

PART TWO

The Cases

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Case 1

Nepal Agroforestry Foundation (NAF)

Background/History/Motivation

The origin of the Nepal Agroforestry Foundation (NAF) goes back to 1988 when World Neighbours was working with New ERA to introduce *Leucaena leucocephala*, a fodder tree, to the farmers connected with the Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN) as an entry point to the districts east of the Kathmandu valley.

With the introduction of the species, psyllid, an insect (*Heterocephala cubana*), was also seen. World Neighbours hired an advisory service for FPAN to control this insect by changing the cultivation of the species from monoculture to mixed cropping. The office of the service started from the home of one of the advisers. The members of the advisory service were known experts in forestry, fodder trees, pasture and social development. World Neighbours saw that there was adequate technical expertise among the advisers to provide the service. So it started encouraging them to set up a formal organization to provide the service to other organizations so that they would not be solely dependent on World Neighbours to carry out the work and provide the funding.

NAF was registered as an organization in 1991 with seven constituent members

who were experts in agroforestry. NAF is currently promoting improvement in the use of fodder trees in nine districts of Nepal. The executive director manages all the programs of the organization with the approval of the executive committee.

The Organization

NAF is a membership-based organization and currently has 46 members. It has a general assembly which meets once a year. Membership is open to all. The board of directors is formed by general election. Staff may become members of the organization but lose the right to vote if they are in the board of directors. The executive director is an ex officio member of the board but s/he cannot vote on board decisions.

Profile of the Beneficiaries

Since the major thrust of NAF is improving fodder trees and their use, women are the prime target beneficiaries because they carry out most of the work of looking after the trees and lopping off fodder for the domestic animals. The other reasons for focusing on women are that they are socially disadvantaged with regards to knowledge and training and that climbing the tall trees traditionally used for

obtaining fodder is hazardous for them.

Men are included as secondary beneficiaries since they cope better with visitors, and are more likely to be the community representatives who visit other areas and government offices, because there are more literate men than women. Another reason to include men as beneficiaries is that in some areas and ethnic groups the men fear that in their absence their wives may get into adulterous relationships or even elope. Thus, men are included among the beneficiaries only to support women and to assure them that working with NAF does not create disharmony in their families. The ratio of male to female beneficiaries is 25:75.

The individual beneficiaries are selected by cooperative groups based on criteria suggested by NAF with modifications to suit the local community and conditions. The cooperative groups are formed by farmers interested in agroforestry with facilitation from NAF. Each group consists of 7 to 15 members and selects a leader farmer. NAF is working with over 200 cooperative groups. Around 150 of such groups are active.

NAF used to provide Rs. 500-600 per month to the leader farmers. The leaders used to donate part of this to develop group funds. But since NAF stopped doing so, the groups' source of funds has dried up. Then these cooperative groups initiated saving and credit schemes where they collected money from individual members to form a fund out of which they lent out loans to the needy with interest.

Such a scheme was intended towards the groups' financial self-sustainability in the long term. Some of these cooperatives have also started a children's saving group. This idea occurred to them when they visited an NGO in Nawalparasi, a district in the central southern part of Nepal. This would inculcate in children in their formative years the habit of saving, lending and thinking about optimizing the benefits from the little that they might have.

Most of the leader farmers are mature women. They are expected to be the "role models" in agroforestry. They are trained in making farm plans centered around developing fodder trees for optimum benefit. They should be able to prepare farm plans for their own farms and those of the others. They should encourage other members of the group to do so and distribute saplings as needed to meet the requirements of the livestock kept by the individual families.

Services to the Beneficiaries

The Nepal Agroforestry Foundation does not implement its core programs directly but works with cooperative groups and forest user groups (organized separately, most of these are connected with the national union of forest user groups). The essence of its work is in building up the capacity of cooperatives and forest user groups. NAF also helps in networking the local NGOs and cooperative groups that it mainly works with. Assisting the cooperatives and the local NGOs in monitor-

ing helps them evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness and improve their programs. NAF's other area of assistance is in organizational development and institutional strengthening. Depending on the individual cooperative's situation, the issues that NAF addresses are the running and managing of cooperative groups, the roles and responsibilities of the executive members, and institutional accounting. For the NGOs associated with NAF via the network and for the cooperative groups, NAF develops linkages with line agencies in the districts and also with donors when appropriate. This has been done for irrigation projects in the districts of Sindhupalchok and Kavrepalanchok. NAF has done this for their beneficiary organizations in other subject areas with other line agencies too.

On the more technical aspect of the work, NAF assists the cooperatives in promoting and managing agroforestry. The specific topics may be establishing tree nurseries, training the trainer farmers, establishing vegetable nurseries, kitchen gardens and growing vegetables for the market on land covered by fodder trees. It also supports demonstration plots of agroforestry with technical inputs (expendable and equipment) that the farmers cannot obtain locally. Support for animal husbandry and veterinary clinic is yet another aspect of NAF's services to its beneficiary communities. The provision for a matching fund to veterinarians to establish a clinic is an important contribution of NAF to the communities. For

income generation in the community, it provides training on bee keeping.

Growth of the Organization

In 1988, agroforestry was established as an advisory service within World Neighbours. This provided support on agroforestry to NGOs supported by World Neighbours. Then in 1991 at the encouragement of World Neighbours, the Nepal Agroforestry Foundation (NAF) was registered on its own right. Henceforward, all agroforestry programs of The Ford Foundation for World Neighbours were moved to NAF.

The foundation started working with the active groups already established by World Neighbours in the districts they had been working. So far World Neighbours is the sole employer/sponsor of NAF. In the third and fourth year of NAF's establishment, World Neighbours hitherto supported by The Ford Foundation, started encouraging NAF not to depend on it.

This was not an easy suggestion for NAF workers who had only just gotten together to carry out the work expected of them with support from a bigger organization. A sense of apprehension arose as to whether they would be able to sustain the organization without support from World Neighbours/ The Ford Foundation. Not depending on this support meant that they would have to "diversify" their donors. This, in turn, meant diversifying their programs/activities. This entailed conceiving and preparing programs

which they could “sell” to others. This meant a careful identification of the needs in the agroforestry sector, the foundation’s own potential to “deliver the goods” and to relate with the donors’ programs.

The staff got together and put forward a training package on agroforestry to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1994. This proposal was accepted. This was a turning point for NAF in donor diversification as this helped to expand its work towards self-sustainability. The training program created demand for NAF’s work with other (i)NGOs.

Then in 1995, the Nepal Australia Forestry Project approached the foundation to jointly launch the Community Agroforestry Programme in Sindhupalchok and Kavrepalanchok districts, east of Kathmandu. The work continued and in 1997, SNV, a Dutch INGO, invited NAF to launch a conservation program, the Praja Community Development Programme. This was to support the development of the aboriginal community of Chitwan district, southwest of Kathmandu. Then again in 1997, NAF developed an agroforestry program for Helen Keller International. Developing a program for this organization was a challenging prospect. The training skills developed so far needed to be adjusted to suit the needs of the organization whose ultimate aim was to encourage the partners with visual and vocal challenges. The skills to be transferred to such partners also needed to be modified. This project ran for three years.

This followed a study of the agroforestry in Mustang district, a remote area in the central north area of Nepal adjoining the rainshadow of Tibet, for the Himalaya Foundation (USA), and another study for Reading University (UK) on agroforestry strategy for the mid-hills of Nepal. Then NAF embarked upon a work on leasehold forestry in the hills in Sindhupalchok for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Since 1999, NAF has been working with the Nepal Denmark Watershed Project for five years in Dhading. Thus, NAF aggressively took up challenges one after another and of one kind and another, developing its own expertise and organizational capacity to serve the needs of Nepal and those supporting the development of agroforestry. Bishwa Regmi, the executive director, now believes that after striving continuously for nearly 10 years, the Nepal Agroforestry Foundation is now a sustainable organization and can even help build the capacity of local NGOs working in the area of cooperative fodder improvement. The Ford Foundation has reduced its support by half.

Growth of Staff

In 1988, the advisory unit had one consultant, Hutaram Baidya, and one agroforestry trainer, Bishwa Regmi. In 1991, when NAF was registered, the number of staff increased to six including an accountant, an office attendant and a security guard. By 1997, the number of staff

had risen to about 45 including part-timers. In the year 2000, there were 60 regular and 20 part-time staff. Of the regular staff, seven work from the head office and the rest are field-based.

Growth of Physical Facilities

Initially NAF had only one computer and a few desks and chairs. The office was in a rented building. It was able to buy a jeep in 1996, five years after it started as a registered organization. This has helped going to field where there is no public transport. In 1999, NAF bought land and, within the same year, it was able to build its own office building with a training hall. A small library was also started. At present, the organization has six computers, four printers, e-mail and fax facilities and two motorcycles in addition to the jeep for visits to other organizations and the field.

Growth of Annual Budget

In 1991, the annual transaction of the organization was NPR 2,000,000. This rose to NPR 3,000,000 in 1994. By 1997 the transaction had increased significantly to NPR 12,000,000. There has since been no rise in the transaction, although NAF has more projects. This is mainly because the funds are transferred directly to the partner NGOs while NAF focuses on the technical aspects of the work and leaves the disbursement of funds to the NGO partners. Now NAF is able to meet its recurrent costs without external support.

Internal Sources of Funding

Over the years the foundation has evolved a number of methods to raise funds within the organization apart from the membership fee to sustain it.

These are consultancy services, training, renting out the training hall and office and shop space. Money is also raised from donors, (foreign) students and (international/non-government) organizations for the use of the fax machine, computer and motor vehicle. The sale of publications is also a source of funds. Organizing exposure trips has contributed funds to NAF. For example, it organized an exposure trip on agroforestry for Bhutanese officials at the request of the FAO. Part of the proceeds from such trips are given to the community groups receiving the visitors.

The community can use the income for their own community development activities. NAF, in fact, encourages the community to motivate the visitors to make donations so that all three parties not only learn from each other but also share a little of the available financial resources for mutual support. The foundation also raises about US\$500 from students who come to NAF as intern students. These students use NAF facilities, advice or management support during their research on agroforestry for their master's or Ph.D. degree. So far, NAF has provided such service to five students from Germany, France and Norway.

Internal Stakeholders (Internal Environment) in Fund Raising

Role of the board in fund raising

The important stakeholders of the organization are the staff, the employees (short-term or long-term consultants) and the board members. The issue of fund raising came to the fore at board level when NAF got its jeep. Majority of the board members are farmers who are not used to handling big amounts of money and do not own cars or jeeps since such items are beyond their purchasing power. Questions were raised as to how they would maintain the vehicle and whether this would turn into a white elephant for the organization. The conclusion reached was that each use of the vehicle would have to be paid for at the going rate. This would ensure the funds required for maintenance.

This conclusion also paved the way for raising a maintenance fund for office equipment based on their use. Another method used by NAF on fund raising/saving is to take a contribution of one to five percent of the basic salary from the staff. Although this goes essentially to the staff welfare fund for crisis management, this led to the idea that each employee should contribute to the financial sustenance of the organization. The group translated this into practice by charging clients relatively higher honoraria for their employees; the employees in turn gave the extra charge to the organization. Although this is well accepted by the majority of employees, this

practice is not entertained by the financial audit.

Apart from raising funds for the maintenance of equipment and the physical facilities and staff welfare, NAF raises fund from hostels located at two sites. Originally, these hostels were used for training purposes and the expenses involved were charged to projects for which NAF provided the training services. However, later they started allowing the use of these facilities to other organizations also so that the hostels could be run independently on a self-sustaining basis.

Publications are yet another source of income though NAF publications are bought mostly by INGOs and aid agencies.

Motivation of Key Stakeholders

The single most important factor that has motivated the people to join NAF is its vision to contribute to the improvement of livestock production in Nepal which, in turn, improves the standard of living of the people and the society at large. This is possible only if agroforestry can be improved. Therefore, people join NAF for their interest in improving agroforestry in Nepal, especially in the hills and mountains where fodder and timber trees are important to sustain the farming system and livelihood of the general populace.

The other factors are the management style and leadership in the organization. University graduates with a degree in agriculture/forestry or those with spe-

cialization in ecology/environment are looking for avenues to satisfy their own interests and serve the needs of the people who might be less fortunate because of their situation in the rural areas. They are also looking for some freedom to try out their own ideas. NAF provides just the right environment and setting for such persons with a very small, minimum and flexible bureaucracy and participatory decision making. This has helped develop a feeling of ownership among the employees and thus they do not expect anything for free from the organization. Now they are becoming even more amenable to the idea of fund raising and begin with saving/reducing liabilities/contributing from within the organization.

The following example of a NAF hostel is a case in point.

NAF had rented the house of one of its staff for a hostel. He used to help occasionally in managing the hostel but his overall job performance was less than good. NAF asked him to run this hostel providing food and accommodation to the farmer-trainees and also build a training hall. After running the hostel and training hall for a few months, he said it was not a profitable business. One of the reasons for this was that NAF staff were also using the hostel for their private visits and holidays. But NAF suggested that he continue for a few more months. NAF promoted this hostel and its facilities to other organizations in the area. NAF also began paying for the use of the facilities on their trainings and paying for their stay at the

hostel on their holidays.

In the beginning, the staff took negatively to being charged by the village hostel rented by NAF. They said they should be allowed to stay there for free. Management persuaded the staff to accept the principle that the hostel had to be run on a self-sustaining basis. To eliminate any financial liability to the organization, the hostel manager had to derive a reasonable income from the hostel for his livelihood. The staff agreed to pay for the use of the hostel. This helped to make good business and the hostel is now running at a profit.

In this case, the NAF management was able to skillfully motivate its staff to pay for what they use, reduce liabilities and convert one of its poor performing staff into a good business manager even if the scale of operation was at a low level. This is in keeping with the principle “money saved is money raised.” ▀

Case 2

Tewa

Background of the NGO

The idea of establishing Tewa occurred to Rita Thapa, the founding president, while attending the Beijing Conference. She was a member of the panel on women's fund in which they discussed various possibilities of raising funds for women's development. This inspired her to establish a fund for women's development in Nepal. After her return, she discussed the concept with a group of people close to her. In 1996 they registered Tewa as an NGO to translate the concept into practice.

Motivation

Community development with local contribution is traditional in Nepal. For example, local people used to build chautaraa—resting places on hill trails—and other community infrastructure or school development, with their own resources. However, when foreign funds started coming into Nepal from the late 1950s largely in institutional forms, this tradition gradually became weaker. People started contributing less and less to community-based development activities, knowing and expecting that the external donor supported organizations would provide for local development. Most devel-

opment activities in Nepal thus became external donor driven. This ushered in among the Nepalis a syndrome of dependence on foreign donors. This was not healthy for the society. Therefore, Tewa has been attempting to revive the old tradition of fund raising in the community, with a modern approach to promote self-help, with the aim of reducing the prevailing dependency syndrome in Nepal.

Major Activities of Tewa

1. Volunteer Training for Fund Raising

A half-day orientation is given to selected candidates before they are selected for volunteer training. The topics discussed in the orientation are introduction to Tewa, its activities, and the role of volunteers. Then the participants are asked if they are interested in the training. For those who are interested, a three-day training is given. The topics discussed are women's development, women's empowerment, philanthropic giving, methods of fund raising, the situation of traditional giving in Nepali culture—how it is declining and how it can be revived—and how to motivate people to give or raise funds.

The training is facilitated by Tewa staff and outside resource persons. In

Tewa's view, volunteer fund raising is very important because it helps to mobilize people who are idle and to sustain the local organizations on their own feet. The training is given to the participants at no cost.

Realizing the importance of volunteer training, Tewa once explored the possibility of INGOs funding it. Some INGOs asked Tewa to send proposals but their final responses were not positive.

► Volunteer selection

Until 1999, Tewa used to select the volunteers based on the recommendations of staff and friends. The recommended people were mostly housewives who were educated and enthusiastic but were not employed for lack of opportunities. Later when Tewa realized its network was very small for volunteer selection, they published advertisements in the national newspapers. This turned out to be not very effective. From the four to five ads they placed, only 30 to 40 people came to inquire. And most of the responses were from people who were seeking jobs. They asked whether they would get jobs after the training. A total of 15 persons took the orientation. Out of this, only four participated in the training and virtually none of them became active fund raisers. The sad part was that they did not even have faith in fund raising. Because of this failure, Tewa retreated to the previous method of selecting only from people known to them.

The volunteers do not get any remuneration.

They have to give all the money they raise to Tewa. The benefits for them are training and exposure. After the training there is a three-month mentoring period. During this period, the meetings of the volunteers are held every three to four weeks. In these meetings, resource persons are invited to give lectures on gender, development, property rights, reproductive health, and current issues. The purpose is to make the volunteers aware of development issues as much as possible, because most of them are housewives and some do not even read newspapers. At the end of the mentoring period, their performances are evaluated and the best volunteers are awarded. So far the highest amount of fund raised by a volunteer was Rs. 43,000 during the three-month mentoring period. Tewa also provides training opportunities to its volunteers outside and inside Nepal.

Volunteer training is a part of fund raising. It is also done with the objective of developing human assets in this sector. Tewa trains two to three groups of volunteers a year. Volunteers can be male or female. During the three-month mentoring period, the volunteers are already working for Tewa. A graduation ceremony is held to reward those who complete the three months. After graduation if they cannot continue doing volunteer work for Tewa, they can quit. So far Tewa has trained 138 volunteers. Forty-five of them are still working for Tewa.

Eight male volunteers have been trained so far. Only two or three are still

associated with Tewa, but one male volunteer won the Outstanding Volunteer award of 1999. Now he is a regular staff of Tewa.

Tewa prefers not to involve anyone in fund raising without the volunteer training. If a person does it without training, she may not fully understand or may not be able to connect with the background, the purpose and the vision of the organization. She is more likely to convey the wrong message to the donors. And in the long term, this may have a negative impact on the mission of the organization.

Volunteers meet every month or between three to four weeks to review their work and share their experiences.

Volunteers are asked to develop their individual work plans on the third day of the training in which they specify who they will approach, at what occasions and how much they expect to raise from them. The occasion may be Teej, when married women fast and worship God Shiva for the prosperous and long life of their husbands, and the unmarried ones wish for husbands having such qualities, when normally all the sisters are together; or Dashain, a festive season when Goddess Durga is worshipped since she destroyed a demon that threatened the gods. Mostly the target persons of the volunteers include their family members and relatives—fathers, mothers, siblings, in-laws, and so on.

In training, the volunteers are also oriented on how to persuade the poten-

tial donors. For example they can persuade her by saying that if she buys five sarees in a year, she can buy one saree less and donate the money she has saved and help uplift some deprived women. Likewise, women who light huge numbers of oil lamps for religious purpose can reduce the number and the saved money can be donated for a social cause. To the young people frequenting restaurants, they can be persuaded to donate the money they saved from one less visit to restaurants.

2. Fund Raising

After training, the volunteers go fund raising. They do it understanding the organization and with motivation. Tewa does not want anybody to just collect money. It wants its volunteers and staff to do this job with a good understanding of why they are doing it.

3. Grant Making

The whole purpose of raising funds to Tewa is to provide grants to community-based women's organizations so that they can carry out activities that would help in their capacity building and that of their targeted participants in development at the local level.

During the last five years, Tewa has provided grants to seven women's groups. One of the essential criteria for the grants is that the women's group should be registered with the local district administration and that the group and its activities should be locally based.

Grants are made to women groups which are registered and moving towards empowerment (not recently started but have already done some work and know how to use funds). The maximum amount granted for one group and one program is Rs. 50,000. But it can be given additional money for another program. There are a few groups that have received funds for two or three programs.

These groups have to send two reports within the year. Tewa gives them recording forms to maintain the information regarding the project activities. If anybody wants to know about the project, they can see these records. Sometimes Tewa also gets assistance from other NGOs through its network to monitor the grantee group's activities.

Role of Internal Stakeholders (Internal Environment) in Fund Raising

Board members, members of the executive committee, and the key members of staff, discuss and decide jointly on all matters connected with the organization, especially with fund raising. "In one way or another, everyone is a fund raiser in Tewa," said Rita Thapa, the founding president and coordinator of the organization. Deepak Dewan, the senior program officer, said, "Naturally, the board members take greater interest in policy matters than in ordinary day-to-day matters. They sign the policy decisions to ascribe a legal status to the decisions or

documents but almost everyone is involved in arriving at a conclusion on any matter."

In addition to their involvement in fund raising activities, the responsibilities of the staff include depositing the donations in the bank, sending "thank you" letters to the givers within a week, sending reminder letters to the givers of annual gifts about the time of giving, and sending Tewa publications to givers so that they know what is going on at Tewa. There are currently nine staff members at Tewa.

Staff Motivation

The staff are highly motivated. Deepak Dewan said, "Since we are highly dependent on others for the resources for our development, we thought why don't we start our own fund raising efforts, no matter how small. This feeling has motivated us to work in this venture. In addition, the success that we achieved in fund raising in a short period of time is a further encouragement to all of us. Now this has given us confidence that the work we were doing was right, as 600 to 700 people are supporting us currently."

Kabita Upadhyay, volunteer program officer, was motivated by this venture when she saw that internal fund raising was possible and the money given to poor women could help uplift them. Amita Adhikary, a volunteer, is motivated in fund raising because she finds Tewa activities transparent and the money she raises is granted to genuine poor women

for their development.

Dewan added on the motivation of the staff within the organization: “Another motivational factor is the work culture of Tewa. There is no hierarchy as such, and everyone’s view is given equal importance. If someone comes up with an innovative idea, this is discussed among the staff, volunteers and board. Any idea is not ignored simply because it came from one staff or a volunteer. We do not have the culture in which people who are close to the leaders’ office get more benefits than people who are away. This encourages everyone to be creative and motivates them to work for the organization which is in fact fund raising.”

Membership

Tewa tries to make itself an organization of diverse communities, cultures and professions. It is even trying to include representatives of grantee communities in its membership in order to make it an organization of diversity. This would mean that the beneficiary of Tewa’s fund raising efforts would also be able to contribute towards decision making in Tewa. However, only women can be members of Tewa (see Box: The Case of Amita Adhikary).

