

STRATEGIC PLAN July 2014 - July 2019

Tewa

Philanthropy for Equitable Justice and Peace www.tewa.org.np



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tewa's new strategic plan for 2014-2019 was prepared by the founder, board, members, staff and advisors under its Theory of Change framework. The result is a bold reframing of our grantmaking to maintain our social justice perspective and continue our concerted efforts in advocating for and advancing the rights for women.

Our strategic plan draws upon 20 years of our experience in mobilizing resources through philanthropy and giving grants to grassroots level women's organisations all over Nepal.

In line with Tewa's founding principles, this document attempts to chart out a context-relevant strategic plan. For the next five years, our focus will be on funding the most marginalised women in the most underfunded areas. We hope to ensure: awareness of and access to economic and social rights; better representation and participation of women; and the supporting and strengthening of the women's movement.

This strategic plan clarifies the vision, mission, Theory of Change, and the guiding principles of Tewa. It gives us a new direction and builds on our earlier successes and experience.

Vision: A country without discrimination and injustice, in which all women enjoy their rights, freedom and peace.

Mission: Through funding and capacity development, Tewa supports women to organize, raise their voices collectively and transform discriminatory policies, systems, norms and practices.

Theory of change: "When women struggling with poverty, marginalization and invisibility organize collectively, they amplify their voices, strengthen their leadership, and overcome injustice. Our role as Tewa is to support such groups of women by funding their initiatives, enhancing their capacities, and connecting them to other relevant groups and national initiatives and processes."

We have outlined five strategic goals according to Tewa's vision and mission.

Strategic Vision 1: Increase resource mobilization

- **Goal 1:** Strengthen Tewa to become a sustainable and autonomous feminist fund.
- **Goal 2**: Influence the agenda setting to significantly shift funding mechanisms towards women and ensure women's rights work is supported.



Strategic Vision 2: Transformative grant making

- **Goal 1:** Support initiatives aimed at transforming the lives of women, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, through strategic grant making.
- **Goal 2:** Assist to enhance decision making, participation and leadership to amplify women's voices and make their concerns visible.
- **Goal 3:** Strengthen movement building so that there is a critical mass of women who can participate, advocate, influence and engage politically

Strategic Vision 3: Strengthen capacity of human resources within Tewa

- **Goal 1:** Strengthen leadership by enhancing staff skills and activism.
- Goal 2: Strengthen strategic communications and creativity.

Strategic Vision 4: Increase knowledge for informing, persuading and influencing

- **Goal 1:** Be a source of knowledge and influence regarding how women in Nepal organize and strategise for social justice
- **Goal 2:** Maintain and renew our information technologies (IT) infrastructure while balancing technology needs with budgetary demands and our other priorities.

Strategic Vision 5: Develop a strong Learning and Evaluation unit

• **Goal 1:** Develop, maintain and keep updated, a management information system for learning, monitoring and reporting.

Tewa remains committed as ever to engaging women, men and children in ground breaking work, sustaining philanthropy in Nepal, and creating a strong network of grassroots level women's organisations to drive the women's movement forward.

Nirmala KC/ PhD, Board Chair, Tewa Sadhana Shrestha, Executive Director, Tewa

July 2014



1. Introduction

This strategic plan clarifies Tewa's positioning in the world, its priorities and focus areas and the implications for how, with what resources and partners, it moves into its future.

2. OUR JOURNEY

Since Tewa was founded in September 1995, we have been fund raising locally, mobilising resources and supporting women's organisations throughout Nepal. There have been some positive changes. We realize that resources can be mobilised locally and we can be partners with fellow Nepali women for development.

Our grantee partners work to support the most vulnerable and socially ostracised women: widows, Dalits, landless women, sex workers, women living with disabilities, and lesbians among others. Creating employment and opportunity; spreading awareness and vision; constantly challenging and breaking down the established status quo.

Our grantee partners are women taking the risks and supporting other women, helping them through difficult times and pressuring the system to deliver. Some have grown before our eyes from small local NGOs to leaders in their areas and beyond. Though Tewa has supported initiatives in a range of areas, a large portion of our funds have gone towards supporting the development of women's skills to generate income and ensure economic rights and justice. This has been critical in drawing women out of their homes, helping them build confidence, and support each other in times of crisis.

