

GYNECOLOGY AND GENERAL MEDICINE HEALTH CAMP MARCH 2020 in BHACHCHEK, AJIRKOT municipality, district of GORKHA.

PREAMBLE

With the Manoj Association in France and now Mutu Foundation in Nepal, our donors, we are very happy to finance and carry out our 4th free gynecology and general medicine health camp in Nepal.

It took place at the beginning of March in a normal way in a sort of temporal parenthesis. The threat of the Corona virus seemed distant and the free movement of people was still possible. But on March 20, we were able to take the latest international flights returned to France in full lockdown. This shift has also hit Nepal like the other countries around the world: closure of borders, closure of treks, lockdown, curfew, stop of public transport, schools ...

BACKGROUND

This small Asian country is one of the poorest in the world, rural for at least 80%, with 25% of its population below the international poverty line (\$ 1.25 per day), an income average annual of \$ 970, an HDI of 0.574 which places it at the bottom of the ranking at the 148th world rank on 189 countries (UNDP 2018), with a life expectancy at 70.6 years, an expected schooling duration at 12.2 years and on average 4.9 years. Nepal is a real socio cultural, religious, multiethnic and linguistic mosaic, hierarchical in ethnicities and castes see sub-castes (untouchables), very diverse and disparate and also very unequal.

Very young republic (May 28, 2008) that fights again and again for its independence and autonomy, it is particularly fragile and unstable.

Torn between its aspiration for modernism and the weight of traditions, this country of paradox elected, on October 28, 2015, a first female president, Mrs. Bydhia Devi Bandhari, who has long complained for women's rights. In her speech "Nepal is moving from a society dominated by men, where women work in houses and farms, to a society where they have equal opportunities and legal rights". In real life, despite political will and legislative advances for women's rights, the traditions of patriarchy continue. The family unit is formed around the father and in particular the eldest son inherited from the family unit with whom the whole family will live with children, parents, grandparents. Always under the male yoke, the Nepalese woman becomes a citizen only according to the goodwill of her husband or father; the tradition of chhaupadi, exile of women during menstruation or after delivery, which has become illegal, persists in certain remote regions; certain laws are diverted like the abortion leading too often to the selective abortion of the girls.

On April 25 and May 12, 2015, major earthquakes devastated Nepal. The villages nestled in the heart of the Himalayas and particularly in the area of the epicenter of the earthquake have suffered greatly.

By necessity, women are often isolated and used to managing everything in the village, a beginning of emancipation. Since then, the devastating effect of the earthquake has in fact been the trigger of a considerable rise for rebuild houses, villages, infrastructure and access roads improving living conditions and access to care.

Alas the COVID-19 pandemic cuts this momentum of recovery and risks destroying many efforts and advances. This new disaster falls just before the period of Himalayan treks. This

off season in Himalaya has very heavy human consequences (more 4000 tourist guides and more than 16000 trek guides!) and economical.

CONDUCT OF THE CAMP

Namaste Nepal!

Tribhuvan International Airport:

Dhan welcomes us with his beautiful smile and his welcome necklaces. We arrive a little tired after 24 hours of travel between the train and the plane. We left the day before from our Brittany level zero that of the sea so dear to our hearts.

Change of scenery: Kathmandu, the capital is still under construction and so lively.

On the way to the mission:

The next day we take the bus to Bhachchek.

1st step at Green City Hospital.

The Green City Hospital is a private hospital. He is our partner and our technical medical support for the mission. He brings us all his experience, his expertise in health camps, his staff: in particular his medical and paramedical team: doctors, nurses, pharmacist, the equipment, medical supplies and drugs necessary for the duration of the camp. We meet Mr. Saludin Miya, the director of the hospital. Doctor Binod joins us. A little blessing before hitting the road is not superfluous!

The road :

Once the equipment is loaded, we all get on the bus. We take the road to Prithvi main axis and only road to the west to exit the Kathmandu valley with its usual and endless traffic jam. We have plenty of time to admire the procession of magnificent TATA trucks in the bends of the road and dizzying tracks. Below, the tumultuous Marsyangdi river attracts us.

Stopover in Gorkha:

We are picking up the last member of the team, Dr Sahadev Bidari, in Gorkha. We take this opportunity to take a break and pick a bouquet of red rhododendron flowers, the national emblem of Nepal. A photo of the whole group is taken under the Nepalese flag.

Bhachchek terminus:

Finally Bhachchek, we arrive at destination after 10 hours, for only 170 km, on a bumpy road and finally on dirt track and pebbles. Too many to be homestay, we are hosted in a small, warm family hotel, with a Gurung family with their two adorable daughters Melina and Ashmi.

Bhachchek a village in the Himalayan hills:

It is in this big village of the Himalayan hills that the health camp will take place. The commune of Bhachchek is the seat of the community of the communes of Ajirkot rural municipi-

pality (gaunpalika) located in the Distrik of Gorkha and the Province of Gandaki. Ajirkot has about 18,000 inhabitants (last census in 2011 before the earthquake). In this rural community (80 to 90%), the population is really very poor. It is also the area of the epicenter of the earthquake which here devastated, wiped out, destroyed all the houses, all the schools. Surroundings there are only fields and rice fields, unchanging scenes of the life of the countryside and the mountains, hard work always with human hand in these steep inaccessible reliefs. Life is very difficult for these men and women with work in the fields, fetching water, fetching wood ... even more for women who work on the farm and at home. They are often isolated and used to managing everything in the village when the men work far away.

Meditation and yoga session:

To start the day, at the first rays of the sun, in a grand panorama with the Himalayan chain in the background, we follow the teaching of Radha Ram Koirala.

Health camp:

It is at Bhachchek's healthpost that the health camp will take place. The ambulance (mainly funded by the Namaste Association for € 6,500 and the Manoj Association for € 2,500, delivered in October 2018) is stationed.

The queue lengthens with its parade mainly of women and children of all ages. Mothers and their children, grandmothers, all generations are there. The women form a shimmering red procession of traditional clothes. Red is a symbol of energy, strength, power, passion and love, it is also the color of the tika, this little red drop on the forehead of married women.

The care is organized at the dispensary. The wait is long but the crowd is going in a good mood.

The reception is done outside. All consultants must start by registering: surname, first name, age, village, reason for consultation.

Then it is the turn to take the constants with the weighing, the blood pressure measurement, the temperature measurement. Screening for diabetes by capillary glycemia in people over 55 and pregnant women is organized.

Then the patients are led inside to the various consultations.

In the main building two general medicine consultation rooms are open as well as a gynecology consultation.

A laboratory assistant performs laboratory analyzes.

In another building, ultrasound is provided USG in one room and x-rays in another.

To close the circuit, the pharmacist dispenses the drugs prescribed for the duration of the health camp. As usual, people are in a hurry, jostling and entering with several in the consultation room without disturbing them in the least.

Thanks to donations from individuals and associations, we also brought stuffed toys and clothes for children as well as some games. Nothing is more beautiful than smiles and laughs of children !

All the teams are on the front lines:

- the teams of the Green City Hospital of Kathmandu: Dr Sahadev Bidari, Dr Chettri Adhi, Dr Sarala Kandel, Dr ...general practitioners; Dr ... gynaecologist; Dr Sameer Dangol, pharmacist; Nisha Pandey, Dbya kadel, nurses;
- the Bhachchek Health Post team, with Dr Thakur Bhatta as the responsible doctor;
- the members of the municipality, Ajirkot Rural Municipality, Mr. Phadindra Prasad Dhital, its mayor and Surest Dawad, health coordinator of the municipality;
- Health Community Volunteers;
- our French team from the Manoj Association: Dr Laurence Belz, Dr Fabienne Guillanton, general practitioners; Erwan Ferrant, Isabelle Le Douarin, Laurent le Douarin, nurses;
- our Nepalese binomial Mutu Foundation with our local coordinator, our great organizer Dhan Bahadur Gurung;
- his wife Gopi Gurung as elected representative of women;
- and the Buddha Himal Tourism Development Committee

The outcome of the camp is positive with:

- **556 consultations in total, 435 women (78.25%) for 121 men (21.5%)**
- **225 gynecological consultations**
- **198 ultrasounds**
- **50 laboratory tests**
- **radiological assessments**
- **15 surgical cases were selected for various problems: vesicular or renal lithiasis, gynecological problems: prolapse, masses, tumors**
- **4 diabetics screened.**

The main reasons for consultation are gastric or osteomuscular and several cases of vesicular or renal lithiasis.

During the camp, a 13-year-old girl was evacuated to Kathmandu for appendicular syndrome.

Since then, a woman has had a gallbladder operation.

As always in Nepal, the Health Camps and programs end with expressions of gratitude and congratulations during a closing speech with graduation to thank all the speakers. The municipality particularly spoiled us with scarves made on site by local crafts. Finally, everyone gathered around a convivial meal.

Back in Kathmandu, the time has come to leave. For our part, we leave to discover the country on the top of the world for the legendary Everest trek.

After the trek, we went to see the young girl with appendicitis at Green City Hospital. Her name is Bipana, she is 13 years old, she is one of the poorest among the poor, of the Dhalit untouchables caste. Without our care, without the ambulance funded by the Namaste and Manoj Associations in partnership, her family would not have been able to afford the care and this little girl would no longer be there. It is difficult to imagine, it is intolerable and unsustainable in our Western way of thinking and living ... Just for that thank you, all of you, for helping Manoj to the miracle of saving a life!

CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to thank all the local actors and the people who work with heart in the medical and social field in Bhachchek for their community.

We particularly appreciated our collaboration with the Green City Hospital. We gladly saw part of the medical team in Kathmandu and since then we keep in touch. We also had the honor of having lunch with its director before leaving and we thank him for his presence and listening.

Thanks to you, we are proud to have been able to accomplish our mission and to have been able to help Nepal in its progress for women's rights because the autonomy, education and access to care for women without discrimination is a priority.

Despite the Corona virus pandemic, we will continue our support to our nepalese friends by continuing our actions on the ground thanks to our local actors and coordinators. The difference today is that the crisis is all over the word. It affects us all. But do not forget that the poor will be even poorer and that more than ever they need our help for the essential to simply live.

Many thanks to all our donors and partners who by their generosity participate in human and united actions.

Namaste and see you very soon!