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Subject: Post EQ Update - Our Situation/Work on the Ground - 39
Date: 28 November, 2016 PEQ Update (monthly – Last but 1 remaining)

General:

The most sensational news for Nepalis has been that we have had no load shedding this month all because of a new appointee as head of the electricity department! But political mayhem is ongoing. Overall it does not feel like we are likely to see some political stability in the near future, yet if we are not speaking too early, Nepal may be on the brink of some economic and social progress – these can be speculated in the coming few years, owing to expected sufficiency of electricity supply, building of additional roadways, building of a few more international airports, and owing to our strategic location between India and China. Let us so hope!

NA/Tewa:



This month NA made a field visit to Barpak & Laprak.

This field visit made by NA, included Board members and staff. As winter approaches, it was obvious how people are gearing up for another season of hardship in the absence of

government rebuilding work. The NA team went with a gift of care packages for all members, which was greatly appreciated. They were able to monitor the work and the outcome of the NA BL/IH socio-



psychological counselors and the Tewa HTG volunteers.

They received a very warm welcome and a huge appreciation for all the work done during the past 1 and half years. Community members expressed that although Tewa and NA provided largely intangible support, it was much needed and had greater value than some of the other services and relief provided. This was a difficult visit to make owing to the difficult roads, but the team felt that without being actually present, it would not be possible to assess the good work that was being done.

Likewise, Antina Ranjit has gone on a rotational basis to provide psychosocial counseling support to the BL/IH counselors in Sindhupalchok and other designated districts. The other NA counselor, Sudeep Sigdel has been busy with the monitoring and training of the volunteers of the NA *Youths for Change* programme.

The Tewa HTG volunteers are continuing with their savings credit, educational, and other social initiatives in all the districts of their engagements. The regular meetings of the saving and credit groups has worked as a platform for rural community women to talk about violence against women (VAW), gender discrimination, racial discrimination, community philanthropy and women's empowerment. These activities have encouraged them to venture out of the four walls of their homes and explore their full potential, develop networks, and build their confidence and self-esteem.



Training on incense stick making is ongoing for 21 women of the indigenous community (Newars) of Chapagaun, Bajrabarahi Municipality. These types of trainings are highly desired by the local women as this helps them to learn new skills and earn with low investments. Ganga Maharjan shares how the training has helped her. These products are in high demand and they do not require huge space and can be done in little spare times. This enterprise has helped her to earn monthly 3500 rupees with as little an investment as of 400 rupees!



Case Study:

1. Like many other young girls from rural parts of Nepal, **Durga Majhi** (17) from Manthali, Ramechhap belonged to a family with a weak financial condition. Incidentally during the initial phase of volunteer deployed at Ramechhap district, HTG volunteers encountered a young girl complaining about not being able to go to school. At that time, one of the HTG volunteers Kamala Pant confidentially found out that Durga didn't like attending school as she didn't have school uniform. To encourage her to continue her education, the volunteers provided her with a new uniform and she was supervised on her studies time and again to monitor her progress. At the time of her passing out of school, she was further supported for her education and registered for grade 11. Today, she aims to be independent, earn to be financially stable, and wants to look after her differently-abled father.
2. After the death of her husband, **Ganga Shrestha** from Sindhupalchowk, was denied her property rights by her brother-in-law. She has 2 children and depends on agriculture for their living. Her brother-in-law not only denied Ganga her rights, but harassed her for making such a demand as a woman. Unaware of legal rights, Ganga reported this matter to the local HTG volunteers. The volunteers first tried to talk with her brother-in-law, but he didn't give any time to meet or listen to them. Eventually, Ganga with the coordination from volunteers' registered a case in the district courts. At first, her brother-in-law didn't appear in any hearing, but during the third hearing, he came and Ganga was granted her due rights by the court. She is the legal owner of her share of the property now because of the HTG volunteers.

Conclusions:

It is not possible to capture all the work of the HTG and BL/IH volunteers in all the districts of their involvement. It was noted during NA's field visit to Barpak & Laprak that they have done very good work and are becoming indispensable to the communities.

Season's best greetings from of us at Tewa & NA!