Our volunteers have proven themselves worthy of praise. Ever motivated and ever inspiring, they have donated hundreds of hours and mobilised millions of rupees to support Tewa's cause.

3. CHALLENGES

We need to deepen our knowledge of the issues affecting women worldwide, as well as be abreast of worldwide discussions on contemporary issues since they directly affect our work and our grants. Discrimination against women still prevails at all levels, and there is still limited funding for women's funds and women's rights work. Building and strengthening the capacity of the staff to respond to these developments is a challenge. Further, as Tewa grows, developing the institutional memory and preserving it's history will allow for new and/or younger board, staff and volunteers to understand the values, context and challenges within which the organization was founded. This will allow for a seamless growth of the organization.



4. LESSONS LEARNT

- Building a power-base with a clear constituency is important.
- Co-creating with local and international allies is a powerful way to build a women's fund
- Cultivating a sense of commitment, ownership, inclusive practices and discipline has kept us going strong.
- When grantees receive and give, they take pride in the work of Tewa and this increases ownership of the fund.
- Paying attention to issues of power dynamics within the fund ensures respect for all funders, small and big but also support the building of feminist practices
- The importance of good governance which ensures that some of the fundamental things such as financial viability and setting a clear strategic direction are in place is important especially in a funding organisation
- Building a sustainable fund takes time, energy, voluntary time and commitment.
 On the road to a transformative dream, one cannot expect a speedy trip. There have been and continue to be roadblocks, detours, potholes, and traffic.
- Women on the ground are the best change agents in their areas, we just support them in the best way we can.

5. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Evolution of the strategic framework

This strategic framework emerges from several years of dialogue, research and analysis, and meetings with various key stakeholders. The final strategic planning process was held at Tewa on April 7, 2014.

The strategic plan examines how we can utilise our comparative advantage as a women's fund, prioritise our scarce resources to areas of greatest need and avoid duplicating the work of other funders.

The strategic planning effort was organized around four questions:

- 1. Where we are today and what have we learnt along the journey? What areas have been challenging?
- 2. How can we build on the work already done in order to continue meeting the needs of our constituency?
- 3. What strategies will be used to get where we want to go?
- 4. How will we tell if we are on the right track?

The first question suggests taking stock (timeline), identifying key milestones and lessons learnt. The second question refers to strategic visions and goals toward which Tewa needs to work over the next fiveyears. The plan uses the term Goals to refer to the specific objectives (ends) or directions. The third question refers to the actions (means) needed to move in these directions. The suggested goals are actionable, and



this is why the plan uses the term *actions* in lieu of *tactics* or *strategies*. Finally, in response to the last question, the plan proposes an institutional-level framework for assessing progress toward goals of the plan, recognizing that the metrics and indicators need to be developed further at the implementation stage.

This strategic plan is a "living document" that will change over time. It offers our allies, grantees and us a common framework and flexible guide and, as such, it will foster greater coherence, coordination and unity for the Tewa family. At the same time, however, it is designed to be adaptable enough to leave significant room for the organisation to be creative and innovative. It has necessarily made assumptions about the future based on the current environment and will be reviewed regularly, with a midterm review after two and a half years. The plan will be supported by a five-year financial plan. An operational plan will provide the detailed delivery mechanisms to ensure the strategic directions are achieved.

6. ORGANISATION OF THE PLAN

Part 1 of the Strategic Plan presents the background and process of development of the plan; it highlights the contextual issues and synthesizes our lessons and reflections.

Part 2 of the Strategic Plan outlines the strategic vision, goal areas and actions. It details out the specifics of our focus of work for the next five years.



Part 1

CONTEXUAL ISSUES

The world as we see it today is characterised and defined by power – expressed in political, social and economic terms and manifested in phenomena such as the erosion of democratic spaces, global economic crises and inequalities based on gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation and so on. In particular, women continue to be impacted in ways that persistently compromise their dignity and human rights. While there is almost universal recognition of women's rights, for most women it is a challenge to claim and enjoy them. Violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon of immense proportions. The United Nations Development Fund for Women reports that 'for women aged 15 to 44 years, violence is a major cause of death and disability'.

