

**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:** 15 February, 2012  
**Subject:** Sampanna Campaign Update – Mid February, 2012

### Nepal Now:

Sadly for the first time in Nepal, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February, the public waylaid and distributed gas cylinders being transported in several places in Kathmandu. But the good thing was that people paid the retail price for the cylinders even as they took it. Acute shortage of cooking gas remains. News of massive deforestation in Far West Nepal, bird flu in increasing districts of Eastern Nepal are also worrying news.

As a part of the peace process, while laying off PLA combatants in cantonments seeking civilian's life, those who were disqualified according to the UN criteria, broke in from the outside and vandalized the place tearing tents, breaking furniture and computers disrupting the process. On the other hand the Young Communist League (YCL) of the Maoists have padlocked office/s demanding facilities on par with the PLAs – this seems to be an escalating problem for the Maoists internally. The news recently also had a story of a PLA woman who went to the police since she is being pressured to give away 2.25 lak rupees of the total 3 laks she was being given, and another time most of the cheques received by the ex- PLAs were being deposited collectively by others.



On the 13<sup>th</sup> I was lucky to get a tail picture of the Maoists marching to go their mass rally in Kathmandu on the occasion of their anniversary day.

Stuck in traffic me and our Sankalpa colleagues, were noticing how every political party continue to exploit the people who are at the bottom of the economic ladder and who do not have the power of desertion owing to an adequate formal education.

With all that is happening politically the scene was really disturbing. Please notice the additional line of cars waiting for diesel and petrol that held traffic for us for almost half an hour.

### **Update on the Building/s:**



**Saila & Saili - nothing they can't do – under the late afternoon sun!**



**More finished maybe?!**



1 coat of paint & polishing the dorm cupboard - 18 individual spaces!



tiles on the corridor - but skirting remains!

These days I have hardly any nails remaining! It is a close call to complete the work for the event despite everything moving in full swing.

For the larger landscaping estimate, architect/planner Nava B. Thapa with a plant biologist, Dr. Umed Pun visited the site on the 5<sup>th</sup>. The meeting of the technical team on the 8<sup>th</sup> on a cold rainy day ("maghe jhari") on site to think through timeline and coordination of multiple tasks e.g. painting, flooring, solar light & heating, bathroom and electrical fittings and so much more, was remarkable – needless to say we met again on the 15<sup>th</sup> so I could shift my responsibilities to them during my absence!

### **Moving the Campaign:**

I entrusted Janaki durga with the recruitment of the dormitory support staff and their necessary training and with the overseeing of the purchase of all required and necessary items for running the facility. Janaki and I had a meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> to think about work coordination, recruitment and training, and finalization of necessary items like mattresses, pillows, quilts, and others.

Our first guest Lynne Brennen has already arrived from Toronto hand carrying her pledge of US \$ 1500 equivalent to a little over Rs. 116,000 (sadly, again the price of dollars has gone down to 1US = 78). Arrival schedules are beginning to come in – yet sadly Vanita Mukerjee is cancelling her visit on doctor's advise for her knee injury which has recently regressed. We will so miss her presence!

Laurie H Zeller, who visited Tewa with me on the 11<sup>th</sup> introduced by Patricia Cooper again connected by Julie Shaw and Susanne Jalbert emailed saying she has sent a “modest” gift to Tewa to honour her son’s friend late Samantha. So honoured and moved! Galen Wood, announced she is doing a special intimate programme to support Tewa further during this time! Sangita Khatri brought in a gift of 100,000 rupees from her aunt/my relative, Indira Singh, which she had pledged during her visit to Nepal November last year. Lily Thapa too fulfilled her pledge to the SC by sending us a cheque of 100,000 rupees. Tewa Advisor Chandni Joshi, while being approached to be our event chief guest, sent us with a gift of 25000 for the SC campaign.

### **Financial Aspects of Sampanna:**

Tewa’s money from the GFW arrived last week and what a relief that was! Approximately 40,000 dollars are gifts to the SC campaign. In the meantime as a way of making sure that we can continue our building work at the same pace, on request of the Tewa Board, we approached Louise if she could loan us \$ 50,000. She said YES! This means we will not have to stop work until depending on how we raise the money, the next GFW disbursements can happen. As you can see from Nepal we have raised Rs. 27 laks so far in pledges and gifts. But we have to work hard at all times!

### **IWD March Celebrations:**

Tewa Board met on the 5<sup>th</sup> to make necessary decisions and meeting with the key staff, Board office bearers, the 2 local durgas on the 7<sup>th</sup> is helping the celebration event move forward:

- The details of the formal programmes have been finalized (after Board approval)
- Sponsors for dinners & breakfast are Meera, Pratima & Riva, & Maggie respectively
- The volunteer team are also finding sponsors to make sure that the costs for the lunches are covered



One of the outer access to the dormitory !

Everyone is motivated and are seeing how to ensure they can contribute to keep Tewa costs low – it was inspiring at the meeting. A wonderful this at this meeting was the presence of the **incoming Tewa Executive Director – Lalita Thapa** – who was the Unit Chief and therefore my boss while I worked at the UNDP for the UN Women. She is skilled, well connected, and compassionate and humble! She will formally join from March, but she is beginning to be engaged and Tewa is stronger for her decision! The committees are beginning to work full speed!

I sent out a list of required items which could be house keeping gifts – Lynne Brennen kicked that off by promptly responding and saying she would be “honoured to gift the 2 brass pots”! WOW!

### Conclusions:

When we pull this off on 10<sup>th</sup> March, it will be no short of a miracle and a documentation of women’s work in building community philanthropy for the politics of women’s rights and advancement. Please plan your meetings in Nepal – anyone who can. I can say you will not regret. We will of course do a full homework to inform what we offer exactly and what it will mean it cost soon after the event. This will also go on the Tewa website from the end of June 2012. **Still please find attached our programme details and the invitations for your interest.** Just in case some one can come, or send a friend who is already here – we say “most welcome”, sincerely. We need your presence for our strengths and sanity! Our walk is ongoing, but the trail inviting!