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Organization (Staff, Volunteers and Board Members)

Strengths

1. **Diversity of ethnic communities and professions in staff, volunteers and board members.** This motivates those who work here because they feel everyone is represented and everyone’s voice is heard and respected.
2. **Non-hierarchical organizational structure.** There is no boss and no subordinate. Everyone is given responsibility, and s/he will be fully responsible for his/her work.
3. **Tewa does all its activities proactively.** It discusses beforehand the probable difficulties it may encounter while performing an activity and thinks of ways that the activity might be done that could mitigate the perceived difficulties.
4. **Tewa is a system-based, rather than an individual (personality) based, organization.** It has developed a system that functions or can be sustained even if Person A or B is not there. For example, when Rita Thapa wanted to voluntarily give up her position after two years, Tewa had already groomed another leader to replace her. When Thapa left as president, there was no leadership crisis in the organization. Now Thapa, at present program coordinator, would also like to give up this position, and

Tewa has started looking for another person to take her place. In three or four months' time, Tewa will have somebody in her place. This indicates that Tewa is growing as an organization with a system.

5. **Tewa has a good amount of endowment fund.** It has enough to support its current administrative costs. This ensures the stability of the organization.
6. **Tewa is transparent in its work.** It has different committees representing the volunteers, donors, staff and board. The annual report clearly describes the amount of funds raised and spent and the report is distributed to all the donors. It also invites donors for interaction with the grantee groups so that they can inquire for themselves how their money is being spent by the grantees.
7. **Unity and understanding** among the staff, volunteers and the board.
8. **Good leadership.** Tewa's leaders have good vision and are committed to translating it into action. They are participatory in decision making. They recognize the talent, potentials and strengths of the staff and volunteers.

Weaknesses

1. Since people from diverse groups and professions joined Tewa, it took some time to understand each other and focus on the vision of the organization.

2. Tewa has not been receiving expected responses from givers despite being sent thank you letters, reminders and follow-up. Tewa is not sure if it is a problem of not using the right approach or if it is the problem concerning the givers.
3. Fund raising work needs a lot of investment.
4. Tewa initially wanted to hire only women as staff. But when it could not find enough women with the desired qualities, it hired men also. This can give the wrong impression that Tewa is not serious about filling senior positions with women.

Tewa's Fund Raising Activities

1. Individual donation
2. Cultural show
3. Tewa member house party
4. Walkathon
5. Raffle ticket
6. Donation from big business houses
7. Honoring women
8. Piggy bank
9. Resale of goods

Tewa has a separate committee for fund raising. Every method or technique of fund raising is extensively discussed in the committee before it is put into practice.

1. Individual donation

This helps to expand the large circle of the givers. The frontline givers are the people in the personal networks of the volunteers and staff, e.g., relatives and close friends. In Nepal, the personal network method seems the most effective way. Tewa is trying to increase the number of regular donors more than the one-time donors.

During the occasions of Teej or the festival of Dashain, a volunteer collected from as many as 15 individual donors. The range of the individual donation is Rs. 50 to Rs. 100,000. Twenty to 25 percent are individual donors of annual gifts, i.e., they repeat the donation every year.

- ▶ Targeting and spotting the potential donors

Volunteers start raising money usually from their relatives and friends. It requires some persuasion in the beginning. Givers give money because they trust the volunteers and not Tewa as such, since they are not familiar with its work in the beginning. These givers may be “big people.” Volunteers persuade givers by saying that Tewa is giving grants for women’s empowerment and it is the only organization that is devoted entirely to raising funds for needy women. Later, the givers start giving to Tewa after they are convinced that it is doing good work and that the money is spent for the same cause for which it is raised.

Many donors also do not have enough money for themselves. So it takes

a lot of time to persuade people. Therefore, Tewa is trying to increase the number of annual gift givers rather than the one-time gift givers. It is trying to work out how to nurture a long time relationship with givers.

Volunteer Amita Adhikary related her experience: “Those with lots of money are less interested in philanthropic giving than those with a little money. The people with little money, if convinced (of the cause), are more willing to give and think this giving will be a kind of virtue (dharma).”

Majority of the volunteers have experiences similar to Adhikary’s. “When volunteers approach INGO directors and people owning cars, thinking that they would give more money, they often turn out to be the lowest givers. Volunteers expecting at least Rs. 5,000 hardly get Rs. 500 from these people. Contrary to it, when middle class people are approached with an expectation of Rs. 100, they give even Rs. 500 at a time when they understand the cause.”

Tewa’s volunteers and staff try to woo potential individual donors at all occasions. For example, when a volunteer saw an office woman on a footpath, it immediately occurred to her to approach this lady for a donation.

2. Cultural show (event)

Tewa has done this only once on an experimental basis. “It has a lot of hassles. This is a good method to collect a big sum of money at one event, but it requires a lot of efforts too. In one sense this is easy

to do because we are not asking money from the givers for nothing as they also get the entertainment watching the show. A cultural show was done in 1998. Then it was easy to organize because Uddhav Poudyal, a film producer and cinema owner, took its responsibility. The actors were famous comedians Hari Bansa and Madan Krishna and other singers.”

3. Tewa member house party (event)

This event combines entertainment and publicity for Tewa’s fund raising. Potential givers among the friends and relatives of Tewa members are invited to the party. At this party, Tewa members talk exclusively on Tewa’s vision and mission. All the invitees are informed beforehand of the purpose of the party and the contribution they are to make for participating in the causes proposed by Tewa. So far, Tewa has held two such parties.

4. Walkathon/Sponsored walk (event)

This was organized to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Tewa and also to celebrate its meeting the target of Rs.15,000,000 for its endowment fund. It was also done to give a new touch to the annual meeting of the donors. In the annual meeting, Tewa presents to the donors the activities it carried out last year, and use this as a forum to interact with donors.

The participants of the walkathon were invited by all the board members, staff and volunteers. Each participant had to contribute Rs. 500 per kilometer. The length of the walkathon was 10 kilome-

ters. Every participant has to collect Rs. 5,000, either paying the full amount himself or raising the money from others. In this event, food was provided by Bhojan Griha (the donor restaurant), water was provided by an individual, Abhijit Acharya, and the banners were printed by some organizations.

In the beginning, it was difficult to convince the people about this event. They said that it was a strange sort of walk, as they not only had to walk for the organization but also had to “pay” for the walk.

Now Tewa is thinking of using the walkathon as a regular feature of its fund raising. The walkathon was documented on video.

5. Raffle ticket (event)

This method is not encouraged officially by the government. According to government regulation, all raffle tickets should be signed by the district administration authority and the lottery should be drawn in the presence of their representative. Since the authority needs extra manpower and resources to supervise the raffle, they do not encourage it.

6. Donation from big business houses

A business house should exist not only to make profit, but should also have the responsibility of helping the poor community to whom they market their products. Tewa approaches the big business houses with this concept in mind. In the beginning, of the eight to ten business houses it sent letters to, only half responded and gave money. Some explained

that they could not give money. In Tewa's experience, the business companies with foreign investment are more likely to give money for social service than the ones without it.

There have been one-time donations worth Rs. 50,000. Four business houses have donated such an amount. Some companies have donated in kind, such as training, seeds, expertise, and company products. For example, HURDEC, a management and development consulting company, provided training to Tewa's staff.

7. Honoring women

This method was used to raise the endowment fund for the organization. In this method, pictures and brief statements about the women being honored were published. The sponsors were people who wanted to honor the women who had inspired their lives. Each sponsor contributed Rs. 50,000 to the Tewa endowment fund. Nepal has a tradition of honoring people after their death, but Tewa wanted to start a new culture of honoring people while they are still alive. Tewa has used this method twice. In the first edition, Tewa honored 12 women and raised Rs. 600,000, and in the second, it honored 11 women and raised Rs.550,000.

Women's contributions in a person's success are usually not acknowledged in public. This event has been used to correct that omission as well. A man becomes successful in his career because a woman creates a good environment for him at home. Unfortunately, only the man gets

recognition for his success; the woman's contribution to it is usually ignored. This method has been adopted not only to honor the women whose pictures and names have been published, but to honor all women who are contributing directly and indirectly to the success of men.

8. Piggy bank

This method promotes the concept that small amounts of money can make up one big sum. Tewa piggy banks are given to members, volunteers, staff and donors. These are collected at a certain interval of time.

9. Resale of goods

Caps and T-shirts with the Tewa logo are resold to the givers and the surplus from this resale are deposited in the Tewa fund. The resale is done on such events as Tewa's anniversary, exhibitions, the walkathon, workshops, and seminars. Plain T-shirts and caps are bought from the local market and then the Tewa logo is printed on them.

Tewa also has a supporter from the US, Suzan Galver, who organizes a Tewa Tea every year at her house and puts on sale Nepali handicrafts made of Dhaka materials sent by Tewa. The surplus from such sale goes to the Tewa fund.

10. Endowment Fund

This is used to meet the operational cost of Tewa. Contributions from Nepali donors giving Rs. 50,000 or more go to this fund.

Most Successful Fund Raising Method

Individual donation is the most successful method of fund raising in Tewa's experience. Through this method, Tewa can explain to individual donors face to face what the organization is all about, and through those individual donors the donors' network can be expanded further and Tewa can further publicize itself. This method can help produce the crucial mass that Tewa needs.

In Deepak Dewan's view, the walkathon is its second most successful method, as this created curiosity and attracted the interest of a large number of people who came to see the event. In Kabita Upadhyay's view, the members' Tewa house party is the second most successful method in terms of cost and time. "With a little input we can get more output. In one night Tewa can raise up to Rs. 80,000," she said.

In Deepak Dewan's view, the third most important method is the Piggy Bank, as it can involve children as well. This can help develop a culture of giving among children. Since it is not time bound, people do not feel pressured about it and collect the funds at their own pace. In Kabita Upadhyay's view, the raffle ticket is the third best method as it can mobilize a large number of volunteers. People also do not feel that they have to donate large amounts. "Last time we raised Rs.180,000, only a little less than our target of Rs.200,000. Since the raffle ticket costs only a small amount, more people

buy it," she said.

Least Successful Fund Raising Method

The cultural show was the least successful method in terms of time and resources required. It took one and a half months to raise Rs. 100,000. The organization who produced it for Tewa, Sayapatri Film, received more publicity than Tewa. In this method, since more work is by "third hands" (e.g., performing artists), Tewa has less control over it.

Tewa's Future in Fund Raising

Dewan said, "The future of Tewa looks good. By nature, Nepali people are philanthropic. Even though Nepalis are becoming poorer due to the rising inflation, the desire to donate can also be encouraged.

"There will be competition definitely, it is good to have competition because it makes one work hard and more seriously. Tewa does not intend to increase only the number of its donors, but it wants to increase the number of quality donors. It is for this reason that Tewa wants to involve a few (three to four) staff and volunteers from other NGOs in the next Tewa volunteer training, so that they can also start this practice in their organizations."

Types of donors

On average, there are more male donors than female as men have more con-

trol over resources. The fund raising is limited to Kathmandu. It is because most potential donors are in Kathmandu. Most donors are middle class and office workers while a few are business houses.

What do donors get in return from Tewa?

In order to recognize donors and maintain transparency, they are invited to be members of fund raising and grant making committees. This makes them familiar with the process of grant making—how a grant is given and to whom it is given. The donors are also experts of their areas. They are invited to suggest ideas on Tewa activities with their expertise.

Tewa also provides them with the opportunity to directly interact with grantees in Kathmandu and in the communities. It sends its publications, annual reports and thank you letters to the donors within seven days of their donations.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

“Tewa does not do the cost-benefit analysis only in monetary terms, but also in terms of its long-term impacts on the donors. For example, Tewa spends at least Rs. 40,000 for one volunteer training and it does two such trainings in a year at a cost of at least Rs. 80,000. When it analyzes its cost benefit, it is not interested to assess how much have the volunteers been able to raise in relation to the cost of training. We assess how far have we been able

to contribute in developing human resources in the area of fund raising and how much awareness have we been able to create about Tewa and its activities to its potential donors. It is also important to realize what kind of contribution we are making in development and in raising the capacity of the community-based women’s groups. This will, in turn, help raise more funds for Tewa in the future.”

Lessons Learned

The same event should not be repeated only after a short interval. For example, when its first raffle was very successful, collecting Rs.180,000 and achieving the target by 90 percent of Rs. 200,000, Tewa organized another raffle after only four months. It was very difficult to sell the tickets the second time.

Tewa organized an interaction program for donors and grantees, thinking that it would help donors know how their money was being utilized, and inspire them to give more. But to Tewa’s disappointment, only 10 out of 100 people invited by telephone showed up. A reason for the absence could be that the program was one hour long and they could not spare one hour for this purpose.

Future Plans

This year, Tewa plans to raise funds through individual donations, the food festival, house party, raffle ticket, cultural show, walkathon, product sale and piggy

bank. Syakar Honda has agreed to donate a certain amount for each unit sale of its motorbike, but this has yet to be finalized officially. Tewa is also thinking of using the payroll-giving method. When Tewa staff visit corporate houses, they give many options for donation, but most prefer one-time giving. Tewa also offers the option of providing the company stationery materials for a year. Because of some complexity in accounting, it takes time for corporate houses to decide on this. This

may be due to government policies.

Tewa is also approaching different corporate houses to gain donations from them based on the sale of their products. However, it is selective and will not propose this scheme to companies that produce alcohol and tobacco products. On the other hand, if these companies are willing to donate without asking for publicity, Tewa may collect money from them. ▶

The Case of Amita Adhikary

Amita Adhikary, a volunteer, first heard about Tewa from her husband who was a good friend of Rita Thapa, the founding president. Before this she was “idle” after completing her bachelor’s degree. She was “only a housewife,” and she had never worked for any organization. She is currently working on her master’s degree in sociology.

She said she began to understand Tewa better after attending its volunteer training. When she started working as a volunteer fund raiser for Tewa, she got the opportunity to meet many kinds of people and also got exposure to many areas that she was not acquainted with before. She feels that she now belongs to Tewa. She has become a general member.

Motivation

She enjoys what she is doing today. She said, “We should not think about our comfort only but also think of those women who are in trouble. With little effort on our part, if their lives become better why should we not do it? This is also a virtue (dharma).” This work gives her satisfaction.

Her family supports her in this work. Earlier, when her children were small, she could not spare time for this kind of activity. Now they are grown up and she can afford to do this work. She is always at the organization’s service whenever she is required.

The possibility of an ordinary member becoming president of Tewa

Tewa is an open organization on such matters and anyone with the right skills can get to the top. The possibility of Amita Adhikary becoming president of Tewa someday depends on how far she develops her capability in the future. The organization gives equal opportunity to every member to be in that position. She thinks she is not yet capable of holding that position.

Case 3

Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH)

Introduction

Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) aims to improve the standard of living of the poor in Nepal by supporting community development initiatives. It uses the participatory approach and forms partnerships with locally based NGOs, small farmers groups and women's credit groups, to implement locally sustainable water and sanitation projects affordable to the community. Building the capacity of local NGOs and community groups to construct, manage, operate and maintain infrastructure projects is an integral part of NEWAH's work. It is a member of the Nepal Fund Raising Group (NFRG).

Fund Raising Issues

Realizing the need for local fund raising, NEWAH started a Fund Raising Section in 1998. This was merged and developed further with Communications to set up the Department of Communications and Fund Raising in the year 2000 to:

1. raise NEWAH's profile among people (to create constituency);
2. create public awareness for philanthropic giving; and
3. work towards reducing the dependency syndrome.

The issues in fund raising are:

1. Difficulty in motivating individuals and corporate organizations to give in cash.
2. Potential givers want to see the immediate results of their giving.
3. Majority of the potential givers are in Kathmandu and most are unaware of NEWAH as its projects are implemented outside Kathmandu in the rural areas.
4. The potential givers do not know what they get out of giving.
5. The cause of giving for water and sanitation projects in faraway areas does not motivate the potential givers.
6. The events organized for fund raising—for example, rafting and a “treasure hunt” in a supermarket—had to be postponed to suit the convenience of the supporting organizations. This demanded flexibility on NEWAH's time and other resources, sometimes causing disappointment to the staff in meeting the target.
7. NEWAH still has to do some primary work on generating new ideas (concepts) on fund raising and refining their presentations and profile to fit their constituency.

NEWAH is the largest NGO working in the area of drinking water supply in Nepal. It uses the integrated approach and works in the areas of drinking water, health and sanitation. It emphasizes the participation of the local community in order to build their capacity, to establish their ownership of the implemented projects, and to make the projects sustainable. It has been working only in the rural areas but is planning to work in the semi-urban areas too.

NEWAH is currently working in 45 districts. The total number of stakeholders/users of NEWAH supported water supply systems exceeds 500,000. The projects are implemented from the regional offices, and the head office at Kathmandu is largely responsible for monitoring. The total number of staff is 150 throughout Nepal.

NEWAH has two major donors: Water Aid, a British charity, and DFID, the British government department for international development. Water Aid is its main resource partner and has been supporting it since its inception. DFID started providing funds in 1998. The other resource partners of NEWAH are MS Nepal, a Danish supported INGO, and the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC) based in the Netherlands.

Implementation of Projects

A local project management committee (PMC) is formed to implement the project in every community. Both male

and female representatives from all sections of the society are included in the PMC.

Allocation of Tap Stands and the Minimum Fund Required

Usually one tap stand or hand pump is allocated for ten households. However, if the households are widely scattered, one tap stand can also be fixed for less than ten households. NEWAH raises NPR 500 from each tap stand user and NPR 400 from users of each hand pump in the terai. The fund thus raised from the users is deposited in the bank account of the project management committee (PMC). This is used for the initial maintenance of the water supply system. NEWAH does follow-up visits for the maintenance of the water supply system for two years after its completion. After that, the community has to take care of its maintenance.

Caretaker and Collection of Water Charges

Usually one caretaker is chosen by the community from among the users of one water supply system in the hills. In the terai one caretaker is chosen for one tubewell. The water charge is collected at the rate of NPR 10 per household per month on voluntary basis. In some localities, the community schedules the cleaning of the tap stands and their immediate vicinities on a daily basis by assigning the work to the individual user households. This schedule is sometimes written and pasted

on the tap stand for everyone to take note of. The PMC prepares the schedule in consultation with the water users of the locality wherever this is in practice.

NEWAH not only provides water and health education but also indirectly helps people in general education and other aspects of daily life. With a better accessibility to water, the time people used to spend fetching water has been saved. The children can now use such time for education and women for more productive activities.

NEWAH also carries out experiments with new technologies of collecting water, such as rainwater harvest and fog water collection. The mist water collection experiment has shown promise, especially in the eastern hilly areas, Namsaling and Mabu of Ilam district, as reported in the national dailies.

Role of NEWAH Board in Fund Raising

The executive board consists of seven members. Two are staff (the executive director and another member). The rest of the five members come from diverse professions. One of them is a politician (member of Parliament), another is a well-known expert in gender mainstreaming and development and the wife of a former prime minister. The third one is a solicitor of high national repute. One of the members is an international expert on water and water politics/economics.

Most of the board members are very

busy. So far, they have not been very active in fund raising directly because no one has given much thought to using them. However, they do buy the tickets of events organized for fund raising and contribute to fund collections just like anybody else.

NEWAH has recently realized the importance of board members in fund raising and is planning to use them in the immediate future. They may help as entry points for fund raising by getting personally involved in the work through events or in other manners.

Staff Motivation in Fund Raising

“The feeling that we are doing something for an important cause and not just raising fund for our own organization but for those who need water badly gives us a sense of satisfaction,” said one of the staff members when asked about his motivation in this work. He further added, “When we go to the community and introduce ourselves as NEWAH staff, the respect and love offered to us by the community give more satisfaction than what we get from the salary.” Other staff members said, “After working in this job for a few years now, we have seen another aspect of Nepal—misery in the lives of people, especially in the rural areas, just because of lack of water.”

However, they have had a fair amount of frustrations and humiliations in their efforts to raise funds. They have had refusals in their requests to meet with the executives of potential donor organi-

zations. In some places, they have outrightly been told to go away as soon as they uttered “fund raising!” Archana Sharma, one of the fund raisers, said, “But such treatments meted out to us made us that much more determined to carry on with tact and patience. Visions of people in misery for lack of water came to me at the time. We know the ultimate users of the funds thus raised. Every little amount raised is spent to improve the quality of living of such people.”

Sharma was motivated in this job since she had done fund raising as part of her school activities. Because her family members had also done fund raising, she knew something about it before she made this her career. However, Paras Thakuri did not know much about fund raising before he entered this profession, although he did have some experience as a marketing officer in a private company. This helped him in explaining the cause of the fund raising and the need to provide drinking water for people who do not have it.

Strengths and Weaknesses of NEWAH Staff in Fund Raising

NEWAH’s fund raising staff feel that over the last few years they have learned a lot about fund raising. With their experiences, they now know how to identify and approach potential donors. They are always watchful for persons and organizations from whom they can collect funds. They said, “Whenever we see any of our

friends wasting money we feel like saying, ‘Why don’t you give that money to us for the social cause of water?’”

Their experiences have made them confident in asking for donations from any person or organization. They said, “We do not feel shy anymore in asking donation from any person or organization because we are not asking the money for ourselves. If the donors ask what do we do with his/her money we can show where we spend the money.”

Sharma said, “Nobody will give money just in the name of NEWAH. We need to have in our hands a detailed plan which includes explanation on how that money would be spent for that good cause.” Thakuri added, “There is nothing we can give to the donors immediately in return. The ‘product’ we sell is the ‘cause.’ The fact that they can relate with the cause we try to sell and the degree of satisfaction they derive by giving for the cause is what counts. It is their satisfaction that counts most.”

Transparency, accountability and communication are very important in fund raising and in the use of the fund raised. “A person donating NPR 100 has as much right to know about how the money has been used as someone who might have donated NPR 100,000.” The staff work as a bridge between donors and NEWAH. They should have all answers to the questions that donors might ask before or after giving.

As a result of the attempts at fund

raising, more people now know about NEWAH and NEWAH now knows more people compared with the past. With the experience they have gained, NEWAH can go out fund raising with greater confidence. They can now better do the advocacy and marketing of their organization and its cause.