As global economies continue to shift and reconfigure themselves, the rise of various religious and cultural fundamentalisms are posing an additional threat to women's rights in many places.

In Nepal, fragmentation within the women's movement undermines the ability to think and act strategically; some of this is caused by division and competition of foreign aid and different political party allegiances, and more recently identity politics. In the meantime, neo-liberalism continues; increased inequality; poverty; militarization even when the world thinks that Nepal is at peace.

Fundamentalisms in the name of nationalism; increasing erosion of state supported social safety nets; erosion of community mostly caused by armed conflict; religious fundamentalism that make families marginalize women e.g. expectation of widows or definition of morality and increased poverty are underlying problems.

There has been some policy reforms in favour of women's rights but lack of political will to implement; dearth of grassroots organisers/educators/ political facilitators who hold conservative patriarchal forces make advancing a progressive agenda on women's rights difficult.

There are many problems but women have not been passive within these everchanging social and political contexts. They have been campaigning for women's rights and social justice for decades, and have joined or formed groups as a vehicle for achieving their goals. The women's movement has, through popular mobilisation and protest, been able to secure significant gains such as key legal instruments; women's political participation and the effect of women's movement in communities are phenomenal.



TEWA'S PROFILE

WHO WE ARE: Tewa is a feminist fund founded by Rita Thapa, a feminist and activist. It gives grants throughout Nepal, covering all five-development regions. We name ourselves courageously, we claim feminism without hesitation, we are not afraid to live it, to become it and to walk it. We use a feminist lens and analysis in our work. We are committed to human/women's rights, equality, and justice for all. We support initiatives that challenge existing oppressive norms, policies, practices, cultures and institutions and hence strengthen women's voice and visibility. A feminist lens and analysis offers us political tools to understand issues of inequality, class, caste, power, militarism and citizenship.

WHAT WE DO: We primarily raise funds from Nepali and other international donors and invest it in women. For Tewa, it is not just a matter of raising money but also using the opportunity to make society understand the need to combine forces and fight oppressive structures in our society. Our fundraising strategies increase human connection. We train volunteers and we give back to the community by working with their children in training them at an early age to understand issues of power and gender dynamics, learn philanthropy and take pride in being Nepali. Building on the concrete experiences of women's lives, we work with individual women, organisations, networks and allies to build and strengthen women's development work through training and financial support. We provide facilities for reflection for development workers who are critically engaged in social transformation. The Tewa Centre models an environmentally grounded way of well being and is used by women and men to share their experiences and stories and learn from each other.

HOW ARE WE ORGANIZED: Our office is based in Lalitpur, Nepal. We have 15 staff in the Tewa women's fund, 10 board members, 15 members, six advisors and over 575 volunteers, cumulatively trained and mobilized over the years. We also work closely with many friends and allies based in many parts of the world. Some of our grantees and most of our volunteers are also our fundraisers as well as donors. The Tewa Centre is under the fiscal and legal oversight of the Tewa Board but runs autonomously with 16 staff, due to its nature of work. Tewa is a member of the International Network of Women's Funds and the Asian Network of Women's Funds. We are members of the Women's Funding Network, and Foundations for Peace. Tewa is a member of many national networks that work for justice, peace, women's rights and eliminate violence against women.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS: We attempt tomaximise the impact of resources and prevent organisational overstretch. While our focus is on scrutinising all proposals for grants, we also focus on what methodology will create most value and impact, both for our grantees as well as Tewa. We have reached 65 of the 75 districts of Nepal. Within the districts we have tried to reach the remote and vulnerable groups



of women. But increasingly we have also supported many initiatives in Kathmandu and urban areas in order to further strengthen the fight for women's rights and the changing urban context post the armed conflict.

