

Post EQ Update - Our Situation/Work on the Ground - 4 11 May, 2015

General:

As of today the Humanitarian Index Data updates death as 7,885; number of People Injured (estimate) at 17,803; number of IDP camps at 58; and funding received at \$ 139.3 million. Local newspapers quote a higher death toll. Funerals, memorial services, have been the order of the week. The initial shock is waning off and giving vent to increased politicization, aggressiveness (looting, drinking/drugs and venting out/s – although we have not seen too much of it between Tewa and NA), and fear for security situations is rising at the local level be it fear of animals as people sleep with little protection out on the open, or of looters/robbers who are waiting to pounce where relief aid is expected to go. This time largely, relief aid is more gender and equity friendly. Every Nepali & groups of Nepalis are working around the clock to take relief support out in the best possible way according to them. There is little that is used in overheads or has possibility of misuse. The need is overwhelming and the suffering great. The issuing trauma is of an unimaginable scale.



Tewa/NA:

On the 8th, 42 people (board, members, staff, volunteer) of Tewa and Nagarik Aawaz gathered together for the first time since relief work began. The chairs led the meeting and concluded ED/CEO gave the update on

the outreach/work; funds; the Treasurer & FO gave the financial update; and the Founder gave the philosophical underpinning of the relief work. An open forum of 15 minutes gave many good inputs. The meeting wasted not a word, and ended on

the dot of time. Many said they were feeling so isolated and helpless until then – with this a continuity of such meetings among others was also decided.

Likewise on the 10th we had an in house 3-hour long orientation on socio-psychological counseling given by experts Asha Basnet & Kedar Rayamajhi. Tewa/NA staff, members, and volunteers attended this session and found it to be greatly useful. The sessions focused on the need for sensitive empathizing, interacting with the affecting community and understanding their emotional needs, and making referrals if the need exists. Almost all the participants, were experiencing secondary trauma such as sleeplessness, lack of appetite, and feeling scared that another earthquake would occur. Two NA counselors will be the point persons for our own staffs to reach out when/as they need to. A follow-up was planned in two weeks time.

The outreach work has been ongoing in the hospitals, Tewa grantee groups, in communities in Kavre district, and those served by the NA youth and peace groups e.g. Godavari, Budhanilkantha, and Lalitpur.

Case Study/ies:

1. On the 9th a joint team of Tewa/NA, went to the ward 4 of Sapang VDC of Kavre District. This was the hometown of Tewa bus driver, Kancho. Over 90% homes were either destroyed or unlivable. 3 people and



some livestock lost their lives. The team successfully and peacefully distributed cash relief of Rs 10,000 to 83 homes (belonging to Brahmin/Chettri, Newars, Dalits, and indigenous families – represented demographically in that order) Rs. 5000 for those who had cracks and damage to 42 households, and Rs. 5000 additional each to 8 pregnant, and lactating mothers. All together **Rs. 10,80,000** was given out in relief support. Most of the relief support was collected by the women of the village. The process of documentation was done in a most transparent and thoughtful manner. The community people were cooperative and appreciative, for this was the first support that had reached Sapang and people noted that this was the most unexpected but most generous support they could have ever expected.

2. NA is running its ongoing weekly peace kitchen with the help of the peace volunteers and staff. 120/25 persons are fed in this peace kitchen. After the earthquake, it has been noted that some of the people from



adjoining camp also participate, but are shy and prefer to take their food and eat away from the kitchen.

Status of Funds/finances:

The ERF Committee met on the 11th. It had a full representation including external members. Its agenda focused on the inflow of funds so far, an update on relief work being carried out so far, and on request approvals of Tewa/NA work independently and in collaborations with others. Reporting on the status of funds received and pledged, as well as approval for the larger disbursements exceeding 5 lak rupees or US \$ 5000. The Committee approved an amount of US \$ 65,000 for the coming week. Rest of the ongoing work or requests will be managed at the level of the staff/board of Tewa. So far Tewa has received from International funds and individuals, US \$ 1,64,074 in Tewa's bank account, and it has received US \$ 3,15,843 in pledges. It has received approximately US \$ 4400 from 50 local individual donors and it is still trickling in each day from grantees from unaffected districts, as well. So far it has used US 1,08,309 in relief support in cash and kind and via organizations which are ensuring relief outreach in districts unreachable by Tewa directly or where partners have been working for a long time.

Others:

On the 8th we took a team of engineers from the Municipality to survey the buildings in the Tewa Center. As we thought we were relieved to learn that the Aadhar building (built entirely with the support from the Ford Foundation), has no structural damage. We were advised to wait for another month to observe if the cracks on some of the walls widen, and the earth settles. Then we can mend them. We are just so grateful and relieved. Everything else is just fine. Currently Tewa/NA is working from Rita's space for its centrality and ability to move quickly among grantee partners locally, volunteers, and all allies and visitors who want to connect with Tewa. In the next couple of weeks this will change and Tewa will begin to function from its own office.

We often talk about how not to allow Nepal to be another Haiti story. Nepalis are therefore as we think and as far as we know intuitively, working as one, and with and for each other. But owing to dependency bred by foreign aid, political nepotism breeding violence, corruption and impunity, and increasingly consumeristic values, it will not be easy an easy task ahead.

