

1. Introduction

The main goal of our work in the year 2016 was to stabilize the very difficult situation in Nepal in the aftermath of the disastrous year 2015. The earthquake end of April 2015 and the civil war-like conditions after the adoption of a new constitution in September 2015 had a massively worsening effect on the situation that had already been highly unstable before. In early 2016, three million people were still living in emergency shelters. Due to the blockade of the border to India, cooking gas and fuel could no longer be brought into the country. Despite the commitment of donor countries after the earthquake to contribute to reconstruction with an amount of four billion Euros, a corresponding Reconstruction Act was passed by the Nepalese government no earlier than in January 2016. That was when government officials started visiting the destroyed villages, registered the scale of damage and paid out the first funds for reconstruction – one year after the earthquake! In this context, the lack of construction specialists constitutes another big problem – many skilled Nepalese work in Qatar for the football World Cup – more often than not exploited like slaves themselves!



Awareness campaigns in the aftermath of the catastrophes

Also in 2016, the situation in Nepal continued to be very detrimental for the entire population, but especially for young girls and women. Times of crisis are heyday for human traffickers. Due to the catastrophic living conditions, lack of support by Nepalese authorities, the traffickers' fake promises of marriage or jobs and poor families' hopes for one mouth less to feed, the number of abducted persons has risen by at least 15 – 20% in the aftermath of the catastrophe according to a statement of the Nepalese Commission on Human Rights of April 2016.

It was specified that this figure particularly includes girls and young women that are often abused in brothels or as modern work slaves or are even sold for organ trade. Therefore, according to our local cooperation partner - MAITI Nepal - it is of particular importance to increase girls' and young womens' awareness about these dangers and to offer them career perspectives in their own country. For this reason – with financial support from the cooperating Soroptimist Clubs Muenster-Mauritz, Rhenen/Veenendaal (The Netherlands) and the Isle of Man (England), pro filia has intensified its awareness campaigns and created additional training opportunities and jobs, i.e. for additional border guards.

A visit of the pro filia projects in Nepal was finally possible again in 2016 - for the first time since the earthquake and the border blockades between Nepal and India. The emotional and deeply moving visit will be briefly depicted in the description of the individual projects. Sabin Gurung, our MAITI contact person, accompanied us on our several-day round trip of the different projects.



Visit of the Computer Centre Fikkal

2. The issue of human trafficking

In many areas of Nepal, girls have been considered to be near to useless for centuries. They cost money, parents must pay a dowry for the usually very early (forced) marriage and from then on, daughters work in their husbands' household caring for his parents and not for their own ones. Very often girls are victims of domestic violence and rape.

And Nepalese girls are enslaved in large numbers: each year approximately 12,000 of them are sold to Indian brothels and sexually exploited there. Very often they are no older than 12 – 16 years. The vast majority does not survive this – girls die from the effects of violence and diseases like AIDS, Hepatitis, etc.! Due to their often fair skin colour, Nepalese women are deemed to be particularly beautiful in India. Furthermore, India - where baby girls are frequently aborted or killed immediately after birth - experiences an increasing lack of women.

Some girls can be released from brothels – e.g. by a network in India built up by our Nepalese partner organization MAITI! pro filia is supporting these girls whose parents often do not take them back. And pro filia also contributes to preventing many girls from being

sold in the first place! Projects in Nepal financed by pro filia give almost 2,000 girls per year the chance to lead a self-determined, humane life.

3. Collaboration with MAITI Nepal



MAITI building in Kathmandu

With a high level of commitment, MAITI has helped to get the pro filia projects through the catastrophic year 2015. 2016 - the seventh year of cooperation - saw a continuation of this very constructive and intense cooperation. New concepts were developed together – first by e-mail and then during the personal visit in Nepal – to build up further projects complementing the proven range of measures offered. Their aim was and is to make as many girls and young women insensitive to the seemingly enticing promises of marriage or job offers of human traffickers.