OUR ADDED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE:

- We give money but we know we are not the fire, but stokers of fire. We facilitate, tend and nurture the flame in our grantee partners. Our grantees have their own voices and are active participants in identifying local and national problems and working towards solving them. What we give them is the encouragement, seed capital and some hand holding.
- We work with uncertainties and we take risks. Our work is political, personal, contextual and organizational and hence requires us to tease out the various strategies that we use.
- We have built a Centre as an environmentally grounded creative space for us and our partners to reflect and engage a range of tools and approaches in fundraising and development work and in helping shift the status quos.
- Our grant making is rooted in awareness raising, leadership training, concrete demands and gender analysis.
- Our reputation in the country, region and the world is growing and we are considered experts who use innovative approaches in innovative community philanthropy.
- Our funding is grounded on what is happening, in women's realities and lives on the ground, to understand women's situation, context and needs.
- Insistence on high quality work and attention to process.
- Our work helps individuals to create strategies to cope with the present in the face of uncertainty in the future. It also helps them develop a capacity for agency and a belief for action.
- Our values and working style has developed into a place where people can meet, greet, support, and help each other at Tewa.

OUR VALUES:

- **Listening:** We listen to women's voices. Listening is an integral part of what we bring as funds. The listening we are talking about is very far from being passive; on the contrary, it is an active receptivity. It is a capacity to see the dynamics of a situation. It is an ability to hear women's voices especially those that are muffled by society.
- **Power:** We understand power in both its destructive and constructive configurations, thinking about and being mindful of power within us, power with others resulting in power to address and confront power over [oppression] from whichever sources it emanates.
- Transformational: We believe that for positive sustainable transformation to
 occur it must be addressed at three levels: personal empowerment and
 responsibility, community revitalization, and societal transformation. Holistic
 transformation occurs within all aspects of personal and community life, including
 the psychological, physical, spiritual, economic, political, and socio-cultural



- dimensions of life going beyond hierarchies of class, caste, ethnicity and location as well as being inclusive.
- Highly effective: We seek to be catalysts of change to make the most significant
 positive impact with the limited resources available. This means that we are
 strategic in how we use our resources, addressing priority and strategic issues
 and those in greatest need. We also ensure accountability in how the resources
 are used.
- Excellence: We believe that those we serve deserve the best. We are an
 organisation that is continually learning and sharing; creating models of good
 practice that can be replicated worldwide. We seek to prove Tewa as an
 inspiration for women of what can be accomplished with thoughtfulness and
 persistence;
- **Relational:** We recognise the importance of good relationships and strong, mutually beneficial partnerships. We seek to put those we are serving first while being respectful, humble and learning from others.
- **Empowering:** We seek to strengthen the capacities and address the vulnerabilities of those we serve. This also includes encouraging, development of skills and access to resources for self-sufficiency.
- **Passionate:** We are passionate about those we work for and passionate in all that we do. We seek to be creative and imaginative in finding sustainable solutions to addressing issues of poverty and injustice.
- Partnerships: We recognise the multiplicity of other development actors and the importance of working with and learning from them if we are to achieve our goal of transforming the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalised women



Part 2

OUR IDENTITY

Vision: A country without discrimination and injustice, in which all women enjoy their rights, freedom and peace.

Mission: Tewa through, funding and capacity development, supports women to organize, raise their voices collectively and transform discriminatory policies, systems, norms and practices

Theory of change: "When women struggling with poverty, marginalization and invisibility, organize collectively, they amplify their voices, strengthen their leadership and overcome injustice. Our role as Tewa is to support such groups of women by funding their initiatives, enhancing their capacities, and connecting them to other relevant groups, and national initiatives and processes."

STRATEGIC VISIONS, GOAL AREAS AND ACTIONS

To achieve our vision and mission we have set out the following strategic visions, goal areas and actions:

Strategic Vision 1: Increased resource mobilisation

Rationale: For Tewa to remain relevant, it needs passion and love as well as resources to sustain and expand it. Love and passion for the work we do generate energy and audacity as reflected in the Centre that we have built. We use money as a tool of addressing women's rights. In this strategic framework, local/community resource mobilization goes beyond just rupees, dollars and cents. It includes building valuable contacts and networks, and garnering the interest, support and in-kind contributions of people important to our network, nurturing friendships and promoting philanthropy and sustainability

During the next fiveyears, we will intensify our local/community fundraising efforts by training more volunteers, carrying out an intense time bound campaign so as to help ensure that all Nepalis understand the importance of addressing injustices by supporting transformative initiatives through philanthropy. We are determined to use our links as well as source resources from other sister funders and partners to strengthen, build and support effective and collaborative action.

Goal 1: Strengthen Tewa to become a sustainable and autonomous feminist fund.



