“A positive attitude

towards solvable

problems

is half the battle.”

Ernst Ferstl

Dear friends of Ladakh-Hilfe e.V., Rewa Society and Rewa na KASCO,

Another year has passed and I would like to give you an overview of our activities and an insight into our work in Ladakh – which has been and continues to be made possible by your wonderful support.

This year, 47 children attended our centre in Kargil. In our special educational needs class, 37 pupils with a wide range of support needs, supported by our two wonderful special needs teachers, Archo Fatima and Tohira Banoo, as well as two assistants, were able to work through the school curriculum and develop their skills within our vibrant school community. Ten further pupils were able to be integrated into mainstream classes as part of our inclusive approach. Spread throughout the week, these pupils are taken out of lessons by our physiotherapists – Bilquis Fatima, Ameena Parveen and Zahera Banoo – and receive individual support.

A great joy and an important step this year was my visit to the centres in Ladakh. This allowed me to gain an insight into the current status of our activities on the ground, the needs, the difficulties and the opportunities. As the project requires almost daily communication and support, this personal contact and direct interaction are an essential part of our collaboration. Even though today’s forms of communication have made the world a very small place, they cannot replace these face-to-face encounters. This time was therefore a great enrichment for us all, reaffirming our trust and sense of community.

A variety of activities in Kargil

Following a cold winter with relatively little snow, the 2026 school year began this year as early as 16 March. Full of joyful anticipation, our pupils, still wrapped up warm, streamed into the school building to see their friends and teachers again after the long winter break.

Once again, a varied school routine awaited them, packed with activities and events.

On Environment Day, the plants around the building were tended to, new seedlings were planted, and lessons focused on the environment, pollution and environmental protection.

The warm spring sunshine drew everyone back outdoors, and the traditional picnic outings – with games, delicious food and a festive atmosphere – strengthened bonds and fostered a sense of community.

The teachers and therapists organised the lessons with great dedication and, despite the pupils’ wide-ranging educational needs, managed to explore the topics creatively and playfully with them – a major challenge with so many children in a special educational needs class!

For individual therapy sessions, the children were regularly taken out of class at the relevant times to receive personalised support through one-to-one sessions.

An integral part of the school year are the celebrations for Indian Independence Day and the traditional costume festival, at which traditional clothing from various regions is presented with musical accompaniment.
These celebrations were marked with great enthusiasm and joy by the entire school community. These inclusive events foster an active sense of community and strengthen the bonds between everyone.

Support from a volunteer specialist from Germany
We were very fortunate and received great support this year in being able to recruit Ms Bender, a highly dedicated and competent physiotherapist, for our project. Over a period of two months, she worked closely with our team, developed individual therapy plans in close consultation with our supervising physiotherapists Rosemarie Geenen and Heike Holz, creatively expanded the range of therapy materials through her own initiative, and provided training to the physiotherapists on specialist topics. With great courage and dedication, she also played an active role in assessing needs in rural areas as part of our field trips. Please do read her experience report on our website.

Resumption of field trips and assessment of needs in rural areas
An important part of the work involved assessing the current need for therapeutic and special educational support in rural areas. Over several days, part of the team travelled with Ms Bender to various areas of western Ladakh. There, they visited villages and, in particular, schools to determine the needs. Due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, services to rural areas had been suspended and had not yet resumed. The initial aim of this year's trips was to assess needs in order to better plan and organise further fieldwork. This presented a major challenge. Despite considerable effort, it was unfortunately not possible to reach all schoolchildren during the screening. We suspect that severely disabled children, in particular, were not included because they were not present at school due to their disabilities. There is therefore still a need to include households in the villages in a second round – an enormous organisational task that may not be entirely feasible.

Therapeutic equipment
After many years in storage in Leh, some assistive devices and therapeutic equipment – which had been brought to India from Germany in 2019 as part of a large donation of materials – were transferred to Kargil this year. They were immediately received with great delight by the therapists and put to use.
The centres in Leh and Kargil are now well-equipped to benefit from this wonderful support.

Quality circles led by Rosemarie Geenen and Heike Holz
Our physiotherapists, Heike Holz and Rosemarie Geenen, supported the team – and in particular our volunteer, Ms Bender – by providing professional guidance and individual, patient-centred advice. In several sessions each week, the various issues faced by each patient and possible therapeutic approaches were discussed and reviewed.
The therapy chat, in which day-to-day questions are discussed at short notice and recommendations are given, continued to be offered.

We initially put the monthly online Zoom training sessions that had originally been planned on hold due to our staff's limited English language skills when it came to specialist topics.

English lessons for the Kargil team

We hired an English teacher who gives daily lessons to our staff in Kargil. As a result, their English skills have already improved significantly, which has had a very positive effect on our staff's self-confidence. They take part in the lessons with great enthusiasm and commitment and have also shown a keen interest in continuing the lessons throughout the winter break.
Our aim is for everyone to reach at least B2 level, so that our Zoom training courses can lay a solid foundation for high-quality professional work in the future.

