unspeakable loss and hope for their future

Pemba and RamKumar (both names have been changed), two children NGN has been caring for for years, have overcome amazing hardship in their short young lives. Yet they remain resilient, trusting, and hopeful.

Pemba (now 14) and RamKumar (now 9) were born in Raya (named changed) a small village in the remote mountains of Humla. Their story as told to Hallie one afternoon at Karnali House is one of unspeakable loss and triumph over tremendously difficult odds.

PEMBA: My mother died when I was 5 or 6 years old. We were eating dinner and she got sick and died in my father's arms. I remember the night she died. I was so



Next Generation Nepal

sad and crying so much. A friend took us to her house to sleep for the night. My brother RamKumar was just a baby and feeding him was difficult. He really needed my mother's milk.

My father was a farmer and worked very hard. When my mother died, I had to work very hard too. I had to take care of RamKumar and the animals.

Seven or eight months later, when I was tending to the animals and my father was in the field, he got very sick. My friend ran to me in the field and told me my father had died, and again I cried and cried.

Without our parents, my older brother and sisters stopped going to school and we moved into my uncle's house. We have a cousin in Nepalgunj who wanted to take us and my uncle agreed not knowing what would really happen to us.

So, when I was 7 or 8 and RamKumar was still a little boy of 3 or 4 we left our home in Raya and waited for a plane to take us to our cousin in Nepalgunj. He could not find a hostel for us to stay in together so thinking it was best to keep us together, he sent us with friends to DB Phadera's orphanage Mathatirta in Kathmandu. [NOTE: This was an awful illegal home run by the well known child trafficker DB Phadera who preys on vulnerable families with children in remote Humla offering to bring their children to Kathmandu for education and safety and then exploiting them for money and work.]

RAMKUMAR: Mathatirta was not a good place. We were punished for nothing, we had our hair pulled out, it was cold and there was not enough food.

[Pemba agreed and with a shy and almost guilty look born of painful memories she related the story of how she was rescued from Mathatirta and brought to another nicer children's home called Little Princes.]

PEMBA: RamKumar was not allowed to go because he was too small and I by then I was only thinking of myself and not wanting to be separated from my friend Mangoli. Together Mangoli and I went to Little Princes and I left RamKumar behind.

RAMKUMAR: I felt sad and alone. There was less food than before and I missed Pemba.

For 4 months, RamKumar was without his sister in Mathatirta. Then he too was rescued in 2004 and brought to Little Princes to be reunited with Pemba.

PEMBA: I was so happy to see him. I cried because I felt I had been so selfish when I left without my brother.

Shortly after this, ten more children were welcomed into Little Princes which was then reorganized and renamed Karnali House.



Pemba and RamKumar, brother and sister spend time with Hallie at Karnali House

In 2008, Pemba and RamKumar came to live at NGN's Karnali House together. Until then, they thought they had no family as no attempt had been made to find anyone. NGN has found their extended family and communicate regularly with them. In October 2008 under the guidance of our field team, the children made a first return visit to their village and family in Raya.



Next Generation Nepal

They have connected with their family who have expressed relief to get news from them and are looking forward having them in back in Raya or much closer by in Simikot. Pemba and RamKumar both seem ready and anxious to go back. RamKumar wants to be a teacher in Raya as does Pemba.

PEMBA: We were born there and it is our home.

With a small sigh Pemba leaned her head on my shoulder, clasped my hand and said, "I am not sure what will happen but I know I want to go back and help my village."

With the guidance of NGN and continued support from you, we will be able to scaffold dreams of the future for Pemba and RamKumar and so many other children like them.



The children of Karnali House, Kathmandu

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NGN needs your help.

Please visit our website at www.nextgenerationnepal.com to make a donation.

How much does it cost to change lives?

Here's a sample:

\$30 feeds a child for a month.

\$50 covers the cost of searching for one family in remote areas.

\$150 educates a child for one full year.

You can find much more information on [our site about how we spend your donations](#).

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

Next Generation Nepal is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit organization in the State of New York.

All donations are tax deductible

Thank you for your continued support