

# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

IN NEPAL





## HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES

### OUR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS IN NEPAL

Since 2009, Back to Life has been building school infrastructure and Birth Centres in Nepal whilst also offering various relief and development programmes to alleviate poverty and increase the opportunities and well-being of the suffering and underprivileged.

Guided by the principles of „helping people help themselves“, dignity, and empowerment, the programmes are implemented under the supervision of Back to Life founder Stella Deetjen. Our local team of Nepalese aid workers collaborates closely with local communities and government authorities. To keep overhead costs as low as possible, a small team based in Germany is responsible for fundraising, project monitoring, administrative support, and external communications.

Through long-term, sustainable programmes, Back to Life's work is improving the living conditions of the local population. We operate in three project areas in Mugu, Chitwan, and Nuwakot. To date we are able to reach as many as 45,000 people in Nepal, focussing on the most remote and vulnerable parts of the country. We make sure to choose communities that have little chance of helping themselves without outside assistance.





## SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR PROGRAMMES



- To date we have built school buildings with more than **100 classrooms**.
- We directly support the education of **8,700 children** from poor families. Besides school infrastructure our support includes teacher development, school uniforms, learning equipment, and healthy lunches at some of the project schools.
- We have established **12 rural Birth Centres** that provide supervised deliveries as well as quality pre- and postnatal care.
- We deliver vital **health education**, organise mobile **health camps**, and ensure **emergency medical care** for those in need.
- We improve access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, and raise awareness on adequate hygiene behaviours.
- We engage in effective **livelihood programmes**, such as saving and loan groups, agricultural trainings, small asset transfer, and capacity development for rural cooperatives.
- We promote **environmental awareness** and **clean energy** through solar and biogas home systems, energy-efficient stoves, and clean-up campaigns.



**OUR BIRTH CENTRES IN MUGU** | In Mugu, girls and women get banned from their homes when menstruating and giving birth. This practice, known as chhaupadi, stems from a widespread Nepalese superstition, which requires them to spend several days and nights in animal sheds exposed to faeces and insects, or in the icy cold of the forest without any protection at all. Especially during childbirth this is a high-risk situation jeopardising the lives of both mother and child. The legal ban of this practice has brought hardly any improvement. To address this situation, we work hand in hand with the local communities to establish rural Birth Centres that deliver quality care for mothers and newborns. By involving the communities into planning and construction, we are able to foster local ownership of the facility and its services. Thanks to our capable midwives, mothers and newborns get to experience adequate care before, during, and after childbirth. In March 2019, our 1,000<sup>th</sup> „Back to Life baby“ was born.





**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION** | Since 2009 Back to Life has facilitated almost 6,000 installations of energy efficient, smoke-free stoves and solar or biogas home systems in Nepal. This has helped to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and deforestation linked to fuel wood consumption. Thanks to these initiatives, households have been able to decrease the use of fuel wood by as much as 50%. In addition to protecting the local forests, families experience a significant reduction in respiratory illnesses due to less air pollution inside their homes. By now, about 30% of rural households in the remote and hard-to-access region of Mugu have been supplied with clean, off-grid energy by Back to Life.



**AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE** | In 2015, more than 8,560 people died in the Nepal earthquakes and some 100,000 were injured. More than 600,000 buildings and 30,000 classrooms were obliterated. We initiated immediate relief measures and provided food, water, emergency shelter, and warm winter clothes to 1,200 school children, as well as medical care for 2,000 people. After this devastating incident, we embarked on the mammoth project of simultaneously rebuilding six schools in the affected area as a way to rekindle hope and continue children's education as quickly as possible. The new school buildings were opened in the fall of 2017. In addition, Back to Life restored and expanded water supply, delivered agricultural training, and helped to expand vegetable production in heavily affected areas of Nuwakot.





## HELPING LEPROSY PATIENTS, STREET CHILDREN, AND SLUM DWELLERS IN INDIA (UNTIL 2017)

**LEPROSY CARE** | In 1996, Stella Deetjen founded the charity organisation Back to Life. Its very first project was a street clinic to bring medical care to those afflicted by leprosy and various social programmes designed to restore the dignity of these stigmatised people and their families. From leprosy therapy to social rehabilitation – it was a long journey “back to life” for about 200 „untouchables“.

**STREET CHILDREN** | In 1998 Back to Life began caring for more than 120 street children and social orphans who, until then, had no future to look forward to. Many of them came from leprosy-affected families. Our children's homes gave them a safe and non-violent environment to grow up in. We ensured they would have a proper education and encouraged their personal development, always taking into account their personal talents and needs.



**INFORMAL LEARNING CENTRES** | Since 2011, hundreds of trash picker children who could not attend regular schools enrolled in our 13 informal slum schools. At these Learning Centres they were given the opportunity to gain basic literacy and numeracy skills, which also helped building their self-confidence. Eventually, many of them were able to join a public school.

**FAREWELL** | After more than 20 years, we phased out our projects in India at the end of 2017. You can find more information about the early days of Back to Life in Stella Deetjen's book, which was published in 2016 by Fischer Verlag.

## GET INVOLVED AND SUPPORT OUR NEPAL PROJECTS!

Together, we have a chance to offer impoverished people in Nepal a better chance at the future they deserve. With targeted education, healthcare, and livelihood programmes, we enable young generations to expand their opportunities in life. Here's how you can help:

- **SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP:**

Your support will help to ensure and improve girls' education, allowing them to seize opportunities for a better, self-determined life. Your regular monthly contribution will go towards the improvement of educational infrastructure, quality of teaching, as well as essential learning equipment and school uniforms.

- **BIRTH CENTRE SPONSORSHIP:**

Your support will ensure the continued operation of our rural Birth Centres in Mugu. This contributes to reducing severe maternal and newborn mortality and health issues in this remote and underserved region.

- **DIRECT SPONSORSHIP:**

Your support will help to address the needs of children who come from the poorest families in our project areas, face extreme hardships, or suffer from disability. You will be given the opportunity to exchange letters with the child and learn about their experiences and development first hand through our regular sponsorship reports.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

**[WWW.BACK-TO-LIFE.ORG](http://WWW.BACK-TO-LIFE.ORG)**

for more sponsorship and payment options.

As a charitable organisation we are authorised to issue donation receipts for income tax purposes.

**DONATIONS**

BACK TO LIFE E.V.

IBAN: DE94 5008 0000 0729 9990 02

BIC: DRESDEFFXXX

BANK: Commerzbank AG



**CONTACT** | Back to Life e.V. | Louisenstraße 117 | 61348 Bad Homburg vor der Höhe / Germany  
E-Mail: [info@back-to-life.org](mailto:info@back-to-life.org) | Ph: +49 (0) 6172/662 69 97

**VISIT US ONLINE** | [www.back-to-life.org](http://www.back-to-life.org) | [www.back-to-life.org/facebook](http://www.back-to-life.org/facebook) |  
[www.back-to-life.org/youtube](http://www.back-to-life.org/youtube) | [www.instagram.com/back\\_to\\_life\\_germany](http://www.instagram.com/back_to_life_germany)