- 1. Carry out a situational analysis regarding local resource mobilization in our current environment followed by mapping of relevant fundraising strategies.
- 2. Train more volunteers to raise funds from all corners of Nepal
- 3. Raise money locally and globally
- 4. Enable the Tewa Centre as a model for a holistic feminist space to adequately generate resources for the upkeep of operations of Tewa Centre and Tewa Women's Fund.

Goal 2: Influence the agenda setting to significantly shift funding mechanisms towards women and ensure women's rights work is supported.

Activities:

- 1. Strengthen systems and structures for financial sustainability while influencing debates, discourses and decisions on funding that goes to women's rights and advocate for more funds and support
- 2. Promote philanthropy among different age categories so that there is a strong culture of giving to the women's cause.

Strategic Vision 2: Transformative Grant making

Rationale: Societies that discriminate on the basis of gender pay a hefty price-in creating greater poverty, lower levels of economic growth, weaker governance, and an overall lower quality of life. In most of Nepal, women hold an extremely vulnerable position in society and women bear a disproportionate burden of the national poverty. The imbalance of power in gender relations has led to the oppression and marginalisation of women both inside the family structure and insociety in general.

Therefore, our efforts will be aimed at promoting women's dignity, autonomy and freedom. We will support initiatives aimed at reducing poverty especially among extremely marginalised and discriminated women. Our support will also target initiatives whose purpose increases the number of women in leadership and decision-making positions at all levels.

A single women's organisation cannot bring about significant changes at the national level but it can model the change we seek. It is important for us to support the expansion of spaces for experiences, the scope and scale of interactions, increased linkages, and relationships within the women'smovement. Therefore, during the next five years, we will focus on strategic grant making, strengthening our grant making to work with groups trying to forge powerful alliances of support, learning and collaborative community effort. Our aim is to help ensure and support the women's movement in Nepal so it becomes stronger.

Goal 1: Support initiatives aimed at transforming the lives of women especially the most vulnerable and marginalised through strategic grant making



- 1. Carry out a survey to identify some of the capacity strengthening activities women are engaged in and how to support them, and the kind of support
- 2. Negotiate contracts
- 3. Agree on accountability mechanisms
- 4. Strengthen linkages and networks for women's groups

Goal 2: Assist to enhance decision-making, participation and leadership to amplify women's voices and make their concerns visible.

- 1. In our areas of operation, identify possible structures for women to enhance their leadership and participation, and current strategies being used
- 2. Identify mechanisms for supporting them

Goal 3: Strengthen movement building so that there is a critical mass of women that can participate, advocate, influence and engage politically

Activities:

- 1. Organise and support engagement platforms for our grantee partners and other relevant organisations that create space for debate and discussion.
- 2. Convene collaborative initiatives and in so doing open space for women from different groups, classes, gender, location, religions, age, and different abilities etc to meet on a consistent basis. These meetings will enable women to gain new knowledge and learn from each other.
- **3.** Support robust platforms of shared ideas in order to enable LGBTI, sexworkers and other human rights organisations to initiate and lead debates on critical issues such decriminalization, poverty and economic justice among marginalised groups.

Strategic Vision 3: Strengthen capacity of human resources within Tewa

Rationale: We regard capacity development as a continuous natural process that we should undergo in order to stay relevant in rapidly and continually changing circumstances. We need the ability to analyze current political trends and to understand the consequences for our organisations and movements. Whatever the size or complexity of the organization, this understanding is an important condition for our survival. We also know that our work requires some usual and unusual capacities. Unusual capacities include courage, ability to give women hope in the midst of despair, agility to respond when women are hurting and audacity to address issues of power. The work involves a lot of 'heart, mind and body' issues

During this current strategic plan, we will strengthen our capacities to function at the highest performance level and our ability to change and adjust in order to respond to external opportunities and challenges. We will also consciously look to develop transitions to the new generation, which is happening both at the membership level, Board and staff.



Goal 1: Strengthen leadership by enhancing staff skills and activism.

Activities:

- 1. Encourage and support exchange programmes for learning, support and collaboration given contextual, historical, political and cultural differences of the global women's funds.
- 2. Support leadership through various ways including mentoring and internship.
- 3. Maintain a mutual learning space and collective thinking and knowledge. In learning spaces, be inclusive and respectful of women of different ages, ethnicities, religions, abilities and sexual orientation.

Goal 2: Strengthen strategic communications and creativity.

Activities:

- 1. Develop the capacity to think creatively, develop systems, structures, policies and effective governance boards
- 2. Encourage cross learning within the organisation as well as externally

Strategic Vision 4: Increased knowledge for informing, persuading and influencing

Rationale: We believe that in this global age, self-sufficiency can no longer be enough. Digital technology is revolutionising the manner in which knowledge is communicated across the globe. In the next five years, the challenge we set ourselves, is to develop our capacity to generate and share knowledge beyond the immediate environment of our organisations and network. We will ensure that the information we share not only continues to be transformative at an organizational level, but that it also contributes to public policy and practice. The aim is to ensure the public understands women's rights issues.

We will take the time to reflect on what we have learnt and document important and relevant lessons and share them. We will identify some gaps where some research might need to be done and in carrying out research, we will pay attention to different groups that have been marginalised or who find they are living on the edge of society.

Goal 1: Be a source of knowledge and influence regarding how women in Nepal organize and strategise for social justice

- 1. Increase the capacity to reflect, document and harvest fresh ideas and voices;
- 2. Use the information we have to produce tools, newsletters, reports and think pieces for the movement and the allies;



- 3. Upgrade our web presence and enhance our online platform. Make our platforms easy to find and fun to use and navigate, monitor traffic to our website to ensure the information is used.
- 4. Constitute a platform for internal learning and reflections (for staff and members)

Goal 2: Maintain and renew our information technologies (IT) and infrastructure while balancing technology needs with budgetary demands and our other priorities.

Activities:

- 1. Ensure that technologies and infrastructure that contribute to the enhancement of our work warrant the highest priority
- 2. Effectively coordinate the delivery of IT services and infrastructure to support the mission as well as programme needs of our organisations in a financially responsible way.

Strategic Vision 5: Develop a strong Learning and Evaluation unit

Rationale: We are doing pioneering work in advancing women's rights using philanthropy and establishing models of transformatory ways of working. We need to keep track of what we have done, what we have achieved and what impact our efforts have made in women's lives. In order to also share lessons and experiences with others working on women's rights and women's funds, we need to have substantive evidence. We will hence focus in the next five years to build upon our learning and evaluation system and strengthen it to become effective, practical and comprehensive so that the Board, staff and other stakeholders are able to make decisions based on the tracked information.

Goal 1: Develop, maintain and keep updated a management information system for learning, monitoring and reporting

- 1. Revisit the existing system and based on areas of improvement, establish/strengthen the management information system
- 2. Document and reporting on work completed by Tewa's programmes with analysis of achievements and areas of improvement
- 3. Build detailed and usable databases of donors, volunteers, and grants, grantee groups and other databases as relevant. Practical but advanced computer software where possible to be used
- 4. Strengthen increased use of data & analysis including monitoring policy implementation and impact.
- 5. Measure the shifts in the number of grantees supported in terms of number, diversity and location.



- 6. Shifts in behaviour and actions as change agents, sisters, mobilizers and activist leaders in families, communities, civil society and the political arena as a result of our funding.
- 7. Shifts in the quality and agility of political and personal relationships and engagement, collective processes and behaviour that strengthen organizations, movements and linkages (horizontal and vertical linkages) established and able to activate quickly.
- 8. Shifts in norms, ideas and public discourse; specifically, tolerance for violence against women, and the relative importance/contribution of women's rights to development, democracy and human right.
- 9. Shifts in engagement with decision making structures and formal power (improved ability to anticipate and deal with repression and backlash) and improved responsiveness of our institutions to women's demand
- 10. Shifts in ownership of Tewa, both the Fund and the Tewa Centre, to increase the constant feeling of personal responsibility for her state of being, nurturing and caring.

3. CONCLUSION

Tewa remains committed as ever to engaging women, men and children in ground breaking work, sustaining philanthropy in Nepal, and creating a strong network of grassroots level women's organisations to drive the women's movement forward.

In order to realize this strategic plan we will require the support of all our stakeholders, adequate funding from our donors and supporters as well as commitment and ownership from our staff, Board and members to grow as a professional women's fund.