There is a big difference between fund raising and getting grants by submitting proposals. In fund raising, one has to be very resourceful so as to be able to coordinate people and circumstances of diverse natures and harness them all together. Other tasks involve selling tickets or just collecting the donation, ensuring that everyone does his/her part well, and making sure that everything goes on schedule and towards obtaining the money the donors have to give or obtaining the authority for its release. This is not always without hassle. NEWAH has more experience in submitting proposals to donor organizations for grants. Much of NEWAH's attempts at fund raising are experimental. Events or ideas that are not very successful are discarded. In fund raising, the NEWAH staff are at the mercy of donors/sponsors. For example, an event that was planned to be held right before the festival of Dashain had to be cancelled when the sponsors wanted to postpone it because of their other impending tasks. NEWAH could not do the event at the last hour and thus could not catch the festive giving mood of the people for the benefit of those who needed it most. Although it can be quite frustrating when the host

withdraws from an activity that had been planned for a long time on some pretext, such incidents have to be taken in stride. Despite occasional disappointments, the advantage of fund raising events over grants is that a larger number of people get to know about the organization. And this helps in widening the base (constituency) for future fund raising.

The staff accepts that they are still learning the art of fund raising. "NEWAH is still in its infancy in terms of its fund raising capacity as it has not yet been able to raise enough fund even to support a single project. We are still a child, we are just crawling," said Archana Sharma. NEWAH still does not have enough publicity materials such as brochures and audiovisual materials specifically designed for fund raising.

Fund Raising Methods Used by NEWAH

NEWAH has applied four techniques of fund raising since it established its fund raising section although staff giving has been going on even before the section was started. These are:

1. Events – Rafting, "Trolley Dash"/ "Treasure Hunt"
2. Product sales – Christmas greeting cards, Dashain greeting cards, street map of Thamel (the tourist area of Kathmandu)
3. Donation boxes – in restaurants and hotels

4. NEWAH's staff giving

1. Events

In the last three years, NEWAH has organized two kinds of events: rafting and the "Trolley Dash/Treasure Hunt." Rafting was held twice. Treasure Hunt was done only once.

a. Rafting

The idea of using rafting as an event for fund raising occurred to the NEWAH staff as it is linked to water, the main subject of NEWAH's work. This was organized with the support and cooperation of the Nepal Association of Rafting Agents (NARA)

The first rafting event was held on March 6, 1999, and the second event was held on February 26, 2000.

Companies provided the rafts, equipment and guides free of cost. Rafting was done in the Trishuli river. The dates for the two events were just before the peak season for rafting, which is from mid-March to May, and they were thus chosen so as not to compete with the profit that the companies stood to make during the season. Lunch was included in the cost of the ticket to ride down the Trishuli. The ticket-buyers or sponsors were informed that the money raised from the events would be spent on building a system of tap stands to supply drinking water to the communities in Dhading district, west of Kathmandu, along the Trishuli river.

In the first year, though the sponsors

or clients were both Nepalis and foreigners, in terms of number, there were more Nepalis than foreigners. There were 16 rafts each carrying seven persons and one guide. The Nepali clients were mostly students and those working in INGOs. The price of the ticket for the first year was NPR 1,000 for Nepalis and US\$20 for foreigners. In the second year, there were 15 rafts with each raft carrying seven persons and a guide. The rate was increased to NPR 1,200 for both Nepalis and foreigners, making it attractive for both categories of participants. In the second year, there were more foreigners than Nepalis. The net income from the two events was NPR 180,514.

Success and problems of the rafting event

The rafting events proved to be an innovative and successful method for fund raising. However, organizing this event brought about some behavioral and organizational matters worth noting in the Nepali context.

When NEWAH invited all the interested rafting companies to discuss the event for the first time, astonishingly, none of them turned up! One beverage company which committed to provide the event banner did not keep its promise. One of the local FM radio stations offered to publicize the event and even recorded an interview with the NEWAH staff. But it neither publicized the event nor broadcast the interview. When the station was asked why the management had changed its mind without prior consultation, the

answer was that it thought NEWAH had cancelled the event! Archana Sharma, the event organizer, said that sometimes people in Kathmandu just imagine things to suit their own convenience, and change their minds without informing the related parties. Similarly, another FM radio station simply cancelled a “beach” (riverside) party it was sponsoring at the last hour. These were some of the problems NEWAH encountered in the first rafting event. The second time, having learned their lessons from the first event, everything was planned well in advance and carefully so that there would be time to adjust to the unexpected and to follow up on the commitments made. In spite of this, five rafts did not arrive for the event even though the company had signed a contract with NEWAH. Fortunately, as a contingency, some extra rafts had been requested. So it did not affect the event.

Not all business companies are altruistic or philanthropic. They expect something in return. The rafting companies that cooperated with NEWAH expected to sell their business through the people connected with NEWAH or increase their share of the market in the subsequent years. If this did not take place, they were unlikely to cooperate further. And when they did not make additional sales through their cooperation with NEWAH, they communicated this among the other rafting companies.

b. “Trolley Dash”

The event of “Trolley Dash” was organized with the cooperation of

Bhatbhateni Department Store, not far from NEWAH’s head office in Kathmandu. The staff tried this innovative method to test its applicability in Nepal. When it was successful the first time, it was repeated within a month. So far, this has been organized only twice.

Prior sale of the tickets for the trolley dash was done through personal/official contacts. They were also sold on the day of the event to be held at the grocery section of the department store. The ticket-buyers (sponsors) were largely the customers of the store. The ticket was priced at NPR 100. After all the tickets were sold, the counterfoils with their numbers were put into a bucket. Two counterfoils were drawn from the bucket. The winners were given one trolley each. They could take home whatever they could manage to put in their trollies in one minute. Cosmetics and alcoholic beverages were not included. The surplus of the amount raised from the two events was NPR 46,000.

In January 2001, the fund raising department was successful in raising NPR 90,000 (surplus) from a fun event called “Bluebird Treasure Hunt” held at the Bluebird Department Store.

Success and problems in organizing the “Trolley Dash”

The “Trolley Dash” was another successful fund raising method. However, there were some problems in getting permission from the Home Ministry for this event because it was considered to be a

kind of raffle. Under the law, raffles cannot be organized without the permission of the government of Nepal. Since government officials themselves were not clear as to the right level of authority to grant the permission—Home Ministry or District Administration Office (DAO)—the NEWAH staff had to run forth and back between these two authorities several times. Finally, the DAO decided that it fell under its jurisdiction and the chief district officer granted the permission. It was later suggested that in order to avoid having to get permission from the government, the raffle tickets should be called donations to the organization. Since NEWAH is an NGO and not for profit, and has the approval to receive money for charity, such exchange or transaction could take place without any legal problem.

2. Product sales

a. Christmas and Dashain Cards

Christmas cards were printed with the drawings of the children of a British school. The buyers of the Christmas cards were mostly expatriates working in Nepal. The sale of the cards was a big success. The total raised from this product was NPR 55,116 net.

Looking at the success of the Christmas cards, NEWAH decided to sell Dashain cards too. Dashain is a festive season when the Hindus worship the goddess Durga who destroyed the devil that threatened the gods and the king of heaven. Following the style of the West, the Nepali elite and private and public

organizations send greeting cards to their friends and respected people on this occasion. This has been a tradition of a certain class of people over the last 25-30 years. These cards also had the drawings of children. However, the sale of the Dashain cards was not as successful as the Christmas cards. This was because the culture of greeting with cards on special occasions is not as common among Nepalis as it is with people from the West. A total of NPR 36,450 net was raised from the sale of Dashain cards.

b. Thamel Street Map

Thamel is a popular area for tourists in Kathmandu. Targeting the foreign tourists, a map of the streets of Thamel was printed. This also had advertisements of some businesses in Thamel. The map was priced at NPR 100 each. The sellers of the map were given 30 percent commission. However, the sale was not as successful as expected. One of the reasons was that other companies also produced Thamel maps and their prices were lower than that of NEWAH's. However, the maps are still on sale and are placed in leading bookshops in Thamel.

What do the donors/sponsors/hosts get in return?

“We are essentially talking about philanthropic giving on the part of donors or receiving on our part. We are talking mainly about those who like or enjoy giving. So there is not a lot we can give them in the material sense except appreciation, recognition or sense of satisfac-

tion and the assurance that the money given is used well and for the purpose specified.” The sponsor/host of the Trolley Dash, Bhatbhateni Department Store, and the companies that supported rafting were informed of the total amount raised with their support and where that money would be spent. “Thank you” letters and New Year greeting cards are sent to every donor and sponsor/host of the fund raising events. In order to maintain transparency, NEWAH also invites its donors to visit project sites so that they can directly see how their money is being used to help people achieve access to drinking water. NEWAH organizes such visits with its own expenses. With regards to how they organize these visits and who goes on these visits, one of the fund raising staff said, “We cannot arrange the visits on individual basis as this is expensive, but we can take them in groups.” So far, no Nepali has expressed interest in visiting the project areas but many British donors of Water Aid visit project sites every year.

Lessons Learned

1. The staff involved in fund raising should be highly motivated. S/He should not only be interested in earning a salary but in giving social service.
2. The fund raising staff should always learn from past mistakes and use these lessons to improve future activities.
3. Staff working as fund raisers should have a thorough knowledge of the activities of the organization so that they are able to convince donors if s/he is asked any questions about the organization. Likewise, staff working in other sections of the organization should also be aware of the fund raising activities so that if they come across potential donors they would be able to tap the opportunity.
4. NEWAH should prepare more publicity materials targeting all kinds of donors.
5. The fund raising staff should be evaluated not only on the basis of how much money they have raised but also on how much groundwork they have done for future fund raising: the awareness created, the attempts made, and the approaches adopted.
6. It is difficult to accept money from breweries since this contradicts with the ethics of NEWAH. One of the fund raising staff said, “Giving water to rural people with money from breweries is an indirect promotion of alcoholic beverages. It is a dilemma.”
7. Sometimes it is difficult to convince donors that the money is being utilized for a good cause. The reasons for this are:
 - ▶ Some Kathmandu people have the notion that there is no water problem in rural areas, that this is only a problem of urban areas where many people live,

particularly Kathmandu.

- ▶ NEWAH is currently working in rural and remote areas, so it is difficult to take the potential donors to visit such areas.
- ▶ Many business people do not donate but invest. They want something in return for any money they give.

7. The money raised so far is not even enough to fund a project. A project costs a minimum of NPR 900,000.

The cost-benefit analysis of fund raising activities so far has indicated that none of the events or techniques adopted has caused a loss.

Future Plans

NEWAH plans to:

1. continue the Rafting, Trolley Dash/Treasure Hunt events as they were successful in raising funds; and
2. approach corporate houses for big donations by preparing more publicity materials—videos, brochures, flyers, project documents (the details of the project for which the money is being raised).

Target for the Year 2001

The target amount for this year is NPR 500,000. The target is fixed considering the amount raised in the previous years. This target is ambitious. To achieve its target, NEWAH must approach the cor-

porate houses. This year NEWAH will spend even more time and resources in publicity materials and proposals for new methods.

Fund raising is an activity in which one is always at the mercy of others. No one can force anyone to give. It should be voluntary. People support as they like. ▶

Case 4

Manushi

Introduction

The main aim of Manushi is to give disadvantaged and destitute women a means of earning income so that they can increase their self-reliance and improve their living standards and those of their families. The women are trained in handicraft production and business skills. All the women trained are from low income families, some girls are school dropouts and some are members of ethnic communities. Manushi believes that a sustainable livelihood for women is essential for Nepal's sound and sustainable development. It is a member of the Nepal Fund Raising Group (NFRG).

Background/History/Motivation

Padmasana Shakya worked as director of the Centre for Women and Development (CWD) for three years. CWD is an NGO that carries out researches on issues related to women and poverty. During her time as CWD director, she came in contact with many women from many different communities and areas in Nepal who were not just poor but destitute. Some of them had some skills in marketable economic activities, but many did not have any at all. In the course of her studies related to raising their standard of liv-

ing, generating income and empowering them, she was challenged by some of the women who said to her that her studies would be no help to them at all. Instead of carrying out the studies, why did she not do something which might benefit the women directly and immediately? This struck her. This was a humbling moment for her. Deep down she felt that she must take up the challenge. She felt the urge to do something to raise their standard of living. She discussed this with her colleagues and concluded that she must start an income generating project for the women who had the drive and the skills but whose products could not be sold at the village market. She discussed the idea with colleagues and decided to start a new organization. They named the organization Manushi which means "energetic woman."

Manushi provides training to destitute women from disadvantaged rural areas in skill intensive enterprise development, even if the enterprise may be very small. Its priority areas are the hill communities of Western Nepal and the terai, the southern plains across East-West of Nepal. It has established links with the Tamang women of Dhyangphedi, Samundraratar and Gerkutar of Nuwakot district. These are areas that are known to

grow cannabis and traffick in girls. Manushi is also working with the Rai and Sherpa women of upper Sankhuwasabha in producing allo (high altitude stinging nettle) fiber products.

Funding and Fund Raising

Manushi received seed money for the first two years from a Malaysia-based INGO. It has since not accepted any outside funding to carry out its work. The executive chairperson has participated in two workshops organized by NFRG on fund raising. However, it does not raise funds for itself through solicitation but includes a small charge on the products it sells to cover overheads and staff costs. It would rather assist the poor women of rural areas in raising funds for themselves to improve their lot.

The organization does not provide anything for free. Padmasana Shakya believes that many saving/credit and income generation groups have failed because there is no adequate follow-up of and support for the women after they are trained in specific skills. She cited the example of the Department of Cottage Industries who train a large number of men and women on skills for producing different products. "But they do not provide any follow-up, adequate support or business management training. Just training on skills is not enough for the people. They need support in marketing their products." Manushi has developed links with international buyers in Italy and Japan

who are interested in handmade designer items. Some of the products of interest to them are hats and bags made of hemp fiber, hairbands made from nettle fiber, and recycled paper products (note slips). It also produces clothes and footwear made of cotton, and "tie-dyed" products using herbal dyes. Each product is unique enough to meet the interest of the sophisticated buyer in Japan, Italy or the Philippines. The destitute are provided with the skills to make such products and have the opportunity to raise funds for themselves. This is how Manushi helps raise funds for the poorest of the poor women of Nepal.

Manushi is a member of the Fair Trade Group Nepal.

Fund Raising Issues

Manushi received a grant to run its program for the first two years of its inception. During this period, the executive members realized that they would never be able to develop and sustain it on their own if they continued to work under grants even though it was not difficult for it to get grants. They decided that they should attempt to generate income on their own and for the continuity of such income they must first establish a constituency which would be able to support them. However, since their constituency itself was dependent on outside sources, they concluded that they must first make their constituency aware of their potentials and get them out of the mental poverty that makes them believe that they

cannot get out of their misery because this was the lot given to them by the gods. Manushi's approach differs from other NGOs. While others get grants from international or domestic donors to carry out similar activities, Manushi's fund raising activities are centered almost entirely on the sale of products. It raises the fund for its running costs by including a small amount on the prices of the products produced by its constituency, which it markets on behalf of the producers.

The issue for Manushi in fund raising is to develop products that poor people can produce in their homes using locally available materials, without high capital, and still satisfy the needs of clients in the international market. The other critical factors are quality and design desired by the buyers, minimizing environmental degradation due to the use of the raw materials and during the process of production. These are issues for them since they derive their funds from marketing the products.

The Target Participants and the Program

Manushi targets low income, underprivileged and disadvantaged women in its arts and crafts, micro-credit and training programs. Manushi supports its members by giving technical skills in weaving, natural dyeing and design, obtaining loans and marketing their products. It is currently working in Bharatpur, Samundrar (Nuwakot), Bardiya and Kathmandu. It

has 300 women members in its micro-credit program.

"The name of our organization, Manushi for Sustainable Development, itself suggests that it aims for sustainable development," said its executive chair, Padmasana Shakya. To achieve this goal it has chosen the handicraft sector to provide employment opportunities for women.

Arts and Crafts Program

In the handicraft sector, Manushi has concentrated on tie-dye, "an indigenous art of Nepal." The findings of a small survey done by Manushi revealed that the scarf, shawl, patuka (waistband cloths) and pachhyaura (Nepali common shawls) used in olden times by Nepali people were printed using the tie-dye method. The practice declined due to the use of more easily available modern print cloths. Internationally, the tie-dye is recognized among the indigenous arts of India (Gujarat), Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, but not of Nepal. "This makes us sad," said Shakya. "So we are trying to revive it and also get it recognized as Nepali indigenous art. The tie-dye technique we are reviving is our own: Nepali. We have our own originality in the design. So far we have produced over 100 designs of our own just in Manushi. Each one of this is a creative work similar to that of a poet writing a poem.

"Only Manushi does tie-dye, no other organization in Nepal does it. It has

done tie-dyed lampshades. Others do screen prints of Buddha and other images for lamp shades. Our allo (high altitude stinging nettle) and hemp products are different in item and design from that of others. Manushi's Nepali paper products are also different."

When Manushi began doing tie-dye, it started with cotton cloths. Later, to diversify its products, it began using allo, hemp, silk and wool. It uses allo and hemp because these are locally available natural resources. Local people use allo and hemp fiber to produce rope, damlo (rope to tether animal), namlo (forehead strap to support load carried on one's back), while Manushi is using it to produce modern

goods like ladies' bags, wallets and mobile phone cases. Furthermore, it also produces handicrafts made of allo and hemp mixed with cotton. Its other products include paper made from grass, barks and cloth pieces and handmade items made of ceramic, dhaka and pashmina. These are all innovative and adoptive techniques and products for fund raising.

Entrepreneurship Development

Manushi aims at developing its women members as entrepreneurs. It believes that this can be achieved by transforming their potentials and skills into entrepreneurship and not into laborers.

Entrepreneurship Development: The case of a woman

Asha (not real name) joined the producer's group because her husband's income was not enough to support the family. Her husband, an office clerk, was slightly lame. With the support of Manushi, she got a loan which she used to buy two looms for weaving pashmina. She also got help from Manushi in marketing the pashmina products. The income she earned from the pashmina enterprise helped her support her family. Later when her business grew bigger, she asked her husband to give up his job and work with her. Her grown-up children also worked part-time in her enterprise when they were free. Thus, her enterprise provided employment to all her family members.

With her earnings she added another floor to her one-story house. After moving her family to the upper floor she rented out the ground floor. The enterprise took an interesting turn when she offered employment to her tenants in her pashmina business. Henceforth she no longer took rent from them based on mutuality. Instead, she gave them money for food, clothes and other expenses. The benefits to her in doing this were that she could save time in looking for people to work in her enterprise. They would work longer and more reliably than the people coming from far away. They would be available any time for consultations and planning whenever she needed them. After bringing the enterprise to this level, now she is thinking of expanding it further on a mutually supporting basis. The tenants are happy too.

This can help them to become independent. For Manushi, to be dependent means to remain at status quo. In order to make its members independent, it gives them training in the production of handicraft and also supports them in acquiring credit and exploring markets for their products. It has 300 women members in its micro-credit program. They are from Goldhunga and Kathmandu-17. Apart from this, a producer group can get a loan of up to NPR 50,000 under the cottage industry loan from banks.

Growth of the Organization

In 1991, Manushi started targeting poor, young, talented women who were not able to continue their studies due to financial constraints and were from the grassroots. Shakya said, "They had just started life—since they were poor, they needed somebody's support to stand on their own feet."

Recalling the establishment of Manushi, Shakya said, "When we were working in Centre for Women in Development (CWD), a research organization, we used to go for surveys and research studies. Then our women respondents told us that we always went to them and asked questions but did not deliver anything. They said, 'We want something from you that brings improvement in our lives. We cannot wait ten years for your planning and implementation, we want something now.' We felt this as a kick to us, a

reminder of the grim reality of the people, time and area. Then we decided to establish a separate organization for implementing capacity building/empowerment program by splitting the board members of the CWD into two halves. One half of us ran CWD and the other half ran Manushi. We also added some new board members in both the organizations."

Manushi was established not only to give skills training to produce handicrafts but also to develop the entrepreneurship of low income, young, talented girls from the grass roots. In the beginning, it hired two staff and gave training to 15 women. All of them were low income people from the grass roots. The first products of these 15 women were not export quality and had several technical problems. In 1995, the staff grew to five persons. Towards 1998, the staff reached its present number. Manushi continued its efforts and now after about nine to ten years, it has established itself as an organization that produces fine quality handicrafts for export. Currently there are 23 members working full-time—15 in production, five in management, and three in micro-credit. In addition, it has 15 housewife producers trained by Manushi, who produce at home and send the products to Manushi to sell. It also has eight producer groups, which also include male members. On average, each group has five to six members but in some groups the number can be as high as 15.

Assets

Manushi's physical assets include two computers, internet connection, cameras and tape recorders. The office rents a house for NPR 8,000 per month. "These are not so important compared to the human assets in Manushi," said Shakya. "Our endeavor is to constantly expand our human assets to fight poverty and help build the capacity of our members to gain control over their own lives and improve the quality of their lives."

In its first two years, it received seed money from an outside source. In 1995, its turnover was NPR 700,000 to 800,000 which increased to NPR 1.5 million (a break-even point) in 1997-98. The turnover in 2000 went up to Rs. 2.5 million, and it was expected to increase to NPR 3.0 million in 2001.

Foreign Grants

Manushi has only a few programs supported by foreign grants. Its skills development training program is by a Swiss donor mainly for groups with 20 percent male participants. The training program contributes about five percent of its total turnover to Manushi which, in turn, uses it for skills training to women. The "Trickle Up" program is another one with some external funding. This is a joint program in which the donor provides the fund for the program and Manushi bears the administrative, training and travel costs. However, the donor recently informed Manushi that it would share only

about 10 percent of the overhead costs with Manushi.

The executive chair said, "The reason for having little and few externally supported programs is that we are ourselves not interested in such projects as these can make us complacent or lead us into being dependent on others, the very traits that we are fighting against."

Role of the Board and the Staff

The main role of the board is to advise in formulating policy guidelines. Sometimes they also help in marketing Manushi products, both internationally and locally, by promoting the products to the people in their network.

The staff do everything from collecting raw materials, producing handicrafts to marketing them. They also look after the management of the organization.

Motivation of the Staff

The staff have the feeling that if they work hard, the organization will go ahead and eventually benefit them. When a product of Manushi becomes very popular in the market, Manushi gives credit to the designer both within and outside the organization. The staff are also given opportunity to go abroad for trainings, seminars and workshops on design, production and quality control, and to bring back or generate new ideas on their return. Manushi also annually awards the staff for their performance.