4. pro filia projects in Nepal

Project 1: Awareness campaigns and establishment of aid networks

The aims of this project are

- To inform about the looming dangers of enslavement in seemingly attractive job offers or promises of marriage
- To improve reintegration of surviving girls that are hitherto widely met with hostility
- To establish an aid network for girls.



Street theatre to inform on girls trafficking

The campaigns are conducted with the participation of young women who – by now employed by MAITI – are themselves survivors of human trafficking or who could be stopped just in time at the border to India.

In 2015 and 2016 we have expanded financial support of this field of work in order to save as many girls as possible after the time of disaster through intensive information of their families and the intensified establishment of aid networks preventing them from being sold.

Results 2016 in the catchment areas of Pashupatinagar, Bhairahawa und Itahari:

- In many villages, door-to-door information campaigns, street theater performances, informational events about sex trafficking (and ways to get help) were conducted on market days reaching about 7,000 persons.
- 796 key persons such as policemen and -women, teachers, government representatives, hotel employees and bus drivers were trained regarding the issue of sex trafficking and possibilities to help.
- 648 pupils and students were made aware of the issue of sex trafficking and informed about aid networks and possibilities to protect themselves.
- During a number of cross-border events about cooperation possibilities in the fight against sex trafficking, 170 Nepalese and Indian representatives of border police and aid organizations were trained.
- Countless persons could be reached during a total of 46 one-day events on the topic of violence against women and women's rights.

Project 2: Border guards

Border guards are young women that were saved and trained by MAITI and are employed directly at the bustling border crossings to India. Against the background of their own experiences made, they address apparently endangered girls directly, offering the Transit home as immediate safe haven.

With the aid of the cooperating SI Clubs Münster Mauritz, Rhenen/Veenendaal and the Isle of Man, five additional border guard positions could be established in the spring of 2016, thus financing the wages of a total of 30 border guards in 2016 and at least well into 2017. These 30 border guards serve at 8 border crossings to India. Every border guard conveys an average annual number of 50 girls to a MAITI Transit home straight from the Indian border. Thus through the jobs actually financed at this time, an approximate number of 1,500 girls can be prevented from being sold to a brothel every year.

During our visit in November 2016 we took up close contact to the border guards in Pashupatinagar and Kakarvitta. We admired the straightforward manner in which they approach rickshaws and cars suggestive of transporting an endangered girl. They ask drivers to present the necessary documents and even insist that girls get out of the cars. Additionally they try to verify by phone the information they are given by the drivers. Border police is always within the range of vision – a difficult job in a noisy, dusty and bustling atmosphere.

During the discussions we had with the border guards following our visit, they described vividly how useful they perceive their work to be. However they pointed out that conditions were becoming more and more difficult with an increase of aggressive situations. Moreover the border guards are not always perceived as protective by endangered girls - but rather as enemies preventing their long-held hope for marriage and a better life in India from coming true. We discussed with them and their management that pro filia is ready to fund additional further education such as de-escalation trainings. The money will be transferred in Q1, 2017.



Border guards and border police at Pashupatinagar

Project 3: The Transit home Pashupatinagar

Transit homes offer immediate help to endangered girls right at the border and also serve as first safe haven for girls that could be freed from Indian brothels. Also in cases of domestic violence, girls and women can find support here.



Consultation in the Transit home after a case of domestic violence

During our visit a fourteen year old girl was just being brought into the Transit home by border police. She had been arrested during the night trying to cross the open border to India together with a young man. He had promised to marry her – just like he had done to seven

other young girls. The girl was desperate – she loved him and was persuaded that he loved her. Her parents who had already reported her missing came to pick her up. She had actually hoped for a better life in India. The girl still needs much information and support to understand that she had been saved from being sold to a brothel.

The young man was sent to jail and the case will be brought to justice. By now, human trafficking is sanctioned with 15 – 20 years' imprisonment.

