

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: 30 November, 2011
Subject: Sampanna Campaign Update – November, 2011

Nepal Now: The month began with the very historical breakthrough in the peace process. All political leaders except a dissenting faction of the Maoists, agreed on the following seven point deal: integration of 6500 combatants who are currently in the cantonments; combatants must meet Nepal Army requirements; rehabilitation package of Rs. 500000 – 800000 cash or 600000 – 9000000 for training or other support; return of all property which was seized during the conflict by 23 November; categorization of combatants also by 23 November; and an expert group to be formed for State restructuring. Sankalpa & CA member Sarita Giri was inducted as Minister of Labour & Transport in the biggest sized Ministry ever, so our celebrations came with serious concerns. Besides at the end of this month the State Restructuring Commission was named with 8 members among who was Stella Tamang, a Sankalpa Board member! Many organizational transitions and work is happening at Sankalpa – among them was the visit of Srilatha Batliwala, who has also been supporting these processes. This also was a time to decide and finalize my new role in Sankalpa to the extent where it was most needed and useful.



CA Member Mohamadi Siddiqui Speaks while the Newly Appointed State Restructuring Commission Member Stella Tamang listens on the first day of the 16 Days Campaign of Violence Against Women!

Inflation keeps rising generally for food and essential commodities up to 20%, and there is expected hoarding of petroleum products and cooking gas (with a foreseeable rise in prices) and an announcements that electricity blackouts is expected to be up to 18 hours – so far it is only 4 hours a day. Robbery, looting, and criminal activities are on the rise affecting everyone, e.g. our young kitchen staff at Café Cheeno, was robbed of his mobile, and beaten while returning home at 9 pm. Despite these, in a public programme to assess the programme of Nagarik Aawaz, Rita had an opportunity to assess how in the past 4 years the work that she began and left behind, was reaping fruits and provided much needed support through the peace building work at the community level. Activists are providing counseling services, demanding their rights and designated resources for the conflict affected at the local levels, and are using their group strengths for advocacy and influence.



Gyanu Poudel of Namuna, Nawalparasi, Shares Experiences of Being on the Local Peace Committees

Update on the Building/s:

Regarding the update on the building and some of my work related with this has been: regular and ongoing site supervision; giving an orientation to all staffs in different groups, consultations with different possible suppliers; and pulling together all the various aspects of this work and prioritizing those to ensure how we can:

- Maximize/facilitate existing human resource to ensure we meet the March 2012 deadline for the inaugural and all it entails,
- Minimize transition costs and reassure staff that the de-linking process will be gradual and in Tewa's benefit and theirs,
- Ensure all that needs to be initiated and put in place to ensure completion of the dormitory details,



Prem, Long-time Tewa Site Supervisor is Compressing the Dormitory Ground Floor before PCC



Brick Work has Begun on the Dormitory Building - it is Significant - I Could Not Even Catch the Full Length of the Building

- A marathon meeting of the backstopping committee (Sadhana, Rama, Draupadi, Meera, Amita, Chhaya, Riva, Janaki, Deepak, Rita) was held on the 23rd for finalization and decision-making, and
- Ongoing regular weekly TLBDP technical committee meetings have been held.

The Backstopping Committee agreed/approved that we build a 12 single rooms facility as a priority to ensure suitable and adequate space for international and national meeting space. We also decided that the buildings would use solar powered lights and heating. Yes, work is really moving – and needs daily scrutiny for careful attention to details! How can we ensure best lighting, placement of cupboards (while walls are being built), and overall best use of the spaces under creation is an ongoing reflection and quick decisions in this work.

Moving the Campaign:

Tewa internally made an official announcement of me working with the TLBDP in the capacity of the “Operations Director” on the 8th, and I began intense work at the site (setting up a small physical space in the rental block) from the 15th. Just around this time the GFW informed Tewa that they made a 12,000 dollars presidential discretionary grant to Tewa - everyone involved felt that this was so well timed! Since I will be remunerated for my work at Tewa, I immediately pledged another 100,000 rupees! This month a gift of \$100 came from our friend Deana Zabaldo, and Yasmin Rana fulfilled her gift to make it 100,000 rupees. There were more pledges/gifts of 100,000 rupees from Pratima & Riva Thapa, Kumudini Shrestha from the efforts of Riva Durga, Ankit pradhan through the efforts of Janaki Durga, Rita Thapa (a second 100,000 pledge for the Sampanna Campaign) and Tewa Treasurer Rama Shrestha who with her friends has pledged 50,000 rupees. So this month we have raised **550,000** rupees all together. Importantly the Tewa fund-raising committee met this month to not only detail out next years plan for Tewa’s ongoing fund-raising for grant-making purposes, but also to see how they can help identify the 100 Nepalis who can gift 100,000 rupees each! Meera’s work and initiative here in rallying the team around the campaign goals is both remarkable and critical!

Significant was the visit on the 24th of this month of Dr. Julian & Jane Rait to Tewa through Suman & Riva. Dr. Julian Rait was Suman’s supervisor while he was interning for a year in Melbourne. Their interest in Tewa was much appreciated and we hope that there will be support and connections from their end to move our campaign forward.

Financial Aspects of Sampanna:

In consultations with the construction company representative and the site engineer, we need approximately \$ 400000 more to finish the dormitory, single bed facility and a simple overall landscaping this does not take into account generators, lift, furnishings. Although all efforts are ongoing for our fundraising, we have not heard any big news yet – but we are praying and hoping!

Conclusions:

I have never felt more challenged in my life before. Motivation of the workers & staff is essential to get the work done which I am pumping in, and as speed gathers the financial responsibility looms! It is really taking a day at a time forward and doing one's best and praying which is helping me stay calm and centered although with some sleeplessness.

This time we have an important announcement! The opening of the dormitory building on the occasion of the International Women's Day 2012! Everyone is invited for a complementary inaugural stay at the dormitory (arrival 6th march and departure 10th) during which a delightful programme has been packaged for your learning, enjoyment and being. The flyer painstakingly designed by Louise Durga, which is attached herewith, will inform you better. Please block your time and do plan a trip to Nepal when the weather is beautiful and the mountains can be seen from the valley! You have all helped make this happen – please come and celebrate with us – this partial completion and our collective hard work!