They are trained in their field so that even if they go somewhere else, they can still survive on their own. The trainees of Manushi become designers, producers or just members of the organization. This helps in marketing their products.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Staff and the Producers

All the Manushi staff and producers are very committed and dedicated. (Manushi uses the term “producer” for its skilled workers such as the weaver, spinner, designer and dyer.) They are always willing to work longer hours when needed for the organization. They understand management and financial problems when they occur. The executive chair said, “Sometimes when there is no money to pay the staff and producers’ salary due to delay in receiving payments from the buyers, they do not complain. They bear with the management during the difficult period.”

Manushi’s producers are mostly women with only six to seven years of schooling. Therefore, it is difficult to upgrade them on advance management because of their low academic background. Shakya said, “Recently we wanted to include our producers in training on account keeping with our staff. But since the producers had low level of education we could not send them for the training. We sometimes feel this as a setback in developing entrepreneurship in them. It is also difficult to cultivate salesmanship in them as the job needs good communication skills.”

Frustrations

The negative responses of buyers, not receiving raw materials and payments on time, the return of sold products from buyers, not being able to produce on time, and not being able to meet the deadline, frustrate the management, staff and producers of Manushi. “The deadline becomes headline,” quipped Shakya.

Fund Raising Methods

1. Product sale – 90% of total fund
2. Training – 5%
3. Micro-credit program – 3 to 5%
4. Short-term consultancy – 1 to 2%

Marketing of Products

Manushi faces big competition in marketing its tie-dye products. Since it is a member of the Fair Trade Group, it buys raw materials at fair prices and pays fair wages. This makes it difficult for Manushi to compete with the commercial producers.

Manushi approaches potential buyers such as Royal Nepal Airlines, Kathmandu Guest House and new hotels and promotes its products to them to use as souvenirs. Its products also include tie-dyed bed sheets, pillow covers, curtains and decorative items for rooms and hotel suites.

Manushi is a member of the International Federation of Alternative Trade (IFAT) which also helps promote its prod-

ucts. Sharing her participation at the recent Asian conference of IFAT held in Manila, Shakya said, "In the conference we discussed how we could expand the market of our products within and outside the region." This participation in the IFAT conference was partly funded by the Nepal Fair Trade Group (NFTG) and partly by Manushi.

At present the Nepal Fair Trade Group has nine to ten members. All of them are NGOs. The membership is not yet given to any of the commercial handicraft producers. However, IFAT has some commercial buyers as members as they comply with its motto and principle, which is to show concern for the environment, child labor, fair wages, and the empowerment of low income people. The

member commercial buyers of IFAT do not buy handicrafts from anyone even if they find them at low price. They first see who has produced it, in what environment, how it was produced and who benefits from it. But in Nepal, commercial buyers do not show any concern for these issues, they only go for profit.

"Somebody said to me when I give training in tie-dye that I am cutting my own hand by training others in this much valuable but easy skill to creative and exclusive design, but in my opinion it is the promotion of my skills. It creates more demand for such training. In addition, these trainees are the future producers of our organization and the country. They help reduce the misery of others." ►

Case 5

Child Development Society

Introduction

The Child Development Society (CDS) was established in 1991 as a follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 1990 and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Year of the Child. The Society hopes to be a bridge between the organizations and individuals involved in various activities for Nepali children. CDS is registered with the government and affiliated with the Social Welfare Council. The Society aims to cooperate in the activities related to the physical, mental, spiritual and intellectual development of Nepalese children. It is a member of the Nepal Fund Raising Group (NFRG).

Background

After beginning in 1991, the Child Development Society spent about two years on campaigns, seminars and workshops on child rights. Dr. Verona Dixit, the coordinator of CDS, was working at Kanti Children's Hospital, Kathmandu, during that time. It was in this connection that she got involved with the Society although her father had been one of its founders. While at Kanti hospital, she found that at one stage a large majority of the children admitted to the hospital were

from Kavrepalanchok, a district east of Kathmandu. In 1993, when she joined CDS, she found that a large number of workers of carpet factories were from Kavre and many of them had children. These children did not receive enough attention. Thus they very often became sick and were taken to hospital frequently. It became clear to Dr. Dixit that the children she saw at Kanti hospital had not actually been brought all the way from Kavre but were children of the mothers who worked in the carpet factories around Jorpati, Kathmandu. She thought: The cure should be taken to the sick, the solution should be located where the problem is, and above all "prevention is better than cure." Thus, the Child Development Society decided to start work in, around and with carpet factories. The first step taken was to set up a health service in Jorpati where the carpet factories were and where the mothers and children work. Many activities have since followed.

Members of Child Development Society and Sponsorship Program

The founder members and all the executive members of the Society are well known. Dr. Verona Dixit is the full-time coordinator of the Society. Many of its members are physicians and most of them

are very busy. The membership fee is NPR 1,000. Dr. Dixit said, "Even though all the members do not have the time to participate in the day-to-day activities of the Society, they do find ways to provide moral support as well as their expertise for the sake of children that the Society stands for." The current staff is 22 persons. This was reduced substantially from 2001.

One of the major activities supported by the members is the sponsorship program for children's formal education. CDS has provided formal education to 450 children in various schools of Kathmandu and Dhading, a district west of Kathmandu. The sponsorship is raised largely from Nepali individuals based in Kathmandu. One of the sponsors is a Nepali engineer working in Hong Kong who has sponsored 10 children. The individual sponsors have to commit expenses for children to attain a minimum of secondary level of education. Some of the sponsors include the ex (founding) president of the Society and the current president and members of the executive board.

Another important activity is the non-formal education (NFE) program for the deprived and poor children of carpet factory workers, menial wage earners, domestic child helpers, and street children, to provide a base and stepping stone for formal education. In addition, CDS has also established a day care center at the brick kilns of Bhaktapur, a contiguous district to the east of Kathmandu, and the stone crushing plants of Dhading. ILO

supports these. CDS provides orientation on vocational education to NFE children in order to build their capacity for income generation for the future. This includes candle making. The Society started and is currently supporting a primary school at Tokha, a village at the outskirts of Kathmandu valley. In mid-December 2000, CDS started the Child to Child Program of (peer) education and awareness on child rights for domestic helpers. The Society has also formed children's clubs managed by the children themselves. One of their activities is learning from each other and performing skits on child education. CDS promotes literature and arts among children through video shows and examples of those who have contributed to the cause of development of children in Nepal. A book was published with biographies and contributions made by some senior Nepali social workers (Baal Bikaas Samaaj, 2053: *Kehi Barishtha Samaajsewiharu*). Apart from those mentioned above, the Society also works with other like-minded organizations on child welfare. Notable of these are the Unprivileged Children's Education Program (UCEP) for vocational training and subsequent employment, Seto Gurans for teacher's training for NFE and other educational materials, Ganesh Man Foundation for education sponsorship, and Siddhi Memorial Women's and Children's Hospital, Bhaktapur, to form the hospital management board and for fund raising. The Society is also cooperating in research

and education activities with Nepal Rugmark Foundation (for child labor-free production of Nepali carpets), National Society for Protection of Environment and Children (NASPEC), UK Department for International Development (DFID), General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) and Ministry of Labour: Child Labour Cell. The Duchess of Kent, the Good Will Ambassador of Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), visited CDS last year and appreciated the work of the Society. In May 2001, through Her Majesty the Queen of Nepal, CDS honored a journalist, a talented child and the founder of the Society, for their contributions to the cause of promoting children's literature, technological achievement and child welfare.

Motivation of the Staff, Volunteers and Board

Dr. Dixit said, "I get satisfaction working here more than anything else ... When I used to work at Kanti Children's Hospital I had night duties on Sundays. I had to see different types of patients with complaints ranging from diarrhea to blood transfusion. I used to feel that all the serious cases came on the day I was on duty. One day a father brought his three-year-old baby to the hospital. The hemoglobin level of the child was around 3; I was surprised to see the baby surviving at such a low level of hemoglobin. Then I asked her father to donate blood to the child but the father did not agree. He said, 'If the child dies, she will die

alone. But if I die, other seven or eight members of my family will starve.' I also used to worry looking at the appearance of the patients and their family members whether they could afford to buy the medicines. The hospital did not have resources to provide free services to all the patients. This all made me very frustrated. Then I decided to work in preventive health. My husband is also a doctor. We decided to work in two different areas—husband in curative aspect and myself in preventive. At the same time, CDS was looking for someone to run the organization. They asked me if I would help and take the position. I accepted it. The happiness that I get from looking at the children's happy faces is the motivation for me to work here.

"People have a notion that NGO staff are paid highly. We do not have high salaries and benefits here. For example, my 'salary' is NPR 6,000 a month. There is no big variation on the salaries among the staff," related Dr. Dixit.

She continued, "All our staff have the same motivation that I have. Two of our staff were brought up in SOS hostel. Another two of our staff are former employees of Bal Mandir, an orphanage managed by Nepal Children's Organization."

Out-of-School Program

► **Non Formal Education (NFE) Facilitators - 3:**

They run NFE classes for two hours. They discuss with parents their children's

performances. Sometimes when the children do not come to school, they go to the houses to bring them to class.

► **Vocational Teachers - 2 (one full-time, the other part-time):**

They give training on knitting and stitching, candle making and arts and crafts.

Early Childhood Development Program

- Day Care Facilitators
- Baby Sitters – 3 in three day care centers
- Helpers – 2

Most of the workers are women but there are a few men as well. The CDS staff visit the carpet factories to educate women on HIV/AIDS, women trafficking and child education. The staff include a project coordinator, program officer, accountant and messenger.

Role of the Board

The board has 12 members. It has six subcommittees on: research and development (convener—Dr. Ramesh Adhikari); activity (convener—Dr. Verona Dixit); international relations (convener—Surendra Dhakal); publicity and publication (convener—Sharad Chandra Wasti), fund raising (convener—Kiran Baidya); and public relations (convener—Chhatra Amatya). The board meets once a month.

The board members are very busy. Therefore, they rely on the coordinator to translate all policy decisions into action. The coordinator takes advice from the board before taking any new initiatives. Thus, the board and the coordinator, the chief executive, work hand-in-glove.

In the beginning, the board members were implementation-oriented as they wished to get visible results fast. Policy issues were also decided quickly. Documentation did not receive great attention. However, they have now realized that documentation is important and are putting in efforts to document everything they do. In the beginning, the Society concentrated its activities within Kathmandu, where most INGOs are based, so that it could get its staff trained by the INGOs. Now the Society is slowly expanding its work outside Kathmandu.

The Society concentrates its activities on education. It believes that education is the best way to help the children. With this belief, they requested the area (“wada”) office of the municipal authority to give them a piece of government land where they could establish a school for the carpet children, the street children and the domestic helpers. But they have not received a positive response. The area office of the municipality said, “If we give some piece of land to the Society today, some other organizations will also come to the office asking for land tomorrow.”

Fund Raising Issues

Children are the present and the future of any society. But those born to poor and illiterate parents are deprived of their childhood and education for a better future. Despite being born in unfortunate circumstances, majority of the children are intelligent, smart and diligent. Some are not so intelligent but still wish to have formal education, while some are content with literacy skills. Whatever their family background and intellectual capacity, all children deserve attention and opportunities for development. But those born to poor parents face hindrance to their personal development. After Nepal ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a number of organizations intensified their support for an all-round healthy development of the children and their protection from neglect and abuse. Child Development Society stands to promote the cause of education and preparation of the child to face the challenges ahead. However, the situation of the child in Nepal is such that uncoordinated and disjointed efforts by just a few persons are insignificant. Therefore, the Society decided to raise funds and involve those who can afford to provide some support in education and health for the children. Institutional fund raising in Nepal requires personal contacts, persuasion and education or increasing awareness among those who can contribute, no amount being small or big. Within the last three years, CDS has been able to demonstrate that it is possible to raise funds, although not

easily, for child welfare in Nepal. With the increasing material demands of those who have and the increasing population of the deprived children, CDS must continue to educate the people and raise funds for the development of children in Nepal.

Partnership with American Foundation for AIDS Research (AMFAR)

The American Foundation for AIDS Research, AMFAR, was looking for a partner to work with the adolescents employed in carpet factories. CDS and AMFAR decided to work together. This was a strategic entry point for the Child Development Society to get into the carpet factories. Seven years ago, it was difficult to work on issues of the rights of children working in the carpet industry as this might antagonize the factory owners and put the children in a position of disadvantage, the very point CDS was working against. Notwithstanding the apprehension of the owners and managers of the factories on the issue of child rights, Dr. Verona Dixit decided to advocate, in a practical and humanitarian manner, against such social problems since she knew that in Nepal doctors would be listened to and respected for what they say. And she was welcomed wherever she went creating awareness about child welfare without any restrictions.

Local Support after External Support Stopped

Of the 90 carpet factories in Jorpati, CDS worked in 45 factories educating the workers about HIV/AIDS. They made a team of a doctor, a nurse and two or three field workers. The team went to the factories, raising awareness on HIV/AIDS. When the AMFAR project was terminated in 1995, CDS continued to run the program with its internal reserve fund. The Society also asked carpet factories for support and they did since they found that the CDS education was useful against trans-border trafficking of girls to India and the entry of AIDS from the brothels in India. The carpet weaving girls might otherwise be vulnerable to trafficking and even substance abuse including sharing needles. The big factories contributed NPR 400 and small factories NPR 200 towards the cost of education per day.

When they went to the factories for education on HIV/AIDS, they saw, as expected, many children staying and working in the factories in poor conditions with their parents. They talked with the parents and factory owners about the plight of the children. They suggested that the children be sent to school. The parents and the owners requested CDS to do something for the children within the factory. About the same time, child workers and child rights in carpet factories became a national issue when Germany declined to import Nepalese carpets saying these carpets were made by children. This helped CDS to bring the children and their

problems to the fore and out of the carpet factories.

Non Formal Centres

In 1997, they received funding from Red Barnna (Norwegian Save the Children Fund) to run a program for the children working in carpet factories. It was a five-year program in two phases. The duration of the first phase was 1997-2000 and that of the second phase is 2001-2002. In addition, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has supported CDS in helping children working as stone crushers and those in brick kilns. The stone crushers were identified from Dhading district, west of Kathmandu and those in brick kilns were taken from Bhaktapur district lying immediately to the east of Kathmandu. The children study for nine months in the Non Formal Centres. In these centers, they learn and also realize the importance of education.

In the beginning, CDS had difficulty in bringing children to the Non Formal Centre. But after working in the same area for ten years, CDS now has one child bringing others to the center. So CDS needs little persuasion to convince parents or new children to take advantage of the CDS Non Formal Centre. Normally children above six years of age up to 12 years are accepted at the center, although children above five may also be admitted on exception. The Society cannot accept all the children that come to it due to limited resources. Basically, the objective of

the non-formal center is to prepare those children who did not get the opportunity to go to school at the right age (five to six years) to attend formal school. They learn to read and write which is the minimum qualification for attending school and also develop the habit of going to school.

Play Group for Children below Five Years

Sometimes visitors see very young children (under five) at the Non Formal Centre. These are the siblings of the older children who otherwise could not come to the center as they are the ones who look after the younger children at home. So there is a room allocated for running a play group for such small children.

Day Care Centers

The Society runs day care centers within the carpet factories for children one to five years of age.

In January 2001, CDS planned to ask carpet factories to support the day care centers. If a carpet factory supports a baby sitter of its day care center, CDS can help them train one of their workers in baby sitting. If it is difficult to assign one worker as baby sitter on a full-time basis, five to six mothers can look after the babies by turns an hour each. CDS has been talking about this with carpet factories for six months, but there is still no positive response from the owners. However, the Potala Carpet Factory has agreed to run its day care center by itself. CDS will work

at the Maha Guru Carpet Factory for one more year as the factory owner has agreed to pay for half the salary of the baby sitter. CDS will be using this as a model day care center. Sadly, however, two other day care centers will be closed due to lack of funds.

Parental Education

The Child Development Society runs an education program for the parents of the children attending the Non Formal Centre. In this program, the parents receive education on the rights and the health of the children, family planning and other relevant issues through discussions. CDS gets support from specialized organizations on subjects for which it does not have the expertise. For example, for family planning they refer to Mary Stopes Clinic.

Children's Clubs

All the services that CDS provides to the children are based on their perspectives, needs and aspirations in order to develop their personalities. The Society has established a Children's Club in one of the government schools. In this club, all the members, both executive and general, are children. Although there are club facilitators, the children elect their executive members by themselves. The children manage the club themselves. The members meet every Friday. They discuss child rights and the activities they would like to carry out. The facilitators only provide

guidance. For example, they decided to clean a rubbish tip near their club, which they did with help from the club members and the club facilitators. They cleaned a park near the CDS office. Through these activities they created awareness of health and sanitation in the community. During the season of diarrhea incidence, they campaign on its prevention and cure with a street play which they perform in one carpet factory after another. For polio eradication, they carry out an awareness and immunization campaign from one factory to another.

Going by its success in the schools, the Society is contemplating establishing children's clubs in all the schools where CDS children are enrolled. All the clubs will organize cultural and sports meets and advocate and educate on child rights.

Vocational Classes

The children who are not interested in going to school are given alternatives like skills development training. For example, some were taken to the Underprivileged Children Education Program (UCEP), another NGO at Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, where they were given skill-based training. They received the scholarship allotted for students from poor economic backgrounds. The Child Development Society has established partnership with UCEP.

Domestic Child Helpers

On domestic child helpers, Dr. Verona Dixit said her views are slightly different from those of many others. She said: "Some of these children say they are happy and better off as domestic helpers but there are also those who are exploited and abused. We are thinking of working with children on a child-to-child basis. We will discuss the issue with the children at private schools. Many of these children have domestic child workers in their own homes. So a discussion can be organized for such children to think about these less fortunate ones who are otherwise no different from themselves. Such children can themselves ask their own parents why it is that a domestic child worker of their own age is not sent, or does not go, to school. If the employers are approached directly against employing children as domestic workers or are asked to educate these children, they may throw these children out into the streets to fend for themselves, with serious and lifelong consequences. When the children have to take refuge in the streets, the problems are compounded.

"In a country like ours, I do not say that a child should not work. If the child of the destitute does not work, how will she eat? What I would only say to the carpet factory owners is that they give the children some time for education and play and treat them as children. All these children behave like adults because of the hardships they have faced since their early childhood. All right, many of these children, who are late starters in school, are

performing better in their studies but their childhood has been robbed. For the children working in the carpet factories, we say that they should be provided better working conditions such as well-ventilated workplace, limited working hours, etc. This may also keep them from drugs and other undesirable deviations. However, in the case of the children working in the brick kilns and stone crushing plants, we say they should not work, as such work is hazardous to their health. The children's hands are injured and the stone particles and dust can get to the trachea as they breathe. Therefore, we have been asking the trade unions to take the children away from these sectors. They should not be employed in such work. Children can be productive to earn a living without having to do such work in poor or hazardous conditions."

The Society is planning to start work on child domestic workers from Sanepa (Lalitpur) and Maharajganj (Kathmandu) areas where the affluent live and also from Boudha (Kathmandu). Since there are many educated people in these areas, Dr. Dixit thinks that it will be easy to persuade them to send their domestic workers to school. Once the Society is successful in its mission in one area, it can take this as example to start work in another area. "It is so miserable to see a child domestic worker carrying a school bag of her master's child of the same age who goes to school and she does not," said Dr. Dixit. "So if we educate the children of this generation about such injustice, this will oc-

cur less in the next generation when the girls become mothers and the boys become fathers." However, to be able to begin, first the area office of the municipal corporation has to get the statistics on such children and keep and update their records. After that, the Society may be able to plan how it can help send them to school. Dr. Dixit said: "When the child workers go to school, they might get overworked even more as they have to go to school in the day and also work in the morning and evening. They may not get enough rest or sleep. Secondly, the employers may not provide anything to such children apart from their school fees, books and uniforms. This is not enough for a healthy growth of the child." She suggests that the children should not be kept in school the whole day. "They should, rather, be given quality teaching on important subjects for certain time in a day. In this way they can be useful to the employers and still have the chance to get education to gradually build their future. Otherwise, they may never get a chance to build their future. The government should recognize this. If they reduce the school time, many children would be able to go to school."

The Society thinks that the situation of the children at risk can be improved through education. Dr. Dixit thinks that the child rehabilitation program currently being carried out on the street children of Kathmandu is not the best approach in the long term. They are taken and looked after in a rehabilitation hostel for four to

six months and then sent home to their wards or relatives. The children return to the city immediately or after some time and go back to their previous situation. Therefore, the resources used in the rehabilitation was wasted. As an alternative to this rehabilitation program, CDS has established children's clubs and booths at bus stops, the entry point of the children, to educate them about the troubles they would face in the city and also advise them against going to the city.

Lobbying with Parliamentarians and Advocacy

The Child Development Society also wishes to work on advocacy and lobbying with the members of parliament on child welfare. Since this requires a well worked out plan and the members of the board are busy with their professional work and with the existing voluntary workload, they are not able to spend enough time on this. However, the board members who are nearing retirement will take up this activity properly.

The Rights of the Carpet Workers

The Society also talks about the rights of the carpet workers since the fulfilment of their rights influences the well-being of their children. CDS says that the carpet workers should get fair wages and work internationally prescribed hours. There is one factory in the neighborhood that heavily exploits its workers. CDS asked the workers there about their salaries and ben-

efits. They said they get NPR 1,400-1,500 per month. The factory has a grocery within its complex that sells rice, vegetable, meat and other food items at exorbitant prices. For example, it sells buffalo meat at almost three times the price at the market. All the workers have to buy from this shop because their wages are not being paid. This is a great injustice. The factory owner said he has given them accommodations, loans and work. But if the workers complain about him, they must leave the factory. Because they have no other source of livelihood and have nowhere else to go, they are compelled to ask the owner to let them keep their jobs. They are ready to stay as they are.

The Society also creates awareness among the workers of carpet factories against girl trafficking and provides free medical services to their children.

Fund Raising

Sponsors for school education

After completing the Non Formal Education (NFE) in nine months, the CDS searches for sponsors for the school education of these children. Largely, the local members of society sponsor the children. They sponsor from one to ten children in private and government schools. CDS requests the sponsors to contribute a minimum of NPR 4,000 for the first year if they wish to sponsor a child in a government school. The cost includes admission and tuition fees, books and school uni-

form. From the second year, the sponsors have the choice of whether they want to share the cost of tuition only or of the uniform also. CDS members sponsor the school education of the children. Dr. Verona Dixit has sponsored one child, her father has sponsored one, a friend of hers has also sponsored one of the children supported by CDS and each of the executive members has sponsored one and so on. One Nepali sponsor has given full support to 10 children in government schools. CDS receives application for about 250 children every year. Currently CDS is supporting 450 school children with the sponsorship of its local members. Among them, 350 children are from carpet factories in Kathmandu and 100 children are from the stone crushing works in Dhading.

