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VOICES OF MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES...



“Nomus – For Education and Health” is planning another year of development support in Gojal

PT Report

Gilgit, February 21: It is not unusual for a tourist to visit the Gilgit – Baltistan region and observe the contrast between beauty of the magnificent mountains and lives of the ordinary people, many of whom are plagued with the menace of poverty, surviving of subsistence farming. There are numerous stories about tourists who return to their countries and launch initiatives aimed at improvement of life standards.

The story of Nomus – For Education and Health, is not very different.



Students were badly affected across Gojal Valley due to blockade of the Karakoram Highway which made it impossible for farmers to market their produce

Ms. Elisabeth Oberli, a Swiss national, on her visit of Shimshal valley felt that there was a need to support the people in the field of education and health. She teamed up with Ghulam Shah, a tourist guide hailing from Shimshal Valley, and together they have been able to generate funds and support students and patients in different villages of Gojal Valley, over the past three years.

Starting in 2010, they have been able to give cash money to schools, buy medicines for Shimshal’s dispensary and pay scholarship fees to over a dozen students, getting education at schools, [colleges and universities](#).

Some of our readers might remember a story about the first Bagpipe Band of Shimshal Valley posted last year. <http://pamirtimes.net/2011/04/27/music-for-shimshal-from-surinay-to-bagpipes/>



Elisabeth Oberli handing over medicines to community in Shimshal

Ghulam Shah told Pamir Times that over the past three years they have supported community based schools in Shishkat (Lee Rosy School), Gulmit (Al Amyn Model School), Ghulkin (Nasir-e-Khusro Model Academy), Passu and Shimshal (4 schools), by donating cash, for payment of scholarships and other expenses.

Around 1.5 million rupees has been given to the schools, he said.

Shah further informed that support will also be provided this year to schools and hospitals.

It is pertinent to note that community based schools in many villages of Gojal valley were faced with difficulties due to the blockade of [Karakoram Highway](#) in January, 2010. Hundreds of students were unable to pay tuition fees, making it difficult for the administrators to pay salaries to teachers.

Shah informed Pamir Times that Nomus has now been registered in Muhen/AG, Switzerland, in accordance with Articles 60ff. of the Swiss Civil Code (ZGB).



NOMUS – For Education and Health

Registered logo of Nomus

Nomus is a word in the local Wakhi language, used for a tradition of performing a deed of collective social good in memory of a dear one, alive or dead. In Shimshal valley the local people construct bridges, dig channels and perform similar other tasks to pay tribute to a dear one, while simultaneously helping the communities overcome a collective problem.

The [board of directors](#) of Nomus consists of three ladies, Rita Zehnder, Mico Marti and Elisabeth Oberli.

Explaining the funds generation method, Shah said that the funds are donated by philanthropist individuals based in Switzerland.

Ghulam Shah told Pamir Times that Nomus would provide funds to schools and medicines to a hospital in Shimshal Valley in the year 2012 also.