Lobzang Dolma's 'Bachelor of Education' degree

Our 'scholarship holder', Lobzang Dolma – a former employee of Rewa Leh and sister of our founding child – has completed the first semesters of her Bachelor's degree (B.A. of Education in Intellectual Developmental Disabilities) in Kolkata with great dedication. It is a distance-learning programme with two to three on-campus courses per year. Due to a very happy personal event – she became the mother of a son – she took an eight-month break from her studies and is now in the process of resuming them.

Participation in the national conference on 'inclusion' in Leh

In early September 2026, a national conference on 'Inclusion' took place in Leh. It was attended by 135 participants from 46 different institutions across 18 states of India. Two of our staff members, the physiotherapist Bilquis Fatima and the special needs teacher Archo Fatima, took part and made valuable contacts. They ran a stand to showcase the work of Rewa na KASCO and shared their experiences with other participants. Filled with a sense of fulfilment and armed with many new ideas, they returned to Kargil.

Construction of the new therapy centre

One major project this year was the construction of a new building for the Munshi Habibullah School, on the ground floor of which Rewa na KASCO's new therapy rooms have been created. The entire building has been designed and built to be accessible. The new therapy rooms are beautifully light and spacious, with wood-panelled walls that radiate a cosy warmth. All the rooms are interconnected and form one large hall. Thanks to wide swing doors, this hall can be divided into three separate rooms. The new rooms are due to be opened and officially inaugurated at the start of the new term in spring. With the relocation of the therapy rooms, several rooms will then be available for lessons. This is a major improvement, as it will allow classes to be divided according to learning level and pupils to be taught and supported on a more individual basis.

Support for 'Sanze' – Sanjay Lama

The news of the massive mudslide in Nepal left us all deeply shocked. We were horrified to learn that our former colleague, Sanjay Lama, had been personally affected and had witnessed the disaster at close quarters. Scarred by this experience and traumatised, he returned to his home in Kathmandu. Since then, coming to terms with what he has been through has demanded all his energy, meaning that, until further notice, he is unable to resume his usual daily work routine. Thanks to your donations, we were able to compensate him for several months' lost wages, thereby giving him the time and space he needs to recover.

Establishment of a preparatory class for blind and deaf children in Leh

A new initiative was launched in Leh this autumn. Tsering Dorjay, former manager of the Rewa Society Leh, founded a small private school in 2025: the *Mountain Little Stars Academy*. It currently comprises a crèche, a nursery and a pre-school group, with further classes in the pipeline. The issue of inclusion has long been close to Dorjay's heart. That is why he also wishes to admit and integrate children with special educational needs into his school. As there are already several facilities in Leh offering physiotherapy, occupational therapy, special educational support and speech and language therapy, we worked with him to develop a programme focusing on blind and deaf pupils. Until now, there have been very few support options available for them.

We have already been able to appoint a Braille teacher. He will initially focus on our first blind pupil. Together, we will develop a plan and implement it over the coming years. As there are very few such services available, we expect to be able to admit further pupils in the future. Through this project, we aim to close this significant gap in provision.

Solar installation – project funding from Elektrizitätswerke Schönau (EWS)

It is with great joy and gratitude that we have received the funding approval from Elektrizitätswerke Schönau to support 'global energy justice'. They have donated a substantial sum, which will enable us to power our new therapy rooms entirely with solar energy (electricity and heating). We had applied with the idea of implementing sustainability not only in relation to therapy and special educational needs, but also across the entire facility, and of powering the new building with renewable energy. Thanks to this funding programme, a dream has come true – one that we could not have realised on our own. A heartfelt thank you to EWS for making this possible!

It has been a busy and productive year, characterised by lively exchanges both on site and, as usual, via the media.

We are now approaching the winter break – the peace and quiet of this reflective time, with its long nights, will do us all good.

Looking ahead to the new year, we are very much looking forward to actively supporting our work on the ground once again – with your financial support – to foster new initiatives and bring our visions to life

Plans for 2027

- Resumption of regular online Zoom meetings for professional development (once a month)
- A mentoring programme to provide individual professional support for staff
- Further training and professional development for staff
    - Continuation of English lessons until the B2 level is achieved, with further lessons where necessary to improve professional communication
    - Provision of qualified online training courses delivered by subject matter experts for staff in Kargil and Leh
    - Individual support for staff members where required and feasible
- Supervision and support for projects and professional work provided by Lobzang Dolma
- Establishment of a support programme for blind pupils in Leh through cooperation with the Mountain Little Stars Academy

- Secondment of experienced therapists (physiotherapists, occupational therapists, special needs teachers, speech and language therapists) from Germany to Kargil to support the team
- Fitting out the new therapy centre with a solar power system
- Public relations work through stands at events or markets
- Recruiting new members and supporters for Ladakh-Hilfe e. V.
- Arranging therapy sponsorships for the children of Rewa na KASCO Kargil

In order to continue offering the children high-quality support and to realise our planned projects in 2027, we rely on your help.
We would be delighted if you would continue to actively support our work with your donation.

For further information, photos and the latest reports, please visit our website, which we update regularly (www.ladakh-hilfe.de).

Thank you very much for your loyalty and support in 2026!
We wish you a wonderful festive season and a Happy New Year.

Johanna Klein (Chairperson) **November 2026**

Sara Lücking (Vice-Chair), Andrea Kramer (Treasurer) and Bernhard Dunst (Secretary)

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