Results 2016 for the Transit home Pashupatinagar:

- The Pashupatinagar Transit home offers shelter for 20 girls/young women at a time whose length of stay varies according to their individual requirements. Parents are contacted if the girls wish so. A family discussion is held to clarify if a girl can return home or is transferred e.g. to a rehabilitation center.
- The Transit home successfully intervened in the cases of a total of 545 young women/girls - two of them seven and eight years old – thus preventing them from being sold:
 - 531 came straight from the border where they could be stopped literally at the last minute and
 - 14 returned from situations with sexual abuse or abuse e.g. as work slaves – two of them under the age of 14.
- The Transit home also serves as a primary contact in other cases of violence against girls/young women: 23 girls came out of situations of domestic violence. In discussions with all parties involved, solutions could be found more often than not.
- In 2016 the Transit home carried out a search of 96 girls reported missing, 22 of which were found by MAITI and could be brought back home.

The Transit home Bhairahawa:

pro filia's financial contribution to the Bhairahawa Transit home has decreased by now as other donors could be found. The money is mainly invested in the establishment of aid networks and awareness campaigns in the Bhairahawa district, both organized by the Transit home. The results of these activities are listed under "awareness campaigns" in this report.

Project 4: The Rehabilitation home Itahari

Saved girls that can't or do not want to return to their families are transferred to a MAITI Rehabilitation home if they wish so. In these facilities they are helped to prepare for a self-determined life, they learn to read and write and participate in vocational trainings. Courses in sewing, modern agriculture, cooking etc. are offered.

During our visit in 2016 we had intensive encounters with the girls looked after at the Rehabilitation home who feel very comfortable in the inviting atmosphere there. They are discharged after six months which is often distressing because they do not know what the next step will be. Most of them want to earn their own income. Therefore it was of great importance to us that pro filia continues to support training courses and provides start-up financing and microcredits. The expanded measures in 2016 are described under projects 6 and 7.

During the day of our visit, the interaction with the girls became more and more relaxed. They sang for us and we sang for them, something they perceived as a great honor (“no one has ever sung for us!”) and at the end of the day we all danced to Nepalese music in an exuberant atmosphere. The goodbye was really hard for us!



Girls in the care of the Rehabilitation home

Results in 2016:

- In 2016, 35 saved girls/young women were taken care of in the rehabilitation home. They start learning how to read, write and calculate and are taken through professional trainings. They also receive a lot of information about their future daily life, such as HIV prevention, dangers of early marriage, contraception, women’s rights, support possibilities and protection against sex trafficking. The girls in care of the rehabilitation home were between 18 and 26 years of age.
- 31 girls/young women completed their professional training, 3 continued their training in a MAITI house in Kathmandu.
- 14 out of 47 girls reported missing could be found.
- Criminal actions such as rape, sex trafficking etc. are reported to the police.

Project 5: Mushroom farm

The mushroom farm was thought as a home for rescued young women who due to the severe traumatisation they experienced are psychically or physically broken. 4 – 5 saved young girls lived here at the same time. pro filia provided a two years’ start-up funding and the farm was intended to be self-sustaining as of 2015. Unfortunately the farm was completely destroyed by the earthquake. Furthermore, the challenges of the work there often proved to be too high for the traumatized girls. This is why it was decided not to rebuild the project after the destruction by the earthquake.



Mushroom farm before the earthquake

Project 6: Educational offers

By now pro filia finances a range of training opportunities for girls and young women in danger or saved from danger. As described above, an annual average of 35 – 40 saved young girls and women are trained to be seamstresses, cooks, agriculturists, mushroom farmers.

In order to give even more girls and young women career perspectives in their own country in the aftermath of the catastrophes in Nepal, thus immunizing them against the traffickers' seemingly attractive marriage promises and job offers in India, MAITI asked us to finance additional training opportunities.

Below is an overview of the training opportunities developed **in addition** to those of the Rehabilitation home:

6.1 Computer training

pro filia wants to provide education not only in classical female professions. It is our intention to also create more diverse and more profitable career opportunities that help acquire a stronger self-confidence. This is why since 2013, pro filia has been financing computer trainings for 40 girls per year. On the one hand the program is offered for preventive reasons: the training protects girls out of precarious family situations from being sold. On the other hands it offers the perspective of a self-determined life also to girls and young women that have been rescued. Besides the trainings, the costs for the equipment of the necessary computer training room were settled by pro filia. Despite all the disasters, forty young women were trained to use a computer in 2015 and 2016 each.

During our visit additional weekend trainings were offered for girls above the age of 10 years to introduce them to using a computer, e.g. by a drawing program – a good idea!



Young girls at the computer using a drawing program

6.2 Computer Hardware repair

In 2016 pro filia funded the training costs for 15 girls/young women who started training to repair Computer hardware in December 2016.



Computer hardware repair

6.3 Apiculture

Another project financed by pro filia in 2016 was a training for 40 girls/young women to become beekeepers. The project started in December 2016.



Apiculture training

6.4 Driving lessons

In 2016 we proposed to MAITI to finance driver's licences for 3 girls. It is our goal that young women

- can act as chauffeurs for representatives of aid organizations such as pro filia during their visits in Nepal - which as of now is only done by male drivers

and, as a second step,

- can additionally offer a taxi service for women. This „taxis chauffeured by women for women“ concept was established in Delhi after reports about mass rapes of women in India.

MAITI informed us that in Nepal many people do not pass the driver's exam. An additional hurdle for women to pass the exam is the fact that it is seen as very uncommon for them to drive at all. We asked MAITI to offer this training to women anyway. According to their information, not a single saved girl was self-confident enough to dare a try. However, MAITI knew of a number of girls albeit not in immediate danger of being sold that were quite interested because due to their poverty they had no career perspectives whatsoever. We then agreed with MAITI that pro filia takes over financing of driving lessons for three of these young women in order for them to pass the driver's license. It is our hope that after successfully passing their exam, they can motivate other, up to now less courageous girls in the care of MAITI to take driving lessons.

We have transferred the money for this purpose in October 2016. During our visit in 2016 we considered that it may make sense to have them pass the driver's exam for a motorbike rickshaw as a first step in order to get accustomed to traffic. A next step would then be the license to drive a car. MAITI announced to clarify with the interested girls if this approach makes sense.

6.5. Training in Healthcare:

Many areas of Nepal suffer from a severe undersupply of medical support. This is where we see possible career perspectives for young women. This kind of work would not only be highly accepted but would most probably also guarantee a sufficient income to ensure a decent existence. This is why during this year's journey, pro filia has established contacts with the Rabindra-Puri-Foundation in Bhaktapur. The prerequisites for the implementation of a three years' training as a health counselor with focus on homeopathy were discussed with Mr Puri. MAITI will now continue the conversation with Mr Puri to clarify the next steps in this context.

Project 7: The creation of jobs

Upon completion of trainings, problems regularly arise subsequently to find an employment that guarantees a dignified standard of living. In order to find helpful solutions to this issue, a

concept for the creation of jobs was developed together with MAITI. With the help of start-up financing and microcredits, trained young women should get the chance to earn an income sufficient for them to subsist.

7.1 Establishment of typing offices

During the meeting with MAITI end of 2013 it was decided to establish typing offices in 20 different locations in the Ilam (Pashupatinagar) district, staffed with at least two young women that have terminated the PC training. Locations are chosen for these offices where this service is not yet on offer. Besides services like writing letters, copying, scanning and internet access, information is provided about human trafficking and protection options – with the intention to increase the number of people made aware of this issue and to make as many girls and young women insensitive to the human traffickers’ seemingly enticing promises of marriage or tempting job offers in India.

