

## Post EQ Update - Our Situation/Work on the Ground - 13 31 July, 2015 (bi-monthly)

### General:

An official 2-day (22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>) holiday was announced to enable feedback from all the districts on the draft constitution. All of this happened in a mixed way where there were enthusiasms, assaults, and even disruptions. As per the latter 24<sup>th</sup> was a strike day, which was called in by those few parties wanting to derail the constitutional process. Prior to this some level of vandalism including the torching of a school bus and taxies in Kathmandu occurred. As can be imagined, each day is precious for ongoing post EQ recovery work – and one day like this can be damaging to the spirits and the work, and all the loss this incurs is huge. So far the monsoon is adequate for the rice fields, but for those dislocated in some of the camps, it has been an extremely challenging experience. Individual Nepalis/friends of Nepal continue to come in and take initiatives to support pockets of affected people within the reach.

### Tewa/NA:



The 2 groups of HTG volunteers returning from the field, and had a reflective session to assess learning, challenges, and possibilities. This was shared to the other four groups leaving for the 1<sup>st</sup> time for the fields. It was an enriching and an enlightening session. The following morning, Nirmala KC, Tewa

Board Chair gave the traditional send off to the volunteers. It can only be imagined that the Barpak team came with sore legs/feet and yet readily went back to help. It was the gaining of love and appreciations at the level of the local communities as well as their direct experiences in the districts, that they



could actually make a contribution and a significant impact in the lives they touched, that became the incentive to go back and volunteer.

The other significant work these weeks was initiating the "Supporting Our World Heritage – Bhaktapur" programme. This programme is designed to have as its entry-point, 1) the serving of a mid-day meal/s to the local residents of Bhaktapur who are engaged in recovery/rebuilding work; 2) a "heritage tour through the rubbles" as a way to promote all around education and awareness through local tourism helping the local economy to some extent; and 3) an applied research which will ride on the first two initiatives to learn about the implications and impacts of the earthquakes among the resident of Bhaktapur. Furthermore, this research will also try to explore the level of economic, socio-psychosocial, and other nuanced problems and transitions that the people of Bhaktapur are now facing post earthquake. Thus, the work goal is to assess the impact and implication of the earthquake among the people of Bhaktapur at large, but more at those engaged in the recovery/rebuilding aspects, in order to contribute in formulating an effective strategy to work for the longer-term ongoing recovery and rebuilding processes. Several meetings took place to clarify the concept and the working modality. An overall programme committee, and a research committee has been formed including appropriate members of the Bhaktapur community. Tewa/NA recovery and rebuilding work now entails the following:

1. Hamro tewa goan-gharma (led by Tewa)
2. Building lives – inspiring hopes (led by NA), &
3. Supporting Our World Heritage – Bhaktapur (joint)

With these initiatives on top of all the ongoing work of both the organizations, we will have stretched and exhausted all the resources and capacities we both have in our organizations. But we feel that a niche contribution will be made where it is most needed in the affected districts owing to the originality of the initiatives.

### Case Study/ies:



1. On the 27<sup>th</sup> we visited Chautara in Sindhu-palcok district to follow-up on the HTG volunteers. In a less than a month since their first visit, the 4 volunteers had managed

to do so much work! They helped set-up the camp for the physically challenged and outfitted it by paving and mud washing the floors, furnishing and outfitting the shelters appropriately for the visually impaired, the meeting and office space, the kitchen/s and the dormitories. They shopped for all the necessary materials for the shelters and organized it. They were going to

Irkhu VDC each day to help out women and families with clearing rubbles, help in building work, other planting work or house work as was needed and sometimes the affected people just needed someone who would listen to their woes. This also they gave them with empathy.

In doing this they received so much affections, and have already built some lasting relationships.

But their first piece of work was to build the office of the Adibasi Janjati Women's Upliftment

Forum and support Panmaya Tamang in her work. This ensured that women agency and organizing continues and that they can contribute even more to the communities they serve.



### **The ERF:**

The most wonderful news on this email is the confirmation of Indian rupees 900,000 (almost US \$ 15,000) from an Indian individual Rahul Kapadia for the EQ relief fund, through long time friends of Rita, Anjalee & Prakash Wakankar. The money comes without asking and with thoughtful promptness. This is what makes us roll more madly than most! As Tewa/NA tail off into longer-term recovery and rehabilitation work, the ERF Committee is being brought to a closure. On the 29<sup>th</sup> the ERF Committee meeting was held where a final update was presented and the three external members Hemanta Arjel, Pratima Thapa, and Dr. Chhatra Amatya (Med.) were warmly thanked. They expressed a deep sense of satisfaction on the way the ERF moved and the transparency that went with it. It was agreed that the final closure would happen with a social audit when the Tewa audit closes this month. In terms of the EQR funds there is not much change at present. The pledges will be coming into the Tewa bank during August and will be very supportive for the 3 major initiatives while we look for longer-term support.

### **Others:**

Good news is that Tewa ED Sadhana is back at her desk. Tewa Chair of the Board, Nirmala KC returned from her participation at the IHRFG New York Conference. She reported that it was a very useful experience although compared to the work Tewa is doing, hers was a solitary and therefore a weak representation being alone from Nepal while other countries had at least 3 or 4 participants each.

*Note: Picture Credits: Ganga Sagar Rai & Rita Thapa*