In 1994, when CDS started sending children to school on sponsorships, they accepted all the children that came to them. But many dropped out. They learned that when children and their parents are not ready, they cannot be sent to school. The children study well, but if their parents do not care about their studies, they cannot continue doing well. Unless the parents realize the importance of their children's education or they feel the need for education, the CDS does not take the child on sponsorship. CDS is prepared to take a child into its care for a couple of years if this motivates the parents to help the child attend school regularly and help them study at home too.

Seventy-five children were sponsored

for school education in 2000. Half of the children study at private schools, the other half study at government schools. In the future, there will be a decrease in the children studying in the private schools. CDS admitted some children to school through the Ganeshman Foundation, a politically affiliated organization, in the belief that the foundation raised its own funds for that purpose. However, it turned out that the foundation just asked schools to provide free education to the children. The private schools did not take it well when they learned that the children they were providing with free education were, in fact, from the CDS program. They would rather have children directly from CDS since CDS is not a politically affiliated organization. In such case, they could take more children.

Triyog School at Baneshwor (Kathmandu), where the children of the elite study, has also sponsored a few CDS children. They have asked CDS to send younger children the next time because the older children find it difficult to adjust to their peers who come from a different background and have spent a longer period in that school.

The Society arranges small interaction between the children and the sponsors, where the sponsors can ask the children questions about their studies. The commitment for the sponsorship is made for a minimum of 10 years.

Sponsoring orphans

For orphans, the Society has connections with orphanages. They ask the orphan's relatives if they have objections to the child being sent to an orphanage with religious routines. They respect the thoughts of the relatives of the child.

Cost sharing by parents/local communities/donor organization

“We do not want sponsors to pay everything for the child from the second year because we believe that parents should also bear some responsibility. Therefore, we suggest parents to share cost whatever amount they can for their children. In Dhading, the children study in a school that has been established in a building constructed by a Chinese construction company originally for their own use. They left after completing their works and handed over the building as a donation for the use of the community. The community provided the building for the use of their school. The school has some government support also.”

CDS wants local donors to support the children in school. None of the 450 children are fully supported by their sponsors. A part of their expenses are borne by the parents. When they do not have the money, they would sometimes borrow from CDS so they can meet their share of the costs. Some parents have even brought chicken from their villages when they come to the CDS office. This shows that they now have a feeling that somehow

their children have to be educated. The salaries of staff managing the sponsorship program are paid by the external fund received from Red Barnna.

This year CDS has enrolled 115 children in schools. Some schools provide scholarships to four to five children. CDS has selected two new local schools—Jankalyan and Shri Shrama. CDS chose these school for its children because they have shown great concern for child rights. CDS advocates child rights and it does not select schools where it knows that children are beaten or abused.

Concert event

The Society organized a cultural (songs and dances) evening in 1999 to raise funds. Children from Rugmark Foundation, CDS, SOS Village and some well-known artists, performed at the show. This was held at the National Conference Centre. The show included child concerts, skits, and small plays on child labor. It was a one-time event because CDS found it difficult to organize. The ticket buyers were also members of CDS, so it was felt that the Society was asking too much from the members.

The surplus from the concert was NPR 135,000 deducting all the expenses.

Product sale

It is easy for women's groups to produce items for sale to raise money. However, for an organization such as CDS, it is

not right to put children to hard work to produce things just because they might sell well. CDS protests child labor and if it uses the children to produce things that require hard labor it will be going against its own values. Moreover, it will be an injustice against the children.

Vocational class products for fund raising

The children are asked in their vocational classes what would they like to do. Many of them prefer making candles. So they are trained in candle making. This can be done throughout the year. Special designs (molds) are used for candles to sell for Dashain and Tihar (national festivals of power over the devil, and prosperity respectively). CDS is always interested in new molds to make candles of different designs.

When the candles are ready, CDS asks the members to buy them. They understand the importance of these candles, that these are sold to support the welfare of poor children. These candles are of much better quality than those that are available in the market. Sometimes CDS also trains the parents in candle making. In case they lose their jobs at the carpet factory, they can make candles at home and earn to support their children at school. The molds are not very expensive; they can be bought for NPR 4,000 to 5,000.

Grants

Being able to get a grant from a well-known philanthropic or charitable organization is no less an achievement these days since there are so many organizations bidding for them. An organization applying for a grant has to be creditable and for this, the work has to be good. The Child Development Society has received NPR 1,100,000 as annual support from Red Barnna for the years 2001 and 2002. The support is decreasing gradually. In the year 2000, the support was NPR 1,600,000 for the year. Therefore, they have to find alternative sources of funding for their programs since the grant might be reduced further in the next bidding. The Society pays NPR 18,000 per month as house rent. The house rent in the CDS office neighborhood is very high because of the carpet and pashmina factories which are always looking for houses to use as warehouses for their products. The remaining budget is used for the salaries and benefits of the staff and program activities.

So now they are trying to seek alternative sources of funds. One idea is for the executive members to approach Nepalis living abroad.

Donations in kind

The husband of one of the CDS staff works for Necon Air. When she came to know that Necon Air was changing the seat covers of its aircraft, she asked the company management if they would do-

nate the old seat covers to CDS for the children. They agreed. Since the cloths were of very good quality, CDS decided to make jackets from them. They made 500 jackets and spent only NPR 20 per jacket on stitching with just a token charge. The cost of making the jackets was paid by one of the CDS members. The children wore the jackets last winter. The scrap pieces were used to make toys and dolls.

“We do not throw away anything, what people have spared we collect them and put them to good or modified use. Even empty shampoo bottles are used to make rattles for the children.”

Students of Dipendra Police School discard their old clothes when they return home for winter vacation. CDS collects them for their children. The Society pays the transport costs. They have been taking clothes from the school for the last two years.

The members and staff of the Society also visit the homes of friends and people known to them to collect old clothes and toys.

There is a CDS member (Nepali) in Hong Kong whose wife has a clothes shop. To raise clothes for CDS, she decided to give a 10 percent discount on new clothes if the customer brought usable old clothes. Thus she collected old clothes and sent them to the Society. If the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC), a government-owned Nepali company, would agree to give a discount on the freight, the shop owner and others would be more en-

couraged to send more of such clothes to the Society.

Dr. Verona Dixit is now planning to mobilize young people. A friend of hers belongs to the Marwari community (originally from Marwar of northwest India). They have a tradition of feeding people in charity on birthdays or other important anniversaries. They usually go to the Pashupati Temple where they feed beggars. However, the problem is that when the beggars see somebody coming to feed them, they start fighting each other to get a bigger share. So Dr. Dixit suggested that her friend introduce the CDS NFE Centre to her community. They could feed the children there. She keeps sending someone to CDS once a week to provide lunch to the children.

During Dashain festival, CDS members collect money among themselves and organize a feast for the children. The total number of members in CDS is over 100.

“What do the sponsors get in return?”

“In our meetings, we mention the name of our sponsor organizations and individuals. We have not given to them anything written except thank you letters. Many of our sponsors also have not met with their children. Therefore in the next general assembly, we are organizing a meeting between the children and their sponsors. We also send the reports of the children in private schools to their sponsors but not of the children studying in

the government schools.”

Lessons Learned

Most NGOs are one-person shows. If for any reason the lead person leaves the organization, the organization collapses. So since last year the Society has been developing the second-line leadership. They always try to bring young people into the organization. This has both pros and cons. They hired two persons last year, a program officer and a supervisor, and involved them in a research on child labor funded by DFID. Both of them went to England in connection with the research. For the young people it was an opportunity to work with CDS. The benefit to CDS was that it was easy to train and orient the young people on new issues on child rights as compared to older people who have their own established values. They are more difficult to change. Moreover, they also tend to move on when a better opportunity arises.

“Our staff are competent; they are very good in the field. However, they have a problem of language. Their proficiency in English is not very good. This sometimes makes it difficult for them to communicate with expatriates and international visitors and write reports in English.”

Future Plans

Some plans are:

1. To establish a school. Land is very

expensive in Kathmandu. Therefore, the Society is trying to get it from the government.

2. To seek alternative sources of funds. One idea that has emerged is to appeal to Nepalis living abroad.
3. To develop methods to raise funds for children in a decent manner. Members of CDS feel sad when the miserable conditions of Nepali children are portrayed for fund raising. ▶

Case 6

Vijaya Development Resource Centre (VDRC)

IN OUR OWN VILLAGE... AT OUR OWN PLACE...

Introduction

Vijaya Development Resource Centre (VDRC) was established in 1979 as the Vijaya Youth Club. However, the organization was officially recognized only in 1987 when it was registered with the District Administration Office. In 1988, it was affiliated with the Social Services National Co-ordination Council, then headed by Her Majesty the Queen of the Kingdom of Nepal and now called the Social Welfare Council since 1990. The organization mobilized and organized the youth of Vijaya Nagar of Gaidakot in Nawalparasi district in sports and cultural activities, provided free coaching for school/university examinations, gave seminars on health awareness and on how to rescue victims of floods and fires.

The founders of the organization believed that starting an organization was just a preliminary step to developing an institution. To achieve this, they initiated activities and contacts for the capacity building of the members of the organization. The members gained theoretical and practical knowledge, skills and concepts required to sustain and develop their institution. Then they started launching development activities in Gaidakot and the areas around it.

The members gained experience and built their capacities through work in the areas where they were born and in the surrounding communities. They gained credibility as they learned many lessons, they were appreciated as they served people, and they shared their experiences as they carried out development activities in other parts of Nepal. VDRC is now supporting the community and institutional development in 10 administrative districts of Nepal and is cooperating with many national and international organizations.

Institutional Identity

Over the last 20 years, VDRC has not only achieved success and learned a lot. It has also had to confront several problems. After some soul-searching, the members, and especially the executives, have translated their experiences, thoughts, perceptions, expectations and struggles to form VDRC's institutional identity in the following manner:

Vision: Building a self-reliant society

Mission: Organizing the unorganized in

- ▶ Identifying alternative sources of development and their appropriate use at the local level;
- ▶ Participatory planning and implementation of development projects;

- ▶ Human resource development and mobilization within the community.

Aims

- ▶ To work as a facilitator in the process of empowering women and men in communities
- ▶ To carry out and promote institutional development at the people's level
- ▶ To develop human assets and build skills at various levels
- ▶ To enhance, promote and consolidate the available financial, physical and human resources and traditional skills

Objectives

- ▶ To organize sensitization trainings, workshops and seminars
- ▶ To promote construction of infrastructure, income generating programs and services centered on community endeavor
- ▶ To assist in organizing and promoting saving and credit organizations and social development organizations at the local level
- ▶ To develop the current sensitization center into a resource center
- ▶ To inspire the volunteers of the organization to acquire professional attributes through build-

ing their capacities

- ▶ To work as an activist on social development
- ▶ To prepare an environment for cooperation through networking and coordination among organizations at the local, regional and national levels
- ▶ To preserve and promote the traditional skills and cultural norms of the different ethnic peoples of the communities
- ▶ To maintain a balance between the natural and social environment through studies of the impacts of social development programs on women
- ▶ To develop internal sources of income for institutions of sustainable development
- ▶ To carry on women's empowerment as a campaign

Background

Initially Gaidakot was a part of Palpa district. In those days, the lack of any road or modern transport made it too far from the district headquarters for any effective administration. The area was then placed under Tanhun district in the hope that this would ease the administrative difficulties experienced under Palpa district. This did not solve the problem, so it was shifted to yet another district, Nawalparasi. It has since stayed there.

Until the 1980s, Gaindakot was a very remote and backward village situated by the river Narayani which is one of the major tributaries to the river systems of Nepal. There was no bridge over the river; people had to travel by canoe to go to Narayangadh, the nearest town, on the other side of the river. It never got proper attention from the district headquarters. The government did not have any office there nor did it have any physical infrastructure to serve the people. Some people thought that the district administration was also a little apprehensive about the place and the people of Gaindakot as it was suspected to be a place where people and politicians averse to the party-less Panchayat system of governance could hide. In 1988, the chief district officer ordered that Khem Raj Sapkota be ousted from the organization or else he would impose a legal ban on the organization or dissolve it. It was alleged that Sapkota was advocating to organize and mobilize the people and the community to move towards self-sustaining development primarily on their own efforts. Before mid-April 1990 this was not accepted by the powers of the time as a normal thing to say or do. Those days there was no organization around Gaindakot from which the people could learn how to organize themselves for their development. The idea of this organization was not from outside, it was the brainchild of the people of Gaindakot. Many years later, under the multi-party system of governance, and at the time of this writing, the same Sapkota is the ex-

ecutive director of the organization.

A popular joke of the time was: "Even a buffalo of Gaindakot belongs to (the outlawed) Congress (political) party," implying that just about everyone in Gaindakot believed in socialist democracy (as compared to the conservative right and the revolutionary left). However, VDRC or its leaders have never been affiliated to or had "sisterly" relations with any political party.

The first government-supported project in this VDC was on drinking water, just in the recent years. The construction of an Ayurvedic hospital is now under way. Since this was one of the neglected villages then, a determination developed among the local people that they should do something for themselves. And this led to the birth of the Vijaya Development Resource Center (VDRC). This was established in 1979 initially as a youth club. It was fashionable (and politically acceptable at the time) to establish "clubs" in the villages. Later it was officially registered with the District Administration Office in 1987.

Motivation

The main motivating factor for the people of this village to organize and form VDRC and do something for themselves was the deprivation and total neglect of the government of their development. The village then was very poor. Khem Raj Sapkota said, "This is the place where we had a saying: 'khau makai nakhau bhokai'

(eat maize or else remain hungry).” They could not grow rice or wheat for lack of water. The major crops were maize and mustard. Maize being a summer crop grew on monsoon rain and mustard grew on the remedial soil moisture from the monsoon season. The youth of the village went away in search of employment and came home once a year during dashain, Vijaya Dashami, a religious festival. It was like “vijay,” victory for the youth, to be able to go back to their own village after a long time for the festival of Vijaya Dashami. This was also why they initially named their organization Vijaya Youth Club. This was also why the locality where VDRC works from is called Vijay Nagar, “a habitation of victory.”

Another motivation to form the organization was that in those days the community had plenty of unregistered land which were occupied by many people haphazardly. In order to control and manage this, the people of Gaindakot established this organization.

During talks and discussions to get out of deprivation and drudgery, the residents of Gaindakot recognized that development would not be possible through the efforts of a single person, organization or group. Sustainable community development would be possible only through the cooperative acts of people’s groups, government agencies and non-government organizations. The partners in development could achieve a win-win situation if they moved forward in harmony with an attitude of coordination.

They believed that if VDRC was to be a sustainable and self-reliant organization for the development of the community, its base would have to be people’s organization, mobilization of local resources with participatory project planning, implementation and evaluation. They were certain that development would have to start from where they were and what they could do. They were convinced that their development would not be possible if they expected it from outsiders. They concluded that they could inspire others towards self-reliance only if they were self-reliant themselves and they could share the experience of growing into self-reliance only if they had the first-hand experience of working towards becoming so.

Every social organization has its own objectives and it works to meet these objectives. Nevertheless, the community close to the organization also has its expectations of the organization. These need to be met as well. Gaindakot is not just the first working field of VDRC but it is where, in fact, VDRC was conceived. Therefore, it has a social obligation towards the people of Gaindakot. Thus, it would have to initiate development activities through its own resources and through the mobilization of the resources that the people of Gaindakot would put forward.

Growth of the Organization

The first staff of this organization was an office runner who was hired in 1990. In the year of its registration, 1988, it received 12 ropanis (0.6 hectare) of land from the community. The first computer was procured in 1996 with 50 percent financial support from an INGO; now there are five computers. At present, VDRC has 82 full-time staff.

The total number of founder members was 29. The founder chairperson of this organization was Rishi Ram Sapkota, who is still in the organization; the founder vice-chair, the secretary, and the treasurer were Yam Bahadur Karki, Ram Prasad Poudel, and Dilli Ram Sapkota, respectively.

Currently, VDRC has 87 members (70 males and 17 females). There are four categories of members—honorary (3), life (24), general (60) and associate. To qualify for honorary membership, one has to support and advise substantially in building the capacity of the organization and contribute a minimum of NPR 10,000 to the organization. The honorary members have voting rights, but they cannot contest elections. The life members provide support regularly to the organization and provide a financial support of over NPR 1,001. The general members are those who work for the organization voluntarily and renew their membership every year with a subscription of NPR 51.

Today, VDRC is open to new members. It does not want to limit member-

ships, but imposes certain rules for those who would like to be members. Before anybody can become a full member, s/he is granted associate membership for two years. The associate member does not have the right to vote. If his work or contribution during this period is satisfactory, he is granted the status of a full member. This rule does not apply to women as the organization has very few female members. This may be attributed to the fact that the daughters of the community leave the village after they marry and do not renew their membership. Incoming daughters-in-law, on the other hand, are too shy to join the organization. This year general memberships were granted to 15 people, nine of whom were women.

Structure of the Organization

The general assembly is the highest authority of the organization. It elects 10 of the 13 members of the executive committee. The other three members are the immediate past chairperson (*ex officio*) and two persons nominated by the newly elected chairperson. The members of the executive committee select the executive director from among themselves. S/he is the only one among the executive committee who is paid as a full-time staff. The executive committee forms different sub-committees as provided for in the rules of the organization such as health, construction and so on.

The advisory board is comprised of the ex-chairpersons of the organization.

The immediate past chairperson serves as its coordinator.

Projects/ Activities Carried Out by VDRC

1. **Sports:** VDRC has been holding games and sports programs since its inception. These games and sports are organized at different levels in the district.
2. **Cultural Programs (Music and Dance Concerts):** Singing competitions, drama/plays, Bhailo/Deusi singing (door-to-door singing during the Hindu festival of Tihar/Laxmi Puja, worshipping the goddess of wealth; also done for fund raising) to preserve and promote folk culture and provide entertainment.
3. **Forest Protection/Forest Fire Fighting:** This used to be and to some extent still is the leading message/entry point in sensitization for development activities in Gaindakot area before the community forestry programs were launched.
4. **Free Coaching Classes:** VDRC volunteers give free classes for four years during summer vacation to prepare students for their board examinations.
5. **Saving and Credit Programme:** One of the most successful activities of VDRC has been supporting the VYCCU (Vijaya Youth Club Co-operative Credit Union). VYCCU is now one of the leading and well known cooperative limited banks in rural Nepal with a liquidity of NPR 10,000,000 available to its members. This supports many income generating activities for the people in the area. About 20 percent of the people of Gaindakot are members of this cooperative credit union. This program has also been a subject of study for many other credit unions and income generation projects.
6. **Afforestation/Tree Planting/ Soil Conservation:** VDRC planted an area east of the Narayani river with *Delbergia* trees. This has protected the land from erosion and has also become a source of income for the organization.
7. **Vijaya Community Development Project:** Non-formal education, income generation, drinking water and sensitization activities for 90 families of Ward (area) no. 6, 7 and 9 of the Gaindakot Village Development Area.
8. **Blood Donation:** VDRC has led the blood donation program from the time when many people thought that donating blood was risky. It used to be a challenge to successfully organize blood donation camps. Now many other organizations follow this activity.
9. **Khalechaur Rural Development Project:** In this project 57 families of Gaindakot Ward no. 7 were supported with saving and credit, income generation, drinking water,

education, health, sensitization and managed habitation programs.

10. **Drinking Water and Sanitation:**

a. **Gaindakot Tube-well Drinking Water Project:** Installation of 34 tube-wells in Wards no. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the Gaindakot Village Development Area

b. **Brindapur Drinking Water Project:** Construction of drinking water supply system with 34 communal stand pipes for 40 families with a population of 240 at Gaindakot Ward no. 3, Brindapur (Tantaribas)

c. **Dhodeni Drinking Water Project:** A drinking water supply system comprising 9 communal pipe-stands in Ward no. 3 of Gaindakot in a special co-operation with the Village Development Area Office and Samuhik Abhiyan, an NGO working towards developing a responsible civil society

d. Plans are being finalized and partner organizations are being sought/considered for two drinking water and sanitation schemes for Ward no. 5 of Gaindakot.

11. **Adult Literacy:** A total of 38 adult literacy classes were run in different locations of the VDC from 1996 to 1998. This made at least 700 persons able to read and write.

12. **Ambulance Service:** This is also run as a project to serve the people in the area although this is part of a fund raising activity.

13. **Infrastructure:** VDRC has been supporting local communities with cash and/or labor in the repair and maintenance of roads, school buildings and the construction of travelers' shelters.

14. **Scholarships:** Scholarships have been provided to three students and plans are being made to extend this activity.

Fund Raising

VDRC has been involved in fund raising since it began as the Vijay Yuwa Club. The members of the club went around collecting donations of NPR 0.50. This was such a low amount even twenty years ago that those who were approached thought that this was just a joke and that the "lads" could not be serious! Many made fun of the youth going around collecting NPR 0.50 at tea shops and homesteads for "community development and sports and cultural programs." Sometimes they felt so discouraged by the comments made at them that they went collecting in two's and three's only so they could muster the courage to face the remarks. Not so many years ago, many called the members of VDRC the "people of the mohare club" and VDRC was given the nickname of "mohare bikas" in humor, mohare being the NPR 0.50 coin and meaning being development, the whole expression

was that of satire and disbelief at the possibility of the youth achieving any tangible results. However, the times have changed. VDRC is now one of the leading NGOs in Nepal which carry out development activities for the benefit of the communities surrounding it. To do so it does not only directly solicit money, it carries out activities so that it can get money to assist the communities in fulfilling their needs.

VDRC has had to raise funds to carry out its core programs, to help local support organizations working with it, and to assist community-based organizations. It believes that without a source of funds or sustained fund raising, an NGO cannot continue to truly exist in Nepal as an NGO. The differences between an NGO and a consulting company in Nepal persist. The NGO carries out its work of choice or vision for the benefit of society or its target people. A consulting company mostly aims to just get work. It is client-oriented and sustains or develops its own organization for the interests of the shareholders.

Training

Training is by far the largest fund raiser for VDRC.

