

Proposal: Master student to work on nutrition and health in India: healing plants

Fields to work on:

Together with our gardener Nilu Murmu the student is invited to work in the tribal area of Birbhum District (West Bengal, India) in selected Santal villages with the aim to cultivate and prepare herbal healing plants as remedies to be used in the tribal families. The effectiveness of the traditional medicines shall be analysed to treat common diseases as diarrhoea, respiratory infections and skin infections especially amongst the Adivasi children. Santal families mainly live from cultivating rice – 52 percent of children aged 6-36 months are chronically undernourished and 94% suffer from anaemia. During the COVID pandemic the anaemia rate amongst children could be decreased to less than 10 percent through provision of iron drops at household level, as well as supplement food (NutriMix). Still, the success did not sustain due to repeated infections after Covid with normal social life again... As money to buy medicines is scarce, families shall be trained to prepare traditional healing plants as remedies – so children do not fall so severely sick. The student to join our team may support the effort to cultivate herbal plants in the kitchen gardens (where mainly vegetables are grown so far) and analyse the effectiveness of the remedies focusing on 5-7 healing plants. The findings shall be documented and will serve as a basis for further programme planning – where a women self-help group may be trained to prepare herbal remedies for the village.

Cooperating partner:

Shining Eyes

Dr. med. Monika Golembiewski is initiator of this development work, working in India since 1994. The charitable society "*Shining Eyes – medizinische Hilfe für Kinder und sozioökonomische Dorfentwicklung in Indien e.V.*", registered at Germany, guides this development work.

Shining Eyes has built up a Health Care Centre at Bolpur, which provides medical aid free of cost especially for the poor Adivasi children and mothers residing in the rural area of Birbhum District. Related are 12 tribal villages, where health workers have been trained to guide preventive programmes in cooperation with our social worker, with a focus on nutrition and agriculture. Our gardener Nilu Murmu knows the healing plants well and knows to cultivate and prepare them and will be with the student to guide the analytic and practical work.

For more information, visit: www.shiningeyes.de/ www.shiningeyesindia.in

Location of the project:

In the rural area of Bibhum District, West Bengal India – about 12km from Bolpur/Santiniketan.

Housing:

May be provided in the hospital (guest rooms with toilet are available at the roof level) or in a nearby rented room. From Makarampur, Bolpur, it takes 20-30 minutes by bicycle to reach the villages.

Duration of the stay:

Preferably 5-8 weeks – as per the possibilities of the student and host organizations.

Contact for interested students:

Dr. rer. soc. Silvia Golembiewski (silvia.golembiewski@gmail.com)

Vice president Shining Eyes Germany

Impressions – village life and project activities:



Rice cultivation



harvesting



paddy



Kitchen gardens with vegetables



Nilu Murmu, gardener



Healing plant preparation



St. Mary's hospital at Bolpur



Health worker team



Village checkup Dr. Monika Golembiewski



Village life...

