

Post EQ Update - Our Situation/Work on the Ground - 14 15 August, 2015 (bi-monthly)

General:



On August 4, 2015 Police ruthlessly attacked in a one-hour strike organized by the Dalit activists for their equitable representation in the CA. Some 40 Dalit leaders & activists were injured – some with broken limbs! This is not all – the women's collective campaign for a women friendly constitution is

ongoing with daily 1-hour demonstrations. There are demonstrations regarding proposed federal states in Western Nepal, to the extent where in Surkhet district police had to open fire after situation went out of control on the 10th killing 3 activists followed by curfew. The demonstrations are ongoing in the neighbouring districts, and the curfew orders are ongoing. Adding to this, the Tharuhat and the Madheshis are also on strike – bringing almost half of Nepal to a closure. The taxis drivers are on strike since the 9th – no taxis were available on the streets of Kathmandu until the 14th.

Tewa/NA:

On the 4th Susan CEO/NA led a team to visit Dhading where the Tewa Barefoot volunteers and the NA socio-psychological first aid trainee youths are working in the coordination of Focus/Nepal, an organization in the peace network of NA. The Asia



Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management (APAD) representatives from Japan and Sri Lanka were also present. Rita went to co-facilitate the meeting/s with Susan and Hari/NA. Multiple and simultaneous meetings and workshops were held to ensure that this programme

became successful by understanding the ground realities, monitoring progress, having open consultation, and a look into further possibilities. Likewise, two teams of Tewa/NA staff have gone on the monitoring visit/s. Largely they report that:

- the "**hamro tewa goan-gharma**" (HTG) is a very appropriate programme
- in this brief period of 1 month, the volunteers have gained people's trust/love
- their work at the level of the local communities is well appreciated/critical.

On the other hand the "**Building lives – Inspiring Hopes**" programme required the close follow-up, and guidance. But once more the service is well required and the youths are primarily mapping and introducing themselves at this time. In both programme there may be a 10% drop out. Besides, possibility of **Center for Peace & Philanthropy** is being looked into by NA with probable APAD support. A trip to Raamechhap was also taken on the 14th to have conversations with the local



community and YPS Nepal. The Bhaktapur applied research study has also taken off this fortnight with having a academic backstopping team in place and having given several orientations to the four enumerators who are going to be responsible for the field level data collections.

Case Study:

1. The present political conditions have not been conducive to working in peace. For the past 2 weeks the Women's Collective Campaign has been ongoing



with the participations of all women's rights organizations. NWHRDS/WOREC, FWLD, LAAC, Sankalpa, Tewa/NA, Jagaran, Fedo, WHR to name a few, have been at the organizing front. To give an example

Tewa/NA organized and led the peaceful protest on the 14th. Another one is planned for the 16th with torchlight (to shine light and focus on the discriminations against women) during 7 – 8 pm.

But it makes us worried, as we are all getting so overstretched and worn out, besides the uncertainties of our times makes it harder for even as I write, I learn that tomorrow the 16th is a strike. How do we get to work?

Others:

A total amount of \$ 14,585 Canadian dollars was raised with love and care reaching out to their friends and family, by our long-term supporter donor/s Lynne Brennen & Michael Cook, and sent to Nagarik Aawaz for the relief/recovery fund. Susanne E Jalbert continues to organize the many annual "Tewa Teas" for us. Kabita Upadhayay Tewa past staff, arrived with her gifts and what she gathered from her network in the USA for us. Masanori/Etsuko Yamaguchi, friends of Sadhana, who sent us support earlier also personally visited Tewa. Likewise Dr. Shashi Praetorius another long-time friend of Rita too made a gift of US 10,000 for the relief fund through her foundation. These and other (too many to mention here) individuals' out reach of love and support has kept us going.

On the other side what is totally inspiring is the way the affected communities are going about their lives. Everywhere we travelled this fortnight in Rammehhap, Dhading, Sindhupalchok, and Barpak the corn is almost ready for harvesting, the rice is planted and weeding is underway. Some rubbles are being organized, temporary shelters are in place. Communities who are totally uprooted are in a much harder place, but largely, people are stoic and are asserting life! Overcoming fear, loss, hardship has been more tolerable owing to the love and support all are receiving to some extent from near and far.

Conclusions:

I think even as well all wind up a day of rest, we are worrying about reinventing and managing tomorrow so that work can still gets done!