Sale of the training packages

The training packages include the training on self-help promotion, saving and credit program, bookkeeping, NGO management, leadership, participatory rural appraisal, and social entrepreneur-

ship. The duration of the training is three to seven days. The cost per participant ranges from NPR 2,000 to NPR 5,000 depending on the type of training. The training on saving and credit program has the highest frequency (20-30 trainings) in a year, while the frequency of the other training packages is four to seven in a year. Most of the participants are from the local support organizations (LSO) promoted by VDRC. Sometimes the staff and the volunteers from other NGOs and INGOs also attend the training of VDRC. Most of the trainings are central office based, but some are also done at field level. In addition, VDRC also conducts other trainings "tailormade" to suit the needs of the requesting organizations.

The total income from the trainings last year was around NPR 2,100,000, and the net surplus was NPR 1,300,000. This includes all the trainings conducted both at the central office and at field.

Training hall

VDRC rents out its training hall, Chetana Sadan, to NGOs/INGOs for trainings, workshops and seminars. Accommodations and food service are also available at the training hall at extra cost. Last year the training hall was occupied for 220 days.

Rental services

VDRC has some utensils for cooking and dining which are rented out to the community, when they are not used by

the VDRC. Since there is an increase in the frequency of training in VDRC, the renting of these services has declined substantially. In the past, the income from the rental service was NPR 5,000 to 6,000 per year.

Consulting services

VDRC provides consulting services in training, orientation and monitoring on development programs and activities to different organizations. It charges different rates depending on the organizations—INGOs, NGOs or community-based organizations. It has categorized its resource persons into three categories—A, B and C. The charge for an A grade trainer is NPR 2,500-3,000 per day; for B grade, NPR 800-1,200 per day. At present, there are around 20 trainers with VDRC. Of them, six are A grade as per the grading system, which is currently under review. Some organizations also ask for the services of the field-based staff without academic qualifications, for a few days. Their charges are negotiable. For community-based organizations, the training is almost free; VDRC only asks for a small contribution so that they would feel they own the program. In general, NGOs are charged at cost, while INGOs are charged a little more.

Exposure visits

Many people from different organizations go to VDRC for exposure visits every year. Again, VDRC's charges

differ—the charge for private individuals visiting in groups is NPR 300; for Nepali NGOs, it is NPR 500; and for INGOs, NPR 1,000.

Most people visit to learn about the saving and credit programs and the organizational development of VDRC. They also visit to observe the different programs run by VDRC, for example, social mobilization, self-help promotions, social entrepreneurship and so on. Last year, VDRC earned NPR 20,000 from these exposure visits.

Ambulance service

Realizing its responsibility towards the community where it is located, VDRC started an ambulance service. Until a few months ago, when somebody in the community was sick, the patients had to be taken to hospital on motorbike or bicycle. In order to solve this problem, VDRC procured an ambulance with collections from the community, the Village Development Committee (VDC: politically elected unit of local governance at the bottom level), the member of parliament's development fund and a contribution of its own. The community contributed NPR 300,000, the VDC provided NPR 20,000 and the MP put in NPR 75,000, with VDRC sharing NPR 300,000. The ambulance cost NPR 700,000 and was bought 10 months ago.

The ambulance charge is NPR 7 per kilometer. During the summer, the ambulance service brings in NPR 15,000 to

16,000, while in the winter, it earns NPR 5,000 to 7,000.

Staff contribution

The staff contribute five percent of their salaries. However, since the staff from level 1 to 3 are paid very low salaries, this was discontinued last year.

Membership fees

At present, there are 60 general members. They pay NPR 51 every year. The total fund raised from the membership fee last year was NPR 3,060.

Communication and secretarial services

Telephone, fax, e-mail and secretarial services are provided to training participants, as well as to the community members. These services generate NPR 7,000-10,000 annually. The purpose of providing these services to the community is to recoup the costs of the equipment.

Forest/timber products

VDRC also raises income from a forest/timber plot it acquired as a part of its work to protect the land from erosion by the Narayani river.

Lessons Learned

1. “Money is not everything.” By itself, pouring money into a community

does not bring about desirable social change. Good facilitation and appropriate process is essential to usher in transformation.

2. “We should not attempt to train others on subjects or approaches which we ourselves have not applied in our work. In our trainings we tell other organizations to be self-reliant, but if we do not have the experience of making our own organization self-reliant, the training that we give to others on this subject may not carry any meaning. In VDRC training, we always emphasize those examples which we have learned from our own experience.”

3. “To achieve self-reliance, an organization like ours should have some commercial activities. For example, we have a business wing. Some critics say that an organization like ours should not undertake profit-making activities. But we answer them that if an organization doesn't have its own source of funds, then it will be like a tree without roots. This is equivalent to a parasite, which survives only so long as the host organism supports it.”

“Every year VDRC analyzes the ratio of its internal and external funds. Last year, the ratio was around 30:70, when the budgets of all the program activities were included. The core program is fully supported by its own internal source of funds.”

4. "It should not only work in a small area to test a development model or approach, but also apply its learning to a larger area. Khem Raj said, 'Small is beautiful, but big is necessary.' Moreover, the small area should not be abandoned after the completion of the pilot project; it should be continued."
 5. "For the development of a community, we need two types of organizations—NGO and cooperative. The NGO provides social services, while the cooperative provides financial service. A credit cooperative gives local people easy access to credit without going through the long bureaucratic process."
 6. "We learned when we were an unregistered group that an organization should have formal status to do any social service voluntarily. This helps to correspond with different organizations and to develop linkages with other organizations."
3. work together with VDC and other local organizations for further development of Gaindakot VDC (this would include strategic planning, preparation of village profiles and updating and revision of plans and information on Gaindakot);
 4. establish a trust fund so that more community development activities can be taken up in partnership with the community;
 5. complete the extension of the training hall by this year (this will further increase the internal fund generation of the organization); and
 6. start a community radio as a cooperative company. ▶

Future Plans

VDRC plans to:

1. give continuity to self-help promotion approach and people-centered development;
2. carry out an action research on how an area can be made a better place for community living and how the sustained development of a community can be done through social mobilization, using the Gaindakot VDC

Case 7

Centre for Community Development and Research (CCODER)

“We are the masters of our own destiny.”

Introduction

The Centre for Community Development and Research (CCODER) is a people-first, non-profit non-governmental organization whose mission is to create thriving and self-sustaining rural communities in Nepal. It assists communities to take charge of their own destiny through facilitation in capacity building and community-run banks, micro-industries, schools and health care. It is a service organization for village communities.

Background

Rapid population growth, illiteracy, poor nutrition and health, nascent infrastructure and subsistence farming are some of the typical features of Nepal's remote mountain areas. Although many concepts and strategies have been introduced to Nepal by various foreign aid organizations, Nepal has not achieved the desired level of success. CCODER argues that many years of Nepalese experience indicate that “creating and strengthening both individual responsibility and the sense of community among the residents of rural Nepal is a precondition for a genu-

ine sustainable development.” Based on this, CCODER has developed an effective strategy for poverty alleviation in Nepal.

CCODER was established in 1990. In the beginning, it had only two rooms in Kathmandu and three to four staff. At present, it has offices in five districts with a central office in Kathmandu. The physical assets in Kathmandu include two computers, a jeep and a motorcycle. There is one staff in Lamjung, two in Nuwakot, one in Tanahu, one in Palpa, and six in Gorkha. A seven-member board at the central office located at Samakhushi, Kathmandu, runs the organization. The chairperson is Dr. Gobinda Dhital.

Vision of the Organization

The vision of CCODER is that of self-reliant and responsible village communities continuing the process of their own sustained development with both men and women of all occupational and ethnic groups included to make their own destiny.

Goal

The goal of the organization is “Total Human Development.” CCODER aims to improve the living conditions of the poor and the disadvantaged people

through social and economic enhancement with institutional development and empowerment.

Approach

CCODER approaches its goal through what it terms a “Tripod Model.” This consists of:

- ▶ **education:** for awakening
- ▶ **organization:** for people’s power
- ▶ **social and economic development:** for group action

In approaching the goal in this model, the CCODER staff take only advisory, facilitating and monitoring functions. Thus, they encourage the rural residents to build up confidence in themselves and take the position that “we can do it.” CCODER supports them professionally, organizationally and financially to a certain extent. Training is organized to bring additional expertise into the villages as needed. It cooperates wherever required with government and non-government organizations.

Motivation

When Govinda Dhital’s mother died due to lack of medicine in a remote village in the administrative district of Gorkha, Dhital resolved that he would create a society and environment where no one would die simply for lack of medicine. He was seven years old. As he grew and passed through high school aspiring to be a medical doctor, other thoughts

started pushing his idea to be a doctor to the periphery. He started thinking that health is important but it is just one component to make human life successful. “Total human development is more important,” he concluded.

Philosopher and literateur Leo Tolstoy’s “Three Questions” (Who is the most important person? When is the most important time? and What is the most important thing to do?) impressed him. He was also impressed by Booker T. Washington’s *Up From Slavery* and the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire. After working for some time as a health assistant at a Christian hospital and as a trainer for the American Peace Corps, he finally decided to pursue his inner vocation. He wanted to promote critical analysis among rural people—why they were what they were and how they could shape their own future from where they were. He gave up his job and brought together friends who both understood and appreciated his thoughts or were just prepared to lend him a hand in translating his vocation into reality. He founded the Centre for Community Development and Research. His training in the Philippines, his stay in France, and visits and associations with his ex-American Peace Corps friends helped.

Asked about the motivation of the staff in working in the organization, Hari Adhikari, program manager in Gorkha, said, “We would like to bring about a lasting social change in the villages... We are also the members and shareholders of the

cooperatives of our own villages...”

CCODER believes:

- ▶ in the concept of self-reliant development of the underprivileged by the underprivileged.
- ▶ that people are rich in ideas and if they come together in an organization, they can overcome many problems.
- ▶ in working together with both the poor and the not so poor people of the community.
- ▶ that every individual in the community possesses one skill or another; (thus) no one in the community is/ has to be really poor.
- ▶ that it is a good heart that creates peace.
- ▶ that slamming the rich can halt the process of development and progress; let the rich continue their progress and development with their own innovation, technology and hard work.
- ▶ that capitalist development is all right so long as it is modified to assist the poor to get out of poverty but not to the extent that it would render the rich poor. Let the rich be left that way.
- ▶ that savings programs are at the heart of its “tripod” model, which brings people together with a common bond in an organization simplifying the self-management process of their development initiatives.
- ▶ that people will cooperate to develop new institutions if they believe that

these institutions will deliver some service to them.

Programs Carried Out by CCODER

Community development and education

CCODER believes that the economic and social aspects of development should go together. To carry out the social development activities in the community, the local people developed the norm of “Ten Minutes Mandatory Contribution.” According to this norm, each member of the community has to contribute 10 minutes of his/her time in a day or five hours in a month. An action plan is developed regarding how and in what activities the time will be utilized. The social development activities generally carried out by the communities are maintenance of road and trails, protection of water sources, promotion of kitchen gardening, and awareness of health and sanitation. The community has a slogan: “Ek ghar ek karesa bari” (One house one kitchen garden). With the support of a German organization, CCODER is running a Gorkha German Health Care Centre at Gorkha Bazaar.

Micro Finance Program/ The Community Banks

Community development committee

In order to mobilize local people for development, CCODER organizes them by forming community development committees (CDC). These committees have three members and look after activities like infrastructure development. These committees also function as executives of the saving and credit groups. Initially, the executive committees of the CDCs are given nine days' training on micro-finance and their performance is evaluated every month. Follow-up training is given to them after three months.

Inter committee

A central committee or "inter committee" is formed to oversee 10 to 15 CDCs after nine months. The inter committee has five executive members. Members of the village development committees (VDCs) cannot take positions of executive members in the inter committees. They are elected to the VDCs by the people of the area based on the political party manifesto. This has the risk of politicizing the inter committee, but they can be advisers of the committees. On the tenth month, a workshop is held to review the process and output of the activities completed during the period. The representatives of CDCs and the inter committee participate in the workshop.

On the fourteenth month, a month-long course on banking education is of-

fered to the representatives of the CDCs and the inter committee. Here they learn how to run a community bank and understand the concept of shares. The poor own 50 percent equity of the bank. Then the bank managers are given a one-week training on bank management. Thus, on the eighteenth month a bank is opened with a minimum deposit of NPR 500,000.

The bank thus established provides loans to the local people for income generating activities such as herb collection and processing, vegetable farming, domestic shops and goat raising. The bank also provides technical assistance and training for these income generating activities so that the local people can derive maximum benefit from the loan. Based on the potentials of the communities, "pocket" (specific) areas are identified for investment.

In the second phase, CCODER focuses on strengthening the capacity of the bank and the inter committee. Since the poor own 50 percent of the bank's equity, priority is given to them in disbursing the loan. The bank also helps the poor in marketing their produce. During this phase, CCODER's efforts are to make the bank and the inter committee financially healthy and active and oriented towards disadvantaged and destitute people.

In the third stage, the linkages between the community development banks of the district are developed, and then a district level bank is established. The district level bank helps the community level banks in taking out their extra deposits (which may remain idle otherwise) and

bringing in additional money from outside, when necessary.

Finance management committee

To look after all the activities related with finance, CCODER has a finance management committee of three members.

How does CCODER select the communities?

CCODER prefers to work with communities which are poor, backward and disadvantaged. However, if there is a request for support for development from any community, it works with them, too. CCODER is currently working in 14 village development areas (VDAs, usually misnamed Village Development Committees or VDCs even for denoting geographical areas) of Gorkha, five VDAs of Nuwakot, and four VDAs each of Lamjung, Palpa and Tanahu.

Fund Raising

CCODER raises funds for community development activities from the surplus earned by the cooperatives running on CCODER support. The cooperatives are located in Nuwakot and Gorkha districts. Nuwakot has a community shop, a dairy collection and processing center and a community bank, while the Ayurveda company and Ayurveda shop are the cooperatives located in Gorkha. The surplus of these cooperatives is distributed at the

pro rata of 40:40:20, that is, 40 percent of the surplus to the shareholders, 40 percent to the community development fund, and the remaining 20 percent is ploughed back into the cooperatives for their further growth.

Community Development Shop/ Ayurveda Shop (Gorkha)

Community development shops were initially established in all the communities where CCODER was working. They were functioning as community grocery shops. These shops used to sell household goods and also buy the products of the community people. Its purpose was to protect the community people from the local businessmen who make exorbitant profit from the selling and buying of the goods. However, these shops were not successful because of management problems, particularly the poor performance of the persons hired to run these shops. They did not have adequate business skills. Eventually, the shops at the community level were closed.

Later CCODER started the Ayurveda shop at district level, which has been running successfully. An executive committee of seven members manages the shop, of whom six are from the communities, and one is a representative of CCODER, who also looks after the day-to-day management of the shop. A salesperson was hired to run the shop. Exploring ways to increase the transactions of the shop and fixing the prices of the herbs are the main

responsibilities of the committee. The Ayurveda shop also has a clinic. The clinic doctor is paid 60 percent of the fees raised and 5 percent of the total profit from sales of the shop.

Last year the shop's transactions earned NPR 5,000,000, with a surplus of around NPR 200,000. Of the total surplus, 40 percent was allocated for the community development fund. The target this year is NPR 1,000,000,000.

Gorkha Ayurveda Company (Gorkha)

Gorkha Ayurveda Company has eight ropanis (0.4 hectare) of land in Gorkha Bazaar and 30 ropanis (1.5 hectare) of land in the suburbs. The company produces about 40 varieties of herbal medicine. In addition to selling its products in the domestic market, it also exports herbal tea to France. The company has a transaction of NPR 12,500,000. Sunil Shakya, Bharat Dhital, Bhupendra Man Shrestha, CIDR (a French company, which has 49 percent equity), and CCODER (15 percent equity) are the main shareholders of the company. Last year the share of CCODER was very low, but this year it has increased to 15 percent.

This year CCODER expects its equity in the Ayurveda company to yield around NPR 200,000 dividend. Out of this, 40 percent (NPR 80,000) will be allocated to the community development fund.

Training Hall (Gorkha)

In 2001, CCODER started renting out its training facilities in Gorkha to NGOs and INGOs.

Publications on Sale

1. *Development Education*. This is on sale.

Community Shop

CCODER supports a community shop, a dairy plant and a bank at Nuwakot. These collectively have a transaction of around NPR 10,000,000. CCODER has some shares in these cooperative enterprises.

Community Tourism

Nepal is one of the leading trekking destinations in the world with over 40,000 tourists coming from different countries overseas. However, very few rural people actually benefit from the business. Moreover, although these tourists go to remote and rural areas, they do not get many opportunities to learn about the unique cultural characteristics of the Nepali village folk. It has also been recognized that unguided tourism has caused damages to the environment and induced unwanted socioeconomic changes in some popular tourist trekking routes.

CCODER has started an innovative approach of community tourism to enhance intercultural relationships while

offering opportunities for economic development to the disadvantaged people of remote village areas. This program of community tourism is interlinked with all other components in CCODER's model for village development. The local community banks started by CCODER, the local schools and the families in the communities are all connected and involved in the program of community tourism. However, CCODER is not a trekking agency although community tourism is indeed one of CCODER's fund raising activities. It does not solicit business or market from tourists or trekkers or groups unknown to it.

Challenges

1. CCODER had difficulty, initially, in persuading the local people that it is different from other NGOs that had left a bad impression on the communities. The local people thought that the same NGOs had returned in different or disguised form. Secondly, the previous NGOs distributed money in the community for various development activities, and the local people expected the same from CCODER. It had to work hard to persuade them that distributing money does not help sustainable development of the community.
2. CCODER does not pay any allowances to the participants of its trainings or workshops. It offers free accommodations and food. It creates

interest among the people for training and workshops by making them realize that the knowledge and skill they learn there are more important than the money they would receive as allowances.

3. All the organizations that go to the community form their own committees for mobilizing the local people, thereby creating a myriad of committees in the village—such as the drinking water committee, forest users committee, saving and credit committee, health committee and so on. Secondly, there are not many educated people or people having leadership skills in the village, and therefore, one person becomes the chairperson of four to five committees. The person does not get a salary; he is purely doing social service. If he gives one day in a week for one organization, and if he is the chairperson of five organizations, he has little time for his family. Therefore, instead of having many committees, CCODER recommended one strong committee that would look after all the programs of the village.
4. Sometimes the local people do not deliver the raw materials for the Ayurveda company on time. To ensure that the raw materials are delivered on time, CCODER has made a schedule, but this has not worked. Secondly, the quality of the raw materials has also become a concern.

Lessons Learned

1. Community development is a long process. It requires a period of at least eight to ten years to achieve the desired level of social changes in a community.
2. Very few local donors are interested in NGO programs. The donors are interested only in implementing their own programs through NGO involvement.
3. If a Nepali NGO runs a program which benefits the local people directly in their capacity building for self-reliance in the immediate and in the long term, such a program receives moral support even from the extremist groups since people and their endeavors for self-reliance are on their agenda, too.

Future Plans

Among CCODER's plans are:

1. to start a community restaurant as an enterprise for raising money for community development. (there is potential for a good restaurant in Gorkha);
2. to start a community health care/health insurance program; and
3. to start a national cooperative bank based on the district cooperative banks.

Publications

1. *Development Education*
2. Neupane, Basudev (Author) and Dhital, Govinda (Presenter): Centre for Community Development and Research: A Movement Towards Formation of an Ideal Society (Paper No: 17), Paper presented at the Asian Regional Conference on "The Potential and Limitations of Economic Initiatives in Grassroots Development—Current Issues and Asian Experiences," from 27th to 30th November 2000 at the BRAC Centre for Development Management (BCDM), Rajendrapur, Bangladesh. Conference jointly organized by INASIA and CDF.
3. "CCODER" (an introductory brochure)
4. "Community Tourism in Nepal" (a promotional brochure)
5. "Community Banks" (an introductory brochure) ▶

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Case 8

Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra

Background

Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra (NAK) was established in 1992 through the efforts of a few local women for the purpose of “serving the society.” It aims to serve mainly the girls and women of Chitwan district, southwest of Kathmandu. It initially involved the middle and higher income women with grown-up children since they would have the time to spare for service to society. However, as the organization grew, they have included women of all socio-economic strata. At present, the organization has 53 members. It has its own building with a training hall. There are altogether eight staff members in the organization. The staff “salary” is just a monthly token of appreciation for the work they do for the organization. The “salary” of the accountant is NPR 2,500 and of the runner is NPR 800. The first staff was hired in 1997 for the saving and credit program. Six persons are involved in running the girls hostel. In addition, there are five regular volunteers who look after the day-to-day management of the organization and its activities. On average, they volunteer 15 days in a month. The volunteers do not receive anything for the work they do. In terms of property, the organization has

two bicycles and a few cupboards, apart from its building.

In the beginning, the founder members had great difficulty in attracting women to the objectives of the organization, or to attract them even to the saving and credit program. Many thought that it was just a ploy to collect money from people and then they would disappear or declare that the plan was a failure after appropriating the proceeds into their own pockets. The distrust and doubt was such that when they launched the saving and credit program in Ward (Area) no. 1 of Narayangadh, they received such a low participation that they left the area. One of the members of the executive committee related, “...So when it became very difficult for us to convince them that the saving and credit program was to the benefit of the people in the community, we left the area and went to Ward 14 to work. Later when they saw the people of Ward 14 benefiting, the people of Ward 1 came back to work with us.”

Motivation

The main motivation for the members for working in the organization is the satisfaction they derive from the social service they render. In addition, they feel that working in this organization has

helped them build their capacities. For example, they feel that their confidence to speak in public has increased substantially after attending the trainings, workshops and meetings organized by or for the Kendra. They also feel that their time in these activities are better utilized than staying at home and being idle.

Strengths

The members have feelings of ownership towards the organization. They are willing to volunteer their services at any time. They are so committed that some of them even tend to ignore their problems at home for the organization.

There are no political factions in the organization, though individual members may have their own faith and political affiliation. They participate in the activities of the organization with the spirit of volunteerism and conform to the philosophy of a social service organization.

Founder members are very committed and are always supportive of the new board members. They regularly attend all the meetings and functions of the organization. They are also available anytime their help is sought in the organization.