In 2014, 5 typing offices could be set up. During the crisis-ridden year of 2015, there wouldn’t have been any thought about new projects. In 2016, however, pro filia transferred the funds to install another three typing offices – this project, too, supported by the SI Clubs.

During a visit of the Fikkal typing office, we met a number of very strong and inventive women. In the course of the two years since the foundation of their typing office they have made themselves known and do not only offer simple services, but also computer trainings for young girls. Moreover they themselves have come to be a point of contact for endangered girls that arrive on their own initiative or are brought by the police. They are given advice and are transferred to the Pashupatinagar Transit home if they so wish. As the women of the Fikkal typing office fulfill important tasks, the municipality of the place has now granted them a financial contribution. So far they said they have much work that still does not provide sufficient income. They are, however, enthusiastic about their work and strive for further income possibilities. For instance, they have installed sewing machines in their office as an additional offer to do tailoring and be able to employ more women.



The Fikkal typing office

During our conversation with them we had an intensive exchange about women's rights in Nepal and – upon their asking about this – also in Germany. They complain loudly about women in Nepal working very hard while men on the other hand often like to sit, play cards and be served. They clearly and credibly express their will to fight for more rights. Impressing!

7.2 Installation of tailor shops

In 2015 the installation of 5 tailor shops employing 6 young women each was planned. pro filia transferred the necessary funds with support of the Muenster Mauritz SI Club in June 2015. MAITI wanted to set up these tailor shops as quickly as possible, but had to wait for the government's approval for several months and then encountered infrastructural problems such as lack of fuel, street barricades and other massive obstacles caused by the civil war-like conditions. All these impediments had to be overcome step by step before the tailor shops could be finally built up in July 2016.

We visited four of these shops. They are located in very simple, small rooms. The women involved sometimes try to turn the little places into a boutique by offering further items like shoes and decoration objects. After the first three months of existence the income is still very scarce. We thought about ways of relief and announced to bear the rental costs for the next six months in order to facilitate the start for the young women.



Visiting a tailor shop

7.3 Microcredits for the start of an independent small business

In 2016 pro filia also transferred the funds for microcredits to support 12 young women with the start of their own small business after being discharged from the Itahari Rehabilitation home. They are helped with this endeavour by MAITI during the start-up phase. As soon as the government gives approval to this project, microcredits will be granted as of 2017.

5. Projects scheduled in 2017

Already now we can foresee that pro filia is definitely going to fund the following projects in the year 2017:

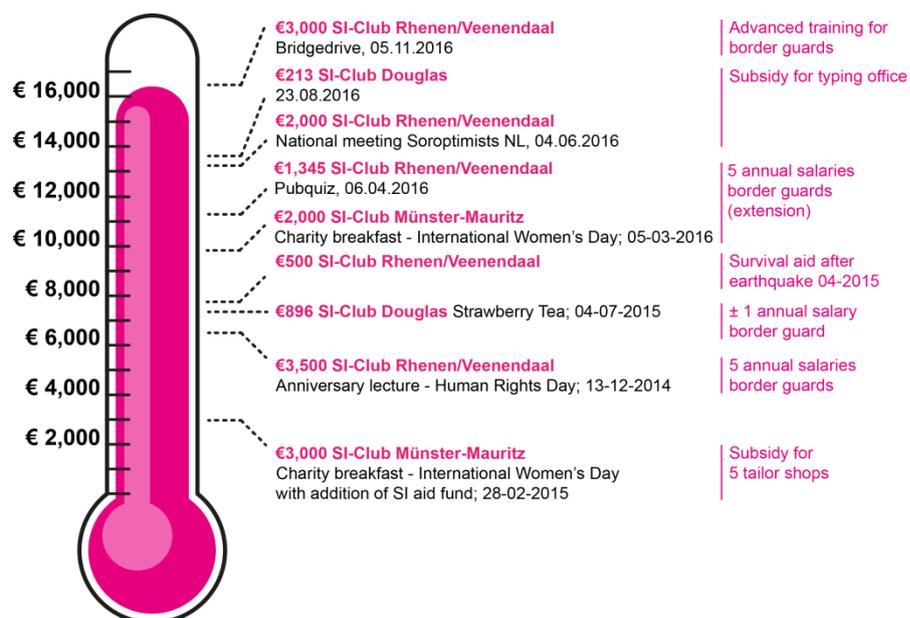
- Awareness campaigns and the establishment/maintenance of aid networks in the Ilam/Pashupatinagar, Bhairahawa and Itahari districts
- The salaries for 30 border guards
- The Pashupatinagar Transit home at the Indian border near Darjeeling
- The Itahari Rehabilitation home
- Computer training for 40 girls
- Further trainings such as 'De-escalation', 'work with traumatized girls' and/or 'teamwork'.

As far as financially possible, the following projects will be discussed with MAITI and affordable solutions will be implemented together:

- Further typing offices for young women trained on computers as soon as MAITI has found suitable locations
- Training to be a health advisor offered by the Rabindra Puri Foundation.

6. Cooperation

Besides the cooperation with MAITI Nepal, a cooperation with the SI Club Muenster Mauritz has been going on since mid-2014, another one with the SI Club Rhenen/Veenendaal since autumn 2014 and with the Isle of Man SI Club since June 2015. On the occasion of the SI charity breakfast early 2015 a meeting of the two SI clubs and pro filia was held where the further collaboration was laid out in more concrete terms with view to the amount of donations and the kind of projects to be supported. The target of the SI clubs to collect 12,000 € in two years was more than achieved:



In 2016, the SI-Club Rhenen/Veenendaal extended the cooperation by one more year. The SI-Club Muenster-Mauritz, too, will continue its collaboration with pro filia. The collaboration is accompanied by regular cooperation meetings, three of them in 2016.

We thank you with all our heart for this wonderful collaboration.

7. Activities 2016

Also in 2016 many campaigns were conducted targeting on raising awareness about the issue of human trafficking and to gain new members and donations for our projects:

7.1 pro filia actions in 2016:

- Presentation of the cooperation in 2015 between the SI-Clubs and pro filia at the Club night at Muenster-Mauritz on Feb 17, 2016
- pro filia Presentation at the charity breakfast of the SI-Club Muenster Mauritz on March 5, 2016.



pro filia presentation at the SI charity breakfast 2016

Representatives of the SI club Rhenen/Veenendaal were present as well. In the course of the conversation it became clear that all concerned are very satisfied with the cooperation so far and would like to continue this work as far as possible.



Meeting between the SI clubs' representatives and pro filia in 2016

- Doppelkopf nights on May 20 and October 28, 2016 and.....



-pro filia information booth at the two-day local Kreuzviertelfest in Muenster on August 27/28, 2016
- In 2014, pro filia had applied at the Muenster public prosecutor's office as non-profit organization entitled to receive imposed fines designated to be donated to charity. We were found to be eligible and thus were assigned funds of about 7,800 € in 2016.
- Preparations for the 4th pro filia Art auction scheduled for April 2, 2017 already took much time and space in the second half of 2016.
- Our application for tax authority's revenues out of criminal tax proceedings was found to be eligible as well : we were already assigned 1,000 € in 2016!
- Our application for the WN-Christmas campaign 2016 was not successful.

7.2 Actions for pro filia

- The campaigns of the three SI-Clubs were mentioned above (c.f. „cooperations“).
- The entire 2015 advent collection of the Guetersloh protestant parishes were transferred to pro filia in January 2016 – a total of 10,700 €!
- Numerous Boule tournaments organized by Konrad Averbeck yielded more than 1,000 €:



Boule tournament in the park behind the Castle of Muenster on June 15, 2016

- Graduates from the MSA Muenster (polytechnic School of architecture) collected more than 500 € for pro filia on their graduation.
- Yoga Summer, organized by Leben & Reisen: a series of open air Yoga session was held every Friday at 17:30 h between June 6 and September 9 near the Muenster lake (Aasee). The event was met with great interest. The Yoga events were attended by approximately 400 participants, each donating 5 € per session. The total earnings were donated to pro filia. The yoga instructors rendered their services free of charge!



Ilona Tertilt and Dagmar Merforth handed over 2,000 €

- Monika Schiwy made collections for pro filia at on several occasions.
- Tina Reuther and Isabelle Feix earned 1,000 € by selling books and transferred this sum to pro filia.
- Further donations were made for pro filia on various occasions such as birthdays, funerals, weddings, celebrations.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all supporters of the many activities and campaigns – to members, donors, sponsors, information desk personnel and bakers of cakes!

Many thanks also to Stefani Bültel who provides the English translation of the annual report and the pro filia website's updates.

7.3 Campaigns already scheduled for 2017

- 4th pro filia art auction on the premises of the Muenster University of Applied Sciences on April 2, 2017
- Further presentations wherever possible
- Information booth at the Kreuzviertelfest Muenster on August 27 and 28, 2017
- Two Doppelkopf nights
- WN-Christmas campaign 2017.

8. Condition of the pro filia association by the end of 2016

8.1. Number of members

By the end of 2016, pro filia is counting 189 members! The forthcoming general meeting will be held on May 5 at 7 pm at the Café "Herr Sonnenschein", Koenigsstrasse 43 in Muenster.

8.2. Financials

The cash auditors Hajo Schoo and Dr. Werner Brüren elected at the last general meeting reviewed and approved the 2015 annual report in 2016. The members ratified the executive board's actions at this year's general meeting on April 8, 2016. Likewise, the Muenster tax authorities have re-issued a notice of exemption in July 2016.

In 2016, pro filia transferred a total amount of 90,000 € to MAITI. 60,000 € were shifted into the year 2017, our next bank transfer to MAITI in April 2017 therefore safeguarded.

The expenditures of nearly 3,400 € (costs for programming, graphic design, computers and banking) were covered by contributions of the managing and executive board and sponsoring. So far, all necessary on-site project visits in Nepal were borne privately. In the long run, however, this procedure will be difficult: not every board member has the financial capacity to bear these visits to Nepal – even less so on a permanent basis. This is why upon suggestion of several members in 2016 it was concluded by the executive board to support two representatives of executive board and management with a subsidy of 1,000 € for visiting projects – also funded by donations of the executive board! 100% of all funding and contributions will still be forwarded to Nepal.

The detailed accounting report for 2016 – as the reports from 2008 through 2015 – as well as all donations received exceeding 1,000 € can be found on our homepage under "voluntary declaration of commitment".

8.3. Executive Board

The pro filia executive board was re-elected during the general assembly in 2016: Ina Specht, Josef Humbert, Brigitte Wierling, Jan Sprünken, Bernd Brixius and Mechthild Spener. Mechthild Spener was appointed chairperson and Bernd Brixius was appointed treasurer. Dr. Werner Brüren and Hajo Scholl will act as cash auditors also in 2016 surveying all financial transactions.

8.4. Perspective

We thank MAITI for keeping up their work on projects under the most adverse condition and for doing everything to ensure safety and sustenance to the girls and young women in their care. In doing so, MAITI is in urgent need of our support as food prices and costs for cooking and heating are rising rapidly. Ongoing projects need to be stabilized and new projects to be structured and built up.

Again in 2016, pro filia members, cooperation partners and numerous donors have enabled us to give this support. Many thanks to all of you for your help, with all of our hearts!

We enter the year 2017 hoping that the living conditions for the people in Nepal may – step by step – stabilize and take a turn for the better!

Dr. Johanne Feldkamp
CEO pro filia e.V.