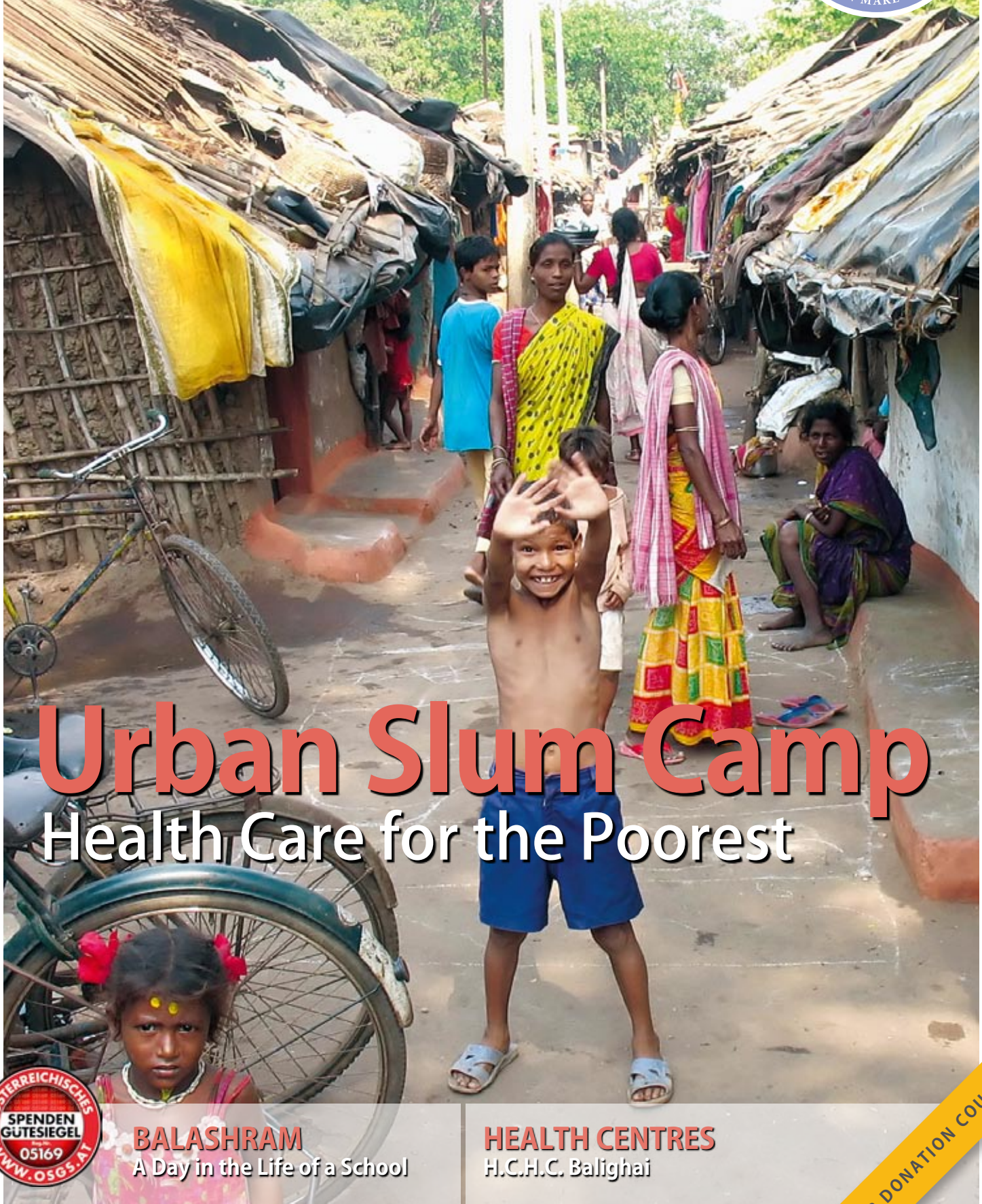


SPOTLIGHT



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Urban Slum Camp

Health Care for the Poorest



BALASHRAM
A Day in the Life of a School

HEALTH CENTRES
H.C.H.C. Balighai

YOUR DONATION COUNTS!

HAND IN HAND GLOBAL



Fundraising Lunch at Paris, serving Indian food



Pictures sold in favor of Hand in Hand



The French Hand in Hand Team

Hand in Hand France

After Hand in Hand Switzerland, Hand in Hand Holland and the Hand in Hand Trust in Germany, last year a new branch of the Humanitarian Aid Organization was founded in France.