Difficulties

Many a time the members have had to sacrifice their family responsibilities while undertaking the tasks of the organization. The vice-chairperson, Pushpa Poudel, sharing her experience, said,

“Once we went to sell telephone directories to Ratna nagar, a nearby town, to raise funds for the organization. When I returned home, my two children were crying loudly waiting for me at the door. For a while I regretted leaving them unattended and asked myself if I was doing justice to my family by joining this organization. All the women who work or volunteer outside the home have this kind of problem. Taking care of the children and the domestic chores are considered their prime responsibilities.” This mostly applies to the volunteer management team since they have to contribute a considerable amount of time to the organization.

Activities and Fund Raising

1. Tapari and Duna-bota making

The first activity of the organization was training the women in making tapari, an indigenous form of leaf plate and duna and bota, leaf saucers, used mostly for placing worship offerings, and used also in family or community feasts as dinner plates of various sizes. The leaf taparis are biodegradable and thus not a threat to the environment. Many people also feel that the use of modern plates made of porcelain or melamine, steel or various kinds of plastic or paper, take away the feeling of reverence during offering or the receiving of blessed offerings in return for worship. As the tradition of tapari making was declining, Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra organized the training with the purpose of reviving it. Since on occasions of commu-

nal or family worships, taparis were needed in large numbers, the members of the Kendra took this up both as help to the families or communities who needed them and as a fund raising activity.

2. Drinking Water Pumps

NAK installed eight hand pumps for drinking water in Ward (block/area) no. 11 of Bharatpur municipality. They asked for support from Oxfam for this.

3. Salary Support for Teacher

The members of the Kendra contributed the salary of one teacher of local primary school for six months.

4. Trust Fund for Academic Award

NAK has established a trust fund to award annually the girls of Chitwan district securing top three positions in secondary school leaving certificate (SLC) final examinations. In addition, it also annually organizes some educational programs such as quiz contests, colloquium/eloquence competitions and other events which they and the partner schools think are good.

5. Micro Credit Program

A micro credit program was run for three and a half years. NAK asked for support from the Asian Development Bank. Although the bank support has been phased out, the program continues without variation. The saving and credit program has 300 members and most of them are close relatives of the organization's members.

For the convenience of keeping

record, a member can deposit an amount in unit or a multiple of NPR 50 and a maximum of NPR 500 in a month. It pays 10 percent interest to its savers, while it charges 18 percent interest to its borrowers, if they borrow within the ceiling set by the organization. No collateral is needed and there is little paperwork involved on the part of the borrower. This is a great relief to the borrower who otherwise would have to go to a commercial bank or a financial cooperative with collateral in the form of land deeds or gold. The procedure and the paperwork involved in getting a loan from these organizations are cumbersome and time consuming. However, if someone wishes to borrow an amount above the ceiling, the interest rate will be higher at 24 percent. In addition to its members, it provides loans to private factories and traders at 24 to 25 percent interest per annum, a rate higher than to its members in normal amount within the maximum fixed. So far the organization has savings of NPR 1,500,000 and all the amount is on loan. This is a deliberate policy of the organization since keeping money within the organization does not help people in need nor does it earn any surplus for the organization. Last year, earnings from the saving and credit program totaled NPR 95,000.

It collects savings from the members from the 1st to the 7th of every Nepali month, collects interest from the 15th to the 20th, and lends the money from the 20th onward. Those who wish to with-

draw their savings can do so in the months of Magh (February-March) and Falgun (March-April) every year. It is also in the process of transforming its saving and credit program into the program of financial intermediaries (FI) in the immediate future. It will register with the Rashtra Bank (the state bank) so as to increase its access to a larger capital from INGOs and the Rashtra Bank at lower rate of interest.

6. Samuhik Rishi Panchami (Women's worship for prosperity of their husbands)

Rishi Panchami is a day in the Hindu calendar in Nepal when married women fast, pray and worship the Hindu god Shiva for the prosperity and longevity of their husbands' lives. The unmarried women also fast, pray and worship to find a good husband with a prosperous and long life. Traditionally, the worship is ministered and validated by the family priest. The priest also does the benediction. But these days fewer persons have vocations or qualifications to be priests. Thus a priest has many families to look after and, thus, is not able to conclude the worship within the auspicious time or even over the whole day. And this is one of the most difficult points for the priest and especially the women who cannot, normally, take even a drink of water unless they are in bad health or have a valid reason for dispensation to the rule.

Since there are not enough priests to minister individually to all the families, Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra organizes it, as an act of facilitation for women, in large

groups so that one priest can perform the rites to a very large number of women simultaneously. Yet another matter of concern in such worship is the ostentatious expenditure that takes place. Most women in the area agree that they need not spend a huge amount on such occasions as Lord Shiva is not checking the level of their expenditure. It is the quality of spirituality that is important and yet they end up spending beyond their means for fear of being seen as financially constrained even for a once-a-year religious occasion.

For such reasons and to preserve the culture by accommodating with the times, Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra first organized such an event in the area in 1999 jointly with Maarwaadi Sewaa Samiti. Samiti is an organization dedicated to the service of people at the initiative of the Maarwaaris, who immigrated to Nepal generations ago from Maarwaar of north-west India. The number of participants in the worship of 1999 was 117. These participants were divided into three groups for performing the rituals. Each participant contributed NPR 10. In the year 2000, it was organized by Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra alone. There were 82 women in the worship this year. However, the contribution was decreased to NPR 5, as Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra does not consider this an occasion for fund raising. As an organization for women's development, the spiritual welfare of the women is more important on this day for the Kendra than the worldly welfare of those who would benefit from the funds

raised.

7. Samuhik Bel Biwaah (Wedding with a bel tree in group)

Newar, an ethnic group of Nepal, has a tradition of performing the religious/cultural rite of marrying girls to a bel, a specific tree. Almost all Hindu/Buddhist Newar girls undergo this rite long before they reach puberty. This requires a special priest, a “Dev Baje.” Such Bajes are, however, not always available. It is difficult and expensive for individual families in many districts outside the Kathmandu valley to organize this ceremony. Hence, Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra organizes this ritual in groups so that one priest can perform the ritual for many girls and it becomes affordable as well. The Dev Baje is usually brought in from Hetauda or Kathmandu which are both two and a half to three hours’ drive from the district.

The rite is a two-day program and is performed on an auspicious day chosen by the priest based on the lunar calendar used in Nepal for the Hindu/Buddhist rites. This is organized at the hall of Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra. Last year 72 girls participated in the rite. The methods used to organize and even the details of the rite may vary over locations and communities. As is common among people of other religions/cultures, differences may occur in the process of expressing, interpreting and solemnizing the rite even though the essence of the rite remains the same. At NAK, the total expense involved in completing the rite is first estimated depending on the number of participating girls.

The parents who make the first request to organize the rite have to make the highest contribution towards the cost of the event. Then the participants are ranked based on their capacity to contribute towards the expenses involved in the rite. The ranking is relative to the families who can afford the most to those who can afford the least. The contribution decreases as the rank goes down till the ninth. Then all the remaining participants have to contribute equally. However, those who cannot afford can also participate without any contribution. In addition, the witnesses (observers) of the rite also volunteer in providing food to the girls. Last year the total money raised was around NPR 18,000.

The next rite for such girls would be *gufaa raakhne* (literally: “keeping in cave”), wherein girls are kept in a room for five to six days, i.e., the girls are kept behind closed doors where they cannot be seen by men. This rite is performed on a girl in anticipation of her nearing puberty and this can be validated unless the girl has gone through the rite of *Bel biwaah*.

8. Construction of Office Building

Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra used to work from an office in a rented room of the Tuberculosis Project. They decided that they needed to have their own building and facilities if they were to work and sustain themselves as an organization without much outside support. They laid the foundation of the building in 1996 on the day of Laxmi Puja, the day for

worshipping the goddess of wealth.

NAK used different methods to raise funds and resources for the construction of the building. The land for the building was a donation from Lila Baaje, father of Saraswoti Rijal (founder member), at Narayangadh, Chitwan. The organization also announced in advance that the names of members donating over NPR 1,000 towards the building's construction would be inscribed on a plaque on the building. This encouraged many members to donate amounts over NPR 1,000.

On the evening of the ceremony of the laying of the building foundation, all the members went to "play" Bhailo to raise funds. In Bhailo, girls and ladies get together and go house to house, inviting themselves or at the invitation of the host, to sing and dance their introduction and blessings to the host, that the goddess of wealth would provide prosperity that night and in the years to come. In return, the hosts offer the Bhailo singers, traditionally, uncooked rice, doughnuts, fruits, saucer lamps and money. As material offerings are awkward and cumbersome to carry around when the singers are moving from house to house or to keep for institutional purposes, these have been replaced these days by money, especially when the host knows that the Bhailo singing is being done to raise funds for a cause. NAK raised about NPR 15,000 in the first year of playing Bhailo.

In the following year's Laxmi Puja, they went singing Bhailo for three days with the support of the children of Sai (a

popular Hindu sect that recognizes other religions) Centre and raised around NPR 55,000. NPR 10,000 was given to Sai Centre for the benefit of their children. This time the members went door-to-door collecting donations from the local businesspeople, most of whom were known to the members of NAK.

For constructing the office building, donations were also received in kind. Apart from the land, some people also donated construction materials such as bricks, sand and steel rods.

The building was completed in one and a half years at the total cost of about NPR 900,000.

9. Ladies Hostel

With the purpose of providing safe and comfortable residence to female college students, NAK started a Ladies Hostel this year. It is registered as a cooperative, and its equities are shared among the management staff and volunteers of the hostel (51 percent), Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra (25 percent) and the general members (24 percent). The value of a "share" is NPR 100. In this manner, the hostel has already raised NPR 275,000. The hostel fee for a student is NPR 2,800 per month, which includes food, accommodation and tuition at the hostel. At present, the hostel has six girls, most of whom are the daughters of the members themselves. The hostel staff is composed of a hostel warden, two tutors (male and female), a caretaker and two guards.

10. Rental Service

NAK has rented out its building, keeping a room for its office, and the training hall to Sai Centre at the rate of NPR 3,000 per month. It also started renting out its furniture. It has 50 chairs for rent at NPR 5/chair to outsiders and NPR 4 for the members of NAK.

11. Membership Fee and Membership of NAK

NAK has a total of 53 members, half of which are life members. Life members make a one-time subscription of NPR 17,000. The general members pay NPR 50 annually as membership fee. To prevent “groupism” or factionalism in the organization, membership is given to those women who are not politically affiliated.

12. Sale of Telephone Directories

NAK has published a telephone directory of Chitwan district and has been selling this to raise funds.

13. Donations from Members

Donations are also collected frequently from the members whenever the organization requires funds urgently and when it has no other alternatives or much time to wait.

Lessons Learned

The trainings and other opportunities given to unmarried members are not fully utilized by the organization since they leave the communities after they are married. In order to address this problem, a

policy has been made that a girl, after taking training sponsored by or on behalf of NAK, has to train others in the organization. Thus, even if she leaves her community or the organization after marriage, the knowledge and skills remain with the community and in the organization.

NAK has realized that asking members to always volunteer wears down their spirit for serving the society. Therefore, it is exploring ways of compensating the volunteers so that it can get their continued support in the activities of the organization.

Some women members complain about their difficulties at home when they participate in the organization's activities. However, NAK has been trying to motivate them by stressing that every woman who comes to NAK has this problem. It seeks participatory solutions to such problems of individual members.

Future Plans

In addition to the ongoing activities, NAK plans to add another floor to its building.

The Board and the Address of Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra

NAK has nine founder members. It has an executive committee of nine members.

Chairperson – Kasturi Shrestha

Vice Chairperson – Pushpa Paudel

Secretary – Mana Sen

Treasurer – Chhaya Shrestha

Members – Sharaswoti Rijal, Kamala
Bhattarai, Ishwori Baniya, Sharmila
Wagle, Shushma Shrestha, Parbati
Dhakal.

Contact Persons

Kasturi Shrestha

President

Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra/Satya Sai Kendra,
Narayan Gadh
Chitwan, Narayani
Nepal

or

Mana Sen

Secretary

Naari Abhyutthaan Kendra
Girls Hostel, Chhetrapur
Bharatpur Nagar Palika
Chitwan, Narayani

Case 9

Dhulikhel Hospital

Background/History

Dhulikhel Hospital is registered with the District Administration Office of Kavrepalanchok and affiliated with the Social Co-ordination Council as a non-profit non-government organization. It is located some 35 kilometers east of Kathmandu. The motto of the hospital is to provide medical service of European standard even to poor people. It charges the cost based on what its clients can afford. If poor people cannot afford its service, they will be provided it free of charge. All the patients are treated equally irrespective of their socioeconomic status.

The history of the hospital is linked with Dr. Ram Shrestha, a resident of Dhulikhel, who was bereaved of his mother when he was still a child. The disease that took his mother's life could not be identified because of unavailability of good diagnostic services. This was a great shock to him; after this event he wanted to become a physician and build a hospital in Nepal to serve poor people so that nobody would die the way his mother did, for lack of proper diagnosis and treatment. To make his dream come true, he studied very hard in school. Through sheer hard work, he was able to obtain a scholarship to study in Austria.

When he completed his study in

Austria he was offered a job at the university hospital where he worked until he returned to Nepal. After gaining sufficient experience, he shared with his professors and colleagues his wish to return to Nepal and build a hospital there to serve the poor. His professors liked his idea and expressed their willingness to help him realize his dream. They assured him that they would help raise funds for the hospital's construction if he could find the local resources to run the hospital. At the time, Bel Prasad Shrestha, a cousin of Dr. Shrestha, was the mayor of Dhulikhel municipality. Dr. Shrestha inquired of Mayor Shrestha about the possibility of finding local resources for the hospital. His cousin said that this would not be a problem. He sent a letter of commitment specifying that the municipality would provide NPR 1,500,000 annually and would also establish a trust fund worth NPR 6,000,000 for its operation. In addition, the letter also mentioned that the community people would also provide land for the hospital.

Dr. Shrestha returned to Nepal to initiate the construction of the hospital. In Austria, an NGO called NepalMed was established to raise funds for the hospital construction. Later NepalMeds were also started in Germany, Sweden, Canada, Ja-

pan and the Netherlands. The construction of the hospital was completed in 1995. The hospital was officially opened in 1996 by His Majesty the King of Nepal.

The hospital has village outreach clinics in Kavre and Dhading districts. These clinics provide primary health services to the people of the neighboring areas. The hospital also produces mid- and community-level manpower for health services such as staff nurses, physician assistants, laboratory technicians, community health volunteers and traditional birth attendants. These outreach clinics also refer patients to the hospital. Asked whether influential persons or people of high standing make recommendations for free treatments, Dr. Nastu Sharma said, "The hospital considers that the patients who come with recommendation of influential people have some resources. In our assumption the very poor people do not have any access to influential persons. Therefore, if some patient comes through such channels, we do not give any discounts. Instead, we ask the recommending person to donate some funds to the hospital before making a referral to us for free treatment. Otherwise, we ask them to leave us to decide who should be treated for free and who should pay for the treatment." The hospital is well-equipped with state-of-the-art technology and facilities for providing quality health treatment. Approximately 150 people are treated daily from the outpatient department. The 45 beds of the inpatient department are usually fully occupied.

Management

The hospital has a board to oversee policy issues but the day-to-day management is done by the medical director and the finance and administration director, both of whom work first as physician and surgeon respectively. There are a total of 120 staff members in the hospital. All the staff, from cleaners to doctors, wear the same uniform. They are very committed and ready to work extra hours whenever required.

In the cafeteria, the prices of food are fixed according to the income levels of the staff. For the same food, the senior staff pay a higher rate while the junior staff pay lower prices.

The hospital recruits only people who are not just looking for monetary compensation for the work they do but who also have a desire to contribute what they can to help the sick. It does not hire anyone just on the recommendation of any board member or influential people of the community. They are hired entirely on merit. This policy in staff recruitment prevents nepotism and the associated complacency or inefficiency that can be seen in some organizations in Nepal.

When it recruits a new staff it carefully examines whether s/he has the right attitude to serve the patients. "Before or during their medical studies most students express the rhetoric of serving the poor, but after they qualify as physicians they lose their sensitivity for the poor and many of them wish to be researchers and pro-

fessors. We ask them to stick to their earlier goal and vision,” said Dr. Nastu Sharma, the surgeon who also looks after the finance and administrative operations of the hospital. He further said, “We also ask them if they want to work for themselves or for the community. We recruit only those who wish to work for the community.” The hospital pays its doctors an equivalent of the average remuneration of doctors working in other hospitals. Thus they need not look outside for additional income for a reasonable quality of living.

The hospital has a family environment for working. All the staff have a feeling that they all belong to the same family. If anyone has a problem, everybody shares and helps him/her to overcome it.

The staff are dedicated to the hospital and committed to their jobs because they chose to join in with those who wanted to work for the sick, the poor and the community. They are loyal to their commitments first than to any other duty or hierarchy of persons. Compared to many hospitals, Dhulikhel Hospital looks very clean. Answering a question on the number of cleaners in the hospital, Dr. Sharma said that they have only four cleaners. Cleanliness is paramount in hospitals. The staff enjoy and derive satisfaction from seeing to it that everyone entering the hospital can feel they are entering an area where care and cleanliness are paramount. Therefore the results are good. The cleaners are not assigned duties every day and monitored regularly. They know for themselves what their du-

ties are and how to carry them out, sharing the work among themselves. The cleaners also have a feeling of ownership towards the hospital. They are proud of working at the hospital. They bring their community members and families to see their hospital. The hospital also encourages them to do so.

Fund Raising

NepalMed, an international NGO, raises funds for the hospital from Austria, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Canada and the Netherlands. Fund raising for the hospital is also done in Nepal. At present there are around 10,000 individual donors, both national and international.

International groups and events

In Austria, NepalMed uses different techniques for raising funds—organizing ball dances, football matches, children’s birthday parties, and so on. High school students in Austria and other countries started a Ram’s Football Club, named after Dr. Ram Shrestha, to raise funds for the hospital. At birthday parties, they ask their friends to bring money to donate to the hospital instead of bottles of wine as presents. Some even made a film about the hospital and telecast it via satellite TV three times to publicize and raise funds for the hospital. Fund raisers have never considered raising money a problem. They take pride in doing something to benefit those who are deprived

of basic medical care.

Hospital fees

In Nepal's non-government hospitals, fees paid by the patients are the main source of funds for running the hospital. In Dhulikhel Hospital about NPR 1,700,000 comes from this source in a year of which 50 percent goes towards staff salaries.

Staff donation of interest from welfare fund

The hospital has a welfare fund established from the contribution of the staff. The amount of staff contribution is progressive, that is, the more senior the staff the higher the contribution. If a staff contributes two percent of his salary, the hospital adds the corresponding amount. At the time of leaving the job, the staff member will be refunded her deposit and the corresponding contribution added to it by the hospital. The interest earned from the deposits is used for the patients who cannot afford the hospital fees.

Donations in kind

The hospital also accepts donations in kind, such as rice, daal (lentils/pulses to cook as a soup and served with rice) and sarbottam pitho (baby food made from flour made of wheat, maize and soy-bean). Community people usually donate in kind after their illnesses are cured.

There is a case that explains very well

how some people donate in kind. There was a local businessman who went to different places for the treatment of his illness. Spending a lot of money in different places with his illness still not cured, he finally came to this hospital. He became very happy when he got better from the treatment of the hospital; he expressed his wish to donate something to the hospital. He had a brick kiln and he said he would like to donate bricks. At that time, some construction work at the hospital was underway and the donation of bricks was highly appreciated. He donated bricks worth around NPR 60,000.

Hospital's preferred kind of donors and donations

The hospital prefers individual donors to organizational donors. The reason is that in individual donation, if a person does not donate or a problem occurs with one donor, it will not make much difference; but in case of organizational donor, it may affect significantly.

The hospital does not compromise with its principles and the quality of its service for the sake of receiving donations, as doing so would defeat the very purpose and image of the hospital. It accepts funds only from such donors who agree with its principles. The hospital also does not accept any second-hand equipment and vehicles from donors. The hospital does not take whatever the donors offer—it makes its needs known; it is choosy and takes only those items and equipment which are

really needed and useful to the hospital.

Nurturing donors

The donors and fund raisers from abroad are invited to visit the hospital every year. They are happy to see the work being done with their contributions. In addition, a lot of visitors come every year to see the hospital. Moreover, Mayor Bel Prasad Shrestha, who is also a hotel entrepreneur has many old friends from different countries whom he invites to the hospital. Many of them become members of NepalMed in their respective countries, having been impressed with the hospital service. Some of the visitors want to donate on the spot after being impressed with the work of the hospital. However, they are asked to donate through NepalMed established in their countries or any other countries abroad.

Lessons Learned

1. The leadership should be given to people with expertise related to the working area of the organization. The hospital should be run under the leadership of medical professionals.
2. A consistent policy guideline is essential to running the organization. This establishes a system where if a person leaves, this will not have much effect in the continuity of the organization.
3. Quality service with professional integrity and commitment are impor-

tant to achieve success. If a hospital has these qualities, donors will be interested to fund it.

4. Committed staff are an important component of the organization.
5. Communicating to mobilize resources for a good cause combined with determination to succeed is key to the success of any project.

Future Plans

The following are the main projects under consideration:

1. to start a medical college in association with Kathmandu University; to develop the hospital as a teaching hospital without compromising the quality of the hospital service;
2. to construct additional staff housing;
3. to expand new departments such as laboratory, pathology, outpatient dental clinic; and
4. to train staff and to continue the expansion of training programs such as hygiene for butchers, birth control and preventive medical care. ▶

Case 10

Bal Bhojan

CHILDREN'S MEAL

Background and Motivation

Dr. Suddhasingh Rauniyar is a homeopathic doctor. When he completed his studies, he could not get a job in public service for being the son of an activist of a political party committed to the parliamentary system of democracy. This was banned at the time. So he started his own private practice in 1983.

Dr. Rauniyar has had an inner call to help the socioeconomically challenged children ever since he was a school boy himself at St. Xavier's School in Kathmandu. The school was residential then. Almost all the students were children of the elite. He was in Class VI in 1967. They used to throw away the old exercise books and half-used pencils at the end of every term when they went home on vacation. They bought fresh stationery for the new term. Many of the old notebooks thrown away still had plenty of sheets that were unused. He did not think it right that he and his fellow students should throw away these good quality materials when there were those who did not have enough writing paper or pencils. With his teachers' support, he collected the exercise books from his schoolmates and gave them to the needy

children in the hostel (orphanage) managed by the Nepal Children's Organisation. He enjoyed providing help to those who were less privileged than he.

