

To: Louise, Kaare, Meera, Gaylord, Chela, Paula, Nicky, Edwina, Jenny, Laurie, Anne, Tracy, Mary Ann, Hemant, Dorothy, Susanne, Sashank, Penny/Lee, Cindy, Marji, Sarita, Janaki, Riva
From: Rita
Date: 29th February, 2012
Subject: Sampanna Campaign Update – End-February, 2012



The air-condition made us freeze in Bangkok as we wrote and worked!

Imagine, I have hardly been in Kathmandu since the 16th. First I was in Bangkok for a write-shop – happily soaking the hot/humid environment and eating shamelessly! Then travelling to Baglung, Myagdi and Chitwan, Makwanpur districts to oversee some projects on behalf of DFID (needed the money!). Here are but some snippets of the past 12 days. All of you who cannot visit in March, this will give you a glimpse while providing some documentation for the campaign. So this time I won't do the Nepal bit – nothing exciting for sure!

Update on the Building/s:

Thanks to Sashank – for the supervision and for updating me with pictures while I was in Bangkok. Detailing work is most difficult. Now multiple actors have been working one on top of the other, and it is getting very difficult to ensure that each of them work responsibly – without damaging the walls, plaster, newly made steps, or the bathroom tiles. In between trips and work – I took help at times from Sashank my son who made regular visits, the Tewa staff, and of course Janaki durga who with the assistance of the Tewa staff has been busy with:

- Hiring 4 helpers for the dormitory, and 1 gardener
- Bought necessary items, &
- Is training and using the new staff in the minute cleaning activities.



The South Face & the North Face (ramp and the solar panels and heater on the rooftop) of the Dorm!

But most importantly the workers have worked so very hard to complete the work. As you can see, almost all that we intended to complete before the event has been completed.



[Watch Closely for Fan, Fixtures in the Bathroom and the Room!](#)

Finishing work like light fixtures, bathroom fixtures, flooring work, finishing touches, and some painting work is ongoing. The solar panels have been installed and we have running water in the taps! Some work remains on the access to the building from both the south and the north sides. Stairs, ramps, and paving of the floor area are ongoing at a frantic – no an intense pace. I am reassured that they will all be done!

Moving the Campaign:

Cindy Ewing, Tewa's ongoing donor activist has gifted the campaign US \$ 3000! We have more good news! Margaret Schink of the Shaler Adams Foundation, made an inquiry. She said that some money she had designated for the TLBDP was lying at the Tides Foundation since last year owing to some oversight, so something substantial may be coming our way with an additional gift - which she also mentioned. From Nepal, the chair of our board, Sadhana, with her daughter/fiancée (Sneha/Dije) and newly married son and daughter-in-law (Razeena/Subeer) made a collective gift of Rs. 150,000 for the SC. Madeline Gilchrist from Toronto, my pacifist friend, is sending (with a student group visiting Nepal at the time), her house-warming gift of US \$ 200 for the two coffee tables. Dr. Julian & Jane Rait with their children send us US \$ 500 as a house-warming gift for all the room fridges we need. Paula durga asked for the GFW address, to also make her gift! Oh just in the wee hours of this morning I checked emails to see that Chela Blitt is making a gift of \$ 10,000 to the SC! I am awed – and overwhelmed by so many gifts, importantly – love and support!

The celebration committees are also raising money locally for the events and have been working with gusto. A special follow-up and update meeting was held today. Lynne and Ann with her friend Joseph are already here – sadly Joseph won't be here but he got to visit Tewa today. We now have Caroline Kiarie, the grant-making officer at the Urgent Action Fund Africa also coming in for the celebrations (thanks to Hope!)

Conclusions:

Although I did not want to even write about Nepal and all that continues to worsen here, 3 ex-ministers are now in the jail on charges of corruption and related crimes. This may be one of the best ways of enabling some confidence in the people, and hopefully may deter others. 12 policemen resigned en masse in a district when a youth political leader and his cronies started flexing muscles when they were pulled up for not wearing helmets while riding motorcycle. “What is the point of us doing our duty when there is so much of political interference” – the policemen said! During my field visit in the 4 districts I covered last week, political dejection is pervasive and the condition of the country is worrying. To top this all, a previously unknown group blasted a powerful bomb near the oil corporation office as a way of protesting the price hike. Sadly 3 were killed and 6 injured.

Yet we are all doing the best we can – the women's groups were doing so much despite the challenging circumstances. Therefore for so many of you who we would love to have with us this March – here is our virtual welcome – the women lined up to welcome us in Makwanpur! For those of you who are joining us – please travel safe and happy! We are so very looking forward to this event!



**LEADS Programme, Savings and Credit Women Group in Makwanpur District I visited Last Week -
Welcome!**