By Hand in Hand Team France

With the addition of **Hand in Hand France**, the International Humanitarian Aid Organization **Hand in Hand** is growing in strength. In February 2008 the members of the foundation handed over the byelaws to the department of Common Public

Interest and Benefit of the Prefecture, which in France registers all charitable organizations. On the 23rd February of the same year, the Official Bulletin for newly-created charitable organizations published the foundation of **Hand in Hand France**, which means that we are now a non profit organization, officially and legally! All donations we receive are tax-deductible and our tax number (No SIRET) is 502 565 237 00018.

Some delegates of the French **Hand in Hand** board traveled a month later, on their own expenses, to the Indian State of Orissa for a survey of the running projects. They visited the Balashram Residential School for children in need, and went also to two Health Centers, which provide free medical assistance and health education to the poorest of the poor.

At the Balashram school the French visitors were speechless in front of the loving atmosphere and warm environment that surrounds the children and the teachers. One of the **Hand in Hand France** board members commented later: "It is the first time we have witnessed so many children coming from different villages, families and backgrounds, living together in such a harmonious, happy and disciplined manner."

On the other hand they were shocked about the long queues of poor people awaiting urgent medical treatment at the Health Centers.

The travelers returned home, convinced that **Hand in Hand France** can play a decisive role in contributing to support all the health and education related projects in India. Shortly afterwards the first fundraising activities were started: tea parties, informal meetings, and a few weeks ago, two Indian fundraising lunches in Paris.

We are convinced to put into affect something that will endure beyond the borders of India. <

HAND IN HAND FRANCE

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! If you would like to work with us as a volunteer or raise funds or do some public relations for Hand in Hand France, please contact us at info@handinhand.fr!



Urban Slum Kids at Cuttack, March 2009



Dear Friends!

The recent movie "Slumdog Millionaire" which was awarded many Oscars, and which is about a young boy, who came from a big city slum, awakened in many people some interest into the inhabitants of the slums in India.

Since 2007 **Hand in Hand** has been organizing, almost on a weekly basis, so-called "**Urban Slum Health Camps**" in Cuttack, the second biggest city in the State of Orissa. During one of his trips to India in February/March of this year, Heiko Mueller, our Executive Secretary, participated at one of these camps and tells us in detail about his experience in this issue of Spotlight.

While you are holding a copy of our magazine, the **Balashram** school project is already up to 240 pupils!

The new Nursery class with 40 boys and girls was opened in April. Each of these children comes from the poorest conditions. They are given the opportunity to receive a twelve-year, all comprehensive education, which they would not otherwise have ... and, who knows, they may also win the top prize in "Who wants to be a Millionaire?" – just like the young boy did, in the above mentioned movie.

It is thanks to your generous donations that projects like the Balashram International Residential School and the medical Slum-Camps have become a reality. Please do not forget, in these difficult times, those who still urgently need your contribution – a hearty thank you for your generosity!

On behalf of **Hand in Hand**

Peter van Breukelen (Präsident)

PS: This year, once again, **Hand in Hand** has been granted the Austrian Donation Certificate



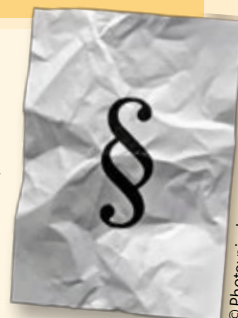
NEWS

Are donations finally tax deductible?

By Dr. Philipp Czaika

After many years of discussions in Austria, it is now possible to deduct donations for humanitarian causes as special expenses. This law (EstG* § 4a.Z.3) is retroactive until the 1st January 2009, and affects also business companies which can now donate money or objects and declare them as operating expenditures. This new law, however, brings some restrictions for those organizations, which collect the donations, while non profit-making organizations that dedicate themselves to animal and environmental causes are not included in these new regulations.

Hand in Hand in principle fulfills all the requirements and we are at present working at being included into the list compiled by the Bundesministerium (Federal Ministry), in order to be able, effectively, to deduct the Austrian donations for the year 2009. The results should be available within the next few weeks and we will keep you posted.



© Photo: pixelquelle

*Einkommensteuergesetz = Income tax law

CONTENT

2 Hand in Hand Global

Hand in Hand France

4 The Balashram

A day at the Balashram
Forgotten children
Construction Update

6 Health Projects

Urban Slum Camp
H.C.H.C. Balighai
Eye-Camp Balighai

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THE BALASHRAM



A Day in the Life of a School

What does a normal day at the Balashram Residential School look like? Are our children really getting up before the first cock crows? And what happens next? An experience report from India.
by Heiko Müller

The sun has not yet risen when the boys and girls start with their morning gymnastics in the girls' quarters (the boys' quarters are still under construction). Morning gymnastics in India means 'yoga', and I'm astonished at how these children are able to perform such body contortions so early in the morning. In the Pre-school building the day starts for the little ones half an hour later – but also on the yoga mat. Afterwards, with sleepy eyes they look expectantly at the young caregivers who will help them to wash, get dressed and to comb their hair.

Playful learning

After the simple, but nutritious breakfast in the dining hall, tuition starts in the school building shortly after eight for the pupils of Standard I-III classes. The youngest children take their breakfast at the Pre-school building and for them classes start shortly before nine o'clock.

Meanwhile the teacher of Standard I class is drawing Sanskrit letters on the board, which the pupils repeat in a chorus. The children laugh to themselves when they mispronounce a word. In the neighboring Standard II class the children are learning Hindi and are scrawling in their exercise books. In this class the children are laughing a lot and points to the fact that playful learning seems to be a reality.

At the same time, in Standard III class mathematics is being taught and the Residential School's oldest pupils seem to be very concentrated.

The youngest pupils receive classes in the Nursery and in the Kindergarten (KG) class. Today there is natural science on the timetable. The children sit on the floor while the teacher asks them to draw a tree on their little blackboards. Shortly before class ends, the teacher intones a song that prompts all the children to get up and dance and jump with euphoria, while singing with her. Later they get very excited when they discover a horde of monkeys in front of the Pre-school building. "Monkeys, monkeys", they shout enthusiastically while clapping their hands. Any biology class fades against the unadulterated nature in which the school is embedded!

Creative expression

During the dance class in the afternoon all ceiling ventilators are turned on due to the great heat. The body mastery of these boys and girls is extraordinary. The dance teacher notices every faux pas and immediately corrects lovingly any wrong posture. Some of the older children regularly participate at celebrations and have earned a brilliant reputation.

It is almost 5 o'clock in the afternoon and now the children can let off their steam: on the school ground the younger ones try to grab the only three bicycles available that are owned by the school. Normally in the weeks preceding the quarterly exams session, there are preparation classes, as well as private lessons, scheduled in the evenings.

After dinner the younger ones fall into their beds around 9 o'clock. Silence and tranquility settles over Balashram and only the crickets' chirps can be heard. In a few hours time the laughter of these children will again bring the Balashram to life. <





Forgotten children

The selection of the 40 Nursery class children for the year 2009/2010 is finished. The family background of these children is often overwhelming.

The little hut on the busy street doesn't even have a door. When the members of the Balashram School Selection Committee entered the small room they were presented with the following picture: two little boys, aged 2-3 are sitting on the floor and eating rice from a bowl. Their mother sits in another corner of the room – she has chickenpox. In her arms she holds



All these children are part of the 2009/2010 Nursery class

a baby. Car noise from the street enters the room. The mother relates that a short while ago her husband had gone mad and set light to himself in the market place of the village. Since then, there is nobody who provides for and sustains the family. Later the Committee decides to accept **one of the little boys** into the Nursery class.

Little girl Namita is three years old. Her father died of malaria and her mother works as a day laborer. The little money she earns is hardly enough to nourish Namita and her three sisters. This little child too will be admitted to the Balashram Residential School.

The parents of four years old **Tikaram** died shortly, one after the other – the father from a car accident and the mother from malaria. The little boy has six siblings. The earnings of one of the older brothers are not enough and the family is lacking the basic things like clothes and food. The Committee decides to accept Tikaram giving him a home and a school education.

All 40 children will spend the most important years of their lives in a secure and harmonious environment. Not only the children themselves but also their families and whole villages will, in the long term, benefit from the education and training they receive. We hope that initiatives, like this one to fight poverty, are going to find more supporters and that Balashram does not remain an isolated case.

Hand in Hand and its partner organization **Prajnana Mission** will continue to ensure that children are not forgotten. <

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



The boys of Standard IV class can now move into the ground floor of the **boys' quarters** (see picture 1) while construction works continue on the first and second floors. Girls of Standard IV class are moving into the first floor of the **girls' quarters** while the ground floor is still occupied by both boys and girls of Standard I-III classes. At the moment the second floor is being fitted with doors and windows. Classes of the Nursery and Kindergarten will in the future be held at the new **Pre-school building** (see picture 2), which is located only a few meters away, while the children will continue to sleep in the old Pre-school building.

Dining hall and kitchen are at present still on the ground floor of the girls' quarters but will move to a section of the Pre-school building. Construction works have already started and should terminate in late autumn of this current year. The first floor of the **school building** will be available as soon as all the electrical works are completed.

! As already mentioned, in the past because of rising material costs, it is important that the construction works of the school campus progress as quickly as possible!

HEALTH PROJECTS



1



2



3



4

1 People waiting for medical treatment 2 Dr Bal with a patient
3 The pharmacist distributes medicines 4 Stretch of the river next to the slum

Urban Slum Camp

In the Indian city of Cuttack there are more than 200 slums, whose inhabitants possess the bare minimum to survive. No medical health care is available and therefore, the periodical Urban Slum Camps, organized by our Health Center in Jagatpur/Cuttack, are more than welcome.

By Heiko Müller

One morning at 8 o'clock we drove across the old vegetable market towards Behera Sahi in Cuttack. The temperature had already reached 30°C. Shortly after the market we passed through a gateway at the border of a larger square, and it was as if we had passed into another world. The narrow, bumpy and dusty road offered little space for the car, and to the right and left were mud huts with plastic roofs. Some women were sitting in front of these shacks sorting out rice in flat baskets, and they looked at us with curiosity.

To the doctor at school

Children kneel at the border of the road and play with caps, while two black dogs doze in the shade of a tree.

After a few meters we reach the school building in the Behera Sahi slum. It consists of a one 20 sqm, dark and moldy-smelling room where Dr Bhagavat Bal will see his patients and the pharmacist – Rasmi Ranjan Mishra – will distribute medicines. There is no privacy here and everybody is examined in front of all the others. Depending on the complaint,

Dr Bal may listen to the heart and lungs, take the blood pressure or inspect the mouth with a torch. An elderly lady complains about pain in her joints and after a short consultation and check-up she receives a prescription, which she can redeem with the apothecary.

Babies die earlier

It is remarkable how many mothers are queuing with their infants, who are still little babies, waiting for a health check up. Due to the terrible hygienic conditions in the city slums, most children suffer from diarrhea, which leads to a very high mortality rate among babies. Later on I come to the river whose dirty waters are used to wash, cook and drink, whilst also being used by the inhabitants as a toilet! A helper of our team explains to me that during monsoons, the waters flood the whole of the slum area.

Many of Dr. Bal's patients suffer from infections of the respiratory organs, from skin diseases, as well as from allergies and malnutrition while the elderly residents are often diagnosed with arthritis.

No health care services whatsoever

Despite all this, when I'm walking through the Behera Sahi to take some pictures I find smiling faces everywhere. Children run after me laughing and shouting and some residents even invite me into their huts. I'm told that men are often working as rickshaw drivers or day laborers for which they earn less than one euro per day – not enough to nourish their large families. One thousand five hundred people live in Behera Sahi in poverty, but, despite that, there is no public health care service in any of the slums in the city.

Our camps contribute to ameliorate the medical & health care in the slums and give the people who live there, their dignity back. <



Children get sick more often

HEALTH PROJECTS



1



2



4



5

1 The Balighai Health Center 2 This little boy has been suffering for days from high temperature 3 The Balighai Health Center Team 4 One of thousands of patients coming every year to the Health Center 5 Blood tests performed at the Health Center's laboratory



3

H.C.H.C. Balighai

Hand in Hand started sponsoring a Health Center in May 2001, situated in the Indian State of Orissa not far from Puri, whose good reputation has attracted patients from afar.

By Dr. Debadutta Mishra

Our Health Center is located on a busy road, which connects Puri and Konark, and it is open to patients 5 days a week (Tuesdays and Fridays closed). The one-floor center consists of two examination rooms, a laboratory, a pharmacy and a large waiting room. An ambulance is available for emergency cases. Our team consists of a pharmacist, a laboratory technician, a receptionist and myself. In 2008 we treated 24,000 patients in total. Most patients who come to us are very poor and don't have money to pay for medical treatment and therefore, our services, including the medicines, are given free of charge.

The number of diabetics is increasing

People seeking help from us, suffer from allergies, bronchitis, arthritis or have small wounds and, lately, we also noticed that the number of diabetics is increasing. We can perform blood tests accordingly in our laboratory. Several times in a month we organize Health Camps in the most remote villages and every second Sunday we have a Medical Camp in a fishing village near Puri, to bring people some help.

We are very keen on health education and we inform our patients about subjects like hygiene, AIDS and diabetes through lectures, brochures and by other means. This current year we are opening a small dental surgery on the first floor at our Health Center and a small operating room is planned for the near future. <

BALIGHAI HEALTH CENTER



Opening times

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday: 8.00–12.00

Eye-Camp a H.C.H.C.*

A short while ago we organized the first Eye-Camp at the Balighai Health Center

20 opticians belonging to the international Organization VOSH (Volunteer Optometrist Service to Humanity) arrived with all their specialist optometric equipment and treated, together with our own team, 1,880 patients in 3 days – all free of charge! Moreover, 3,000 gratuitous glasses were distributed. Due to this outstanding success we are planning another Eye-Camp ...



*Hariharananda Charitable Health Centre



The children enjoyed
very much the 2009
Athletic Meeting

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