He was inclined towards medical service since he was a child when his family used to live in Thamel. He used to have a notice written on cardboard saying: "Free First Aid Provided." He used to have antiseptics, cotton and bandages ready to apply to the small wounds of people.

After his practice was established, he started thinking again of the children who were economically challenged and yet did well in their studies. He saw that such children were not able to pursue higher levels of school for want of money. So he initiated a children's education program called Shree Gaon School-College Bidyarathi Chhatrabritti Karyakram Nepal (Shree Village School-College Student Scholarship Programme Nepal, VISCOSS) in 2050 B. S.¹ (1993 C. E.) But the story about the beginning of Bal Bhojan is quite different. It received media attention—radio, print and television.

When and How Did It Start?

Dr. Rauniyar related: “It was around 9.30 p.m. of Ashad 29, 2056 B. S.² (July 13, 1999) when I was going home after closing my clinic at Makhan Tole, Kathmandu, that I saw four children lying on the pavement. Three of them were asleep and one boy was about to go to sleep. Customarily for that part of the day, casually and nonchalantly I asked if he had had his meal. He answered he had not. I was returning home to have my dinner. I felt uncomfortable! I asked why would he go to sleep with an empty stomach? He returned a question: what could he do?!”

The boy had no money. So Dr. Rauniyar asked him to wait as he went to buy a loaf of bread from a shop around the corner. He found all the shops closed. He returned to ask if the boy would do with boiled eggs instead. It was already about ten at night. He said without demanding that he wished to have rice that night but he could not get it. Dr. Rauniyar understood that the young boy must be really very hungry. He went to a hotel nearby and asked for rice. There was none left. It was late. The child then told Dr. Rauniyar that there was an eatery not very far where a woman sold rice for five rupees (NPR)³. He did not believe it; he had never known a meal of rice being available for just five rupees! He knew anyone could buy a cup of tasteless tea for five rupees but this child was talking about dinner for NPR 5! If the child had talked about a meal for NPR 30-40, he would

have just given a little money and walked off. “But ...,” he thought “... this child was resigned to going to sleep hungry even when there was a meal available for NPR 5!” He decided to give it a last try that time in the night.

This seven-year-old boy led the established doctor in his own neighborhood to an eatery where rice could be found late at night. This was “Aamaako Bhojnalaya” (Mother’s Eatery). Anyone could indeed buy here a half plate of rice, a small bowl of lentil soup, some vegetables and a little pickle, for just NPR 5! Dr. Rauniyar bought these for the child. The child went back to the pavement to sleep and the doctor returned home. And little did the aama, Kanchhi Tamang, realize at the time that this might be a regular work for her, serving many street children in the evenings to come. Incidentally, that day was the birth anniversary of the pioneer poet Bhanubhakta who regretted not having done anything for society when a low-income grass-cutter had dug a well in charity.

A Sleepless Night, the Conflict and the Resolution

Dr. Rauniyar had his dinner “which was definitely worth a lot more than NPR 5.” His “mind was in turmoil.” He had met a child who was going to sleep hungry for want of five rupees. “There might be more children like him,” he began wondering for the first time. He had known of underprivileged children but

nothing like this. Part of him thought he could not be responsible for such a situation and that he should forget it. It was enough effort for him just making sure that he and his family had food. Yet again, another part of him told him that this was not the right attitude and that he did have some responsibility. He could not help asking himself repeatedly, could there be more children like that? He could not sleep that night.

The next day he went to work as usual. But at the end of the day's work, he went looking for the children. He went around the Indrachowk, Sukrapath, Bishal Bazaar, the center of Kathmandu where all the rich and big shops are. He did not find the child he had fed the previous night nor the three who had slept hungry on the pavement. He met others. He asked them if they had eaten yet. They had not. So he took them to Aamaako Bhojnalaya and fed them. On the third night, he again went searching for the children in Bhugol Park. "Without realizing it," Dr. Rauniyar reminisced, "I had concluded that I should feed such children and that I had singlehandedly and instinctively started this 'project.'"

The Number of Children in the First Days

He forgot exactly how many children he fed on the second day, but on the third day, it was some eight to ten of them. He did not keep a record, but on the fourth day, the number of children increased to

13 or 14. From the second day, it was an everyday affair providing evening meals to street children. Dr. Rauniyar did not want the children to go to sleep hungry. The Bal Bhojan program had begun in earnest.

Number of Children Being Fed Every Day

If a child comes to Bal Bhojan for two months regularly, his name is recorded in the register. There are 190 such children recorded in the register but only 40 to 50 come to eat at Bal Bhojan everyday including children from Bhugol Park, Hanuman Dhoka, Thahity and nearby areas. But this figure can also vary. There are reasons.

Do the Children Vary or are They the Same?

After completing his work, every evening Dr. Rauniyar would go out walking and take all the children he could find to feed. The children who came on day 2, 3 or 4 have come repeatedly but the child he fed on the first day has not shown up again. Although some have continued to come, the majority keep changing. Some have remained, others have left, while new ones have joined.

Background of the Children

All the street children have their own stories. They all have their own reasons for leaving their homes and villages to

come to Kathmandu. Some have a stepmother, some do not have a father or their fathers had left them. Some do not have a mother. In some cases the father comes home drunk and beats them up. All of them have run away from “negative” families.

Male/Female Ratio of the Children

Of the 40 to 50 children who come for the evening meals, around 15 are girls. So the ratio is one girl to three boys.

“Khatay”: The Wrong Word to Describe Street Children

Many people call the street children “khatay.” It is a derogatory term that literally means people, especially children or adolescents, who eat for free; scavengers, scrap-eaters or those who pick scrap from the rubbish bin. Dr. Rauniyar believes that “khatay” is the wrong word to describe street children. For him “khatay” means persons who eat a lot or have enough food to pick any time and eat as they like. These children do not have enough to eat. So how can they be “khatay?” In fact they are “na-khatay.” He thought he and people like him should be called “khatay” since they eat several times a day. “These children do not get enough food and they do not have shelter either. They sleep on pavements. I accept that occasionally these children snatch things from people and run away. Sometimes they steal too. This is because they find themselves in such situations. No child is born a thief. This

all happens later as they are diverted and deviated by time, age, conditions and because they have no other options known to them to meet their needs to survive.”

Media Takes Interest

Soon, word spread around Kathmandu that there was a doctor who provided meals to street children. Within a fortnight of starting this program, the press, the local radio stations, television and even the BBC came to visit him. He did not go to them. Many came to know about this program from the media.

Morning Meals for Education; Teachers Mobilized

For the first few weeks, Dr. Rauniyar provided the meals only in the evenings. He then started thinking about providing some kind of education for these children. But he could not be a provider of meals and a teacher at the same time since he had many other things to do. He did not have the money to hire teachers. Nevertheless, from the VISCOSS program started eight years ago, he knew many of the teachers from his visits to the schools for six years. So he went to them and asked them if they would volunteer teaching a group of street children seven mornings a week by turns since he did not have the money to pay them. By that time, Bal Bhojan had already gained credit and media attention. All the teachers he spoke to agreed to his request immediately. They would teach class from 6 a.m. to 9 a. m.

for seven days at a time. The classes began on 2056 B. S. Shree Panchami, Fagun 12, (February 24, 2000), the auspicious day in the year when the Hindu goddess of learning, Saraswati, is worshipped. Many parents start teaching the alphabet to their children on this day. This was some eight months since Bal Bhojan started. The teachers have not received money even for a cup of tea for the work they have been doing. It has been over two years.

“The best thing that happened after starting the morning classes was the rule that only those children who came to the morning classes would get the morning meal,” said Dr. Rauniyar. The children study for two to three hours every day.

For the evening meals, however, any child could just come and get a meal. There were no conditions attached.

No Dependency but Compassion, Company, Culture and Education

Some people alleged that providing food to the children would encourage the syndrome of dependency at an early age but Dr. Rauniyar refutes this. “Bal Bhojan is not just meals. The meals are an entry point for other very important things. With the meals also come the non-formal education. I agree that I have not been able to give my full time to the children, but I do spend some time with them every day.” He calls this time sat-sang, good company. Then there is the support and sanskar, culture. And the third point is that

in addition to the non-formal education, he is providing basic education to the children through the school teachers.

Thinking about Skills for the Children for the Future

Dr. Rauniyar believes that education in Nepal is spoiled. Young people doing their SLC's,⁴ intermediates, bachelors or even master's from government-funded schools and university colleges gain very little skill to do a job well. And yet they expect to find good jobs. This is not possible. Students from private schools and colleges are ahead. But such institutions are too expensive for children from the streets. So he is thinking about giving skills to these children so that they can do something on their own and become independent for a livelihood. However, he said, “I am not in a hurry for this.”

Street Children Too Should Have Their Childhood

He went on further: “I want them to play and study just like my own children do.” Dr. Rauniyar said, “A time will come when they become adolescents or adults like 16, 18 or over 20. After that they will have to work for their whole life and they should be prepared for this. They need not have to worry about their morning or evening meals before this age. I am against them working during their childhood. It is their time to learn sanskar and skills. We are providing them education and when time comes they will get their skills

too. Thus, they will be ready to face the world and live a reasonable life without being dependent on others. To be successful in the future, the street children should have their childhood too.”

Appeal to Provide Formal Education: “Each One Teach One”

To provide formal education to children who have been regular with Bal Bhojan for a long time, he launched an appeal, “Each One Teach One,” with his friends. Four to five persons came forward saying they would take the responsibility of providing funds for children to complete secondary education. The commitments were verbal. All Dr. Rauniyar said to the sponsors was that they would have to be true to their commitments. As a result, he was able to enrol five girls at the Kanti Ishwory Secondary School, Pyaphal, on May 23, 2001. They were Jeena Lama, Mina Tamang, Menuka Khadka and Kumari. Two of them were placed in Class 1 and the other three in Class 2. The sponsors provided the school uniforms, clothes, books, school bags, pencils, soap or toothpaste and everything else they might need. He saw that there were many in society who were not satisfied with their lot even when they had plenty and there were others who were satisfied in their souls: those who wished to share what they had received.

NGO Registered but after the Work was Started

Bal Bhojan is not a program that developed from planning. Many of Dr. Rauniyar’s friends thought that he had registered an NGO to do the work. He said that he had not started an NGO but a “mann jeeyo” (a pun he coined, mann meaning mind, heart or soul, and jeeyo meaning lived, implying the heart prevailed). He was later told that any organized social work had to be registered with the District Administration Office. This was good advice. He got together a group of seven persons including himself, the minimum required by law, and registered as an NGO in Ashaad⁵ 2057 B. S. (2000 C. E.). In a lighter vein, he still calls it a mann-jeeyo! After registering the NGO, he thought he should do something new in addition to the current program.

Mobile Bal Bhojan for Different Gangs of Street Children

In the previous two years or so of his service to the street children around Makhan Tole area of Kathmandu, he learned a lot about street children. One was that these children belonged to area-based gangs. Thus, there would be street children of Makhan Tole, Hanuman Dhoka, Chhetrapati, Durbar Marga and so on. Each gang would have some 10 to 14 children. These gangs would have fights on small matters. So the children of one gang would not normally go to

other areas for any gainful activity where other gangs prevailed. This meant that children from other areas would not come to Makhan Tole for the food provided by Bal Bhojan. There would be gang fights and brawls if they did. Dr. Rauniyar's heart went out to such children from other areas too. He thought that if the children from other areas could not come to him, he would go to them. But he did not have the resources to start a regular feeding program in other areas. What could he do?

He knew about mobile clinics where the doctors went to the patients. So he thought of a mobile feeding program: the food going to the children. He thought of taking food to the children where they were and at intervals, even if he did not have the resources to provide daily! He thought it was feasible if he could raise just enough resources.

Thus, on Baisakh⁶ 1, 2058 B. S. (April 14, 2001), Mobile Bal Bhojan was started. This was a Saturday. He thought this was an auspicious day to start the service: New Year's Day and a weekend too. This could not be done everyday but even if it were just once a week on a Saturday, the children could have a reasonable meal. He sent messages to the gangs at Tridevi Marg, Durbar Marg, Bagh Bazaar, Thamel, Thahiti and Maitidevi areas of Kathmandu. They could stay in their own areas on Saturdays if they wanted to have a meal provided by Bal Bhojan. On the day of the interview with Rauniyar (June 13, 2001), 36 Saturdays of the year had

already been booked by the donors with their pledges for the meals. This was impressive. It was again the first of its kind in Nepal as far as he knew. But there were two Saturdays when it could not be organized due to the tragic incident of June 1 at the Royal Palace, when everyone was mourning. Rauniyar continued it as soon as conditions returned to normal.

By 8 a.m., 300 to 400 lunch packets are ready, depending on the donations made by the sponsors. A van is hired and they go from place to place distributing the food. If they have a surplus, they also give to people whom they find in a sorry state, irrespective of the age of the person.

Staff and Office Property

Asked about staff and office, Dr. Rauniyar answered that Bal Bhojan did not have a single staff nor any office or office facilities. As for property or vehicles, they did not even have a bicycle.

Improvements Observed among Children with Bal Bhojan

Bal Bhojan aims to improve the children with satsang and sanskar. Dr. Rauniyar feeds them with messages to stop all deviations. This is a process that he began over two years ago. He does not claim that the children have become sages or saints but there has definitely been improvement. Many of the children used to steal things. They used to snatch vegetables from the vendors' baskets on bi-

cycles. This has not stopped completely, but has reduced substantially because they do not have to do this for food. They get their food at Bal Bhojan. He knows that children who do not come to Bal Bhojan still do this. In fact, children who came to Bal Bhojan regularly for six months to two years have so improved that he was able to admit some of them to regular formal schools.

And a Regular Place to Sleep...

Dr. Rauniyar thought of renting a place where the children could sleep from the first day he saw them sleeping on the pavement. But then, he also thought that just providing a place to sleep would not help. He became cognizant of the fact that many of these children did many “wrong things” together in the dark hours. He might be able to raise funds to rent a place for the children to sleep in, but he could not find someone to take the responsibility of watching over the children at night. He could not oversee the children 24 hours a day. Who would be willing to do that? Not providing a place for the children to sleep in would be his limitation until he could fully trust the children or until he found the right person to take the responsibility.

Self-esteem and Awareness to Earn a Living

Sometimes the number of children during the evening meals drops noticeably. Dr. Rauniyar learned that this hap-

pens when the children or their parents find a job or make some money for the day by working or begging. So if the children or their parents have earned even a small amount to be able to pay for their food for the day, they would buy the meal, but still at the Aama's place. This goes to prove that not all the children or their parents were greedy, that they were trying to be independent and, above all, that they had a sense of self-esteem. Dr. Rauniyar only smiled when asked if he had developed some of them to be so. He seemed pleased with the question. He could have proudly accepted the fact that he had inculcated such a feeling in the children, but it was also apparent that his humility would not allow him to do so.

Children Sleeping in their Own Homes and on Footpaths

On the basis of where they sleep, there are two types of children who come to Bal Bhojan: those who sleep on the pavements, and those whose mothers or parents have some kind of shelter of their own. Dr. Rauniyar learned this later. But even those parents who had shelter were helpless or begged.

Some Children Return Home from the Streets

Some children return home after they have been on the streets for two to six months. This is another reason why the number at Bal Bhojan drops. Some of these children go back to the streets and

some others do not. This causes some fluctuation in their number at Bal Bhojan.

The number of children in the morning classes and meals is lower. This is because many of the children pick plastic from the rubbish heaps to earn some money. They sell such plastic to rag dealers at Teku and get NPR 20-30 a day. This is their income. But to earn this amount they have to go to the rubbish heaps in the morning before the municipal refuse-collectors arrive. So they miss their classes. And if they miss their class in the morning they cannot have the meal provided by Dr. Rauniyar.

Yet another reason for a sudden drop in the number of children for the evening meals are the gang fights. This causes some of them to miss a few meals until the parties involved can reach a truce. Still, the number of children might remain stable since new children and even a new gang might join in. Some children have been regulars for as long as two years. So the number of children might increase or decrease but there is a steady turnout of 40 to 50 children every evening.

Quality and Content of the Food ...

The meal consists of rice, dal (lentil/pulse soup), vegetables and pickle. There is no meat. It is a simple vegetarian meal. It is pure, fresh and “white.” Dr. Rauniyar said, “When the children are being fed, love and company are also ‘served’. This makes the quality of food that much more

better.” He believes, “Give love and get back love; give hatred and get more hatred.” He feels sorry that there are very few who understand these children. These children are mistreated by many in society. He accepts that these children are dirty; they might not have any soap or water or might not have any change of clothes. But they still look beautiful if you can look at them with love and beneath the surface.

... And Clothes Too

At times, the donors also bring clothes to Bal Bhojan. Dr. Rauniyar and his friends distribute the clothes to the children according to the size of the clothes received.

Why is Bal Bhojan So Successful?

Dr. Rauniyar answered that the main reason for the success of the program is that there is no cheating. The society is able to trust him. The donors are convinced that the money they provide for feeding the children is not used for any other purpose. The donors do not even take receipt for what they give. They say, “No need.” Many of his friends have joined up with him since he started the program.

Expenditure Per Day

The expenditure per day on the feeding program comes to about NPR 500 to NPR 1,000 for both the morning and the

evening meals.

The ages of the children who come to eat are 2 to 3 years, 6 to 7 years and just over 10 years old. All of them do not eat a “full plate.” So he does not have to spend “full plate” money. In the morning meals there are mostly only 20 children or so.

A Religion of Humanity

Asked to describe what he meant by his program that does not just provide meals but also satsang and sanskar, Dr. Rauniyar explained that his feeding program also had the religion of humanity. He said that although he was a disciple of Lord Krishna and the meals started with a prayer of “Shree Ganeshaaya namah” (I bow down to Lord Ganesh), he felt a little uncomfortable with this since he noticed that three to four Muslims and a few Christian children had started coming to the meals. Such children might not pray to a Hindu god. He did not want to force a Hindu prayer on these children against their will. So he gave a little project to two to three schools to see what might be the most important religion in the world. He understood the value of Sarva-dharma (integration of all religions). He is not sure yet if he should call this a religion of atmagyana (knowledge of one’s soul). He wanted to study all these religions. He went to the Christians. He also went to the Buddhists and studied their thoughts. He talked with the Muslim patients who came to his clinic. But he could not do all

the studies. Nonetheless, he was convinced that if everyone preached one’s own religion, unity and peace among human beings was impossible. Therefore, he started talking about the religion of human beings or the religion of humanity. He has never been opposed when he talked about the religion of humanity. So he included this as an important aspect of satsang or sanskar given in the Bal Bhojan program. He is convinced that no one religion will be successful with everyone. So he prepared a prayer by himself which is said daily at the meals. He said, “This is an amazing prayer,” and that one needs to go and see it at 7:30 p.m. at Makhan Tole where the meals are served. He believed that this would bring love and unity among human beings.

Muslims and Christians Supporting

With this approach, Muslims and Christians are also supporting the Mobile Bal Bhojan. Interestingly, he said that none of the contributors to the program, apart from those in the committee, was Buddhist. Nevertheless, he has the support of people of all religions in what he is doing. One of the reasons he is getting the support of all is that he talks of the religion of humanity and also because he is a doctor. Doctors serve patients of all faiths and they are trusted.

Funds and Fund Raising

Dr. Rauniyar spread the word by floating an appeal, that it would be a good cause to provide meals for the street children. The rich celebrate their birthdays and that of their children in a grand manner. They have parties and spend a lot of money. A friend came to him saying he would like to pay for a meal on his birthday. Another friend came and said that the next day was his uncle's daughter's birthday and they would like to feed the street children together. In this way, they started coming to him to celebrate their birthdays at Bal Bhojan. "Then I got such financial support since then that, I am speaking frankly, I have not got any chance to (pay for the children's meal) till today," said the doctor. "Some will have their birthday or their son's birthday. There is always someone." He continued: "These are Nepali brothers and sisters, not the dollar earning kind but those who receive their wages in Nepalese rupees. It has been about two years and we have not had any problem regarding funds. I am very surprised." Asked how many of his sponsors were Nepalis, he answered, "...most of them." He did have some international friends helping him, "...but they make up only two percent of such donors." He completed the answer:

Who are the givers?

The givers are a mixed group. They range from civil servants who do not have high income to those who are very rich

with property for generations. Thus, the donations may range from NPR 200, the cost of a single meal for the evening, to NPR 2,000-3,000 at a time. There are exceptions too. A lady, who is the wife of a very well-known Nepali scholar and diplomat of repute, has been providing for 220 children every month for the past two years. She has already given the amount needed for this in two lump sums of NPR 52,000. Other donors are businessmen, Dr. Rauniyar's friends, his patients and new friends whom he met in connection with the work of Bal Bhojan. Asked about their reasons for feeding the children, Dr. Rauniyar said that almost 90 percent of the cases are for celebrating the birthdays of their children, loved ones and relatives. About 10 percent of the donations are for observing death anniversaries. The major motivation for most of the donations is that of philanthropy for those who can benefit from the act of giving. And of course there is also punya (virtue or righteousness) that accrues from such donations.

An anonymous giver!

Dr. Rauniyar described an incident with an anonymous giver. One day someone phoned him and said that someone wanted to see him at his office if he had the time. He was very surprised that he was called to see this man. He did guess that he might receive some money, say NPR 5,000-7,000, for the program. But this gentleman pulled out NPR 100,000 in cash, just like that! And he asked that

his name not be mentioned. He was not a businessman or an industrialist. This was the first case of this type for Dr. Rauniyar. This anonymous donor had heard about the program on the news. This was a turning point for the program: a point of new departure on what he had been doing. He was able to put five children to school with this money. He had enough money for food in the program.

He does not wax lyrical about the person or the amount just because this came in one instance. For him, even two to four rupees are equally important and those who give such amount are equally great. However, he was overwhelmed that it was a Nepali who did this and that he trusted another Nepali for a good cause.

"It is all God's providence."

Dr. Rauniyar believes that the whole program is running well because of God's providence. God makes sure that donors come to him and there is no problem in feeding the children. He is "free of any worry." His turn to feed the children has not come for a long time. There is always someone who comes along and pledges to sponsor the feeding of the children for even three days or so at a time.

Continuity and sustainability

On the length of commitment of the donors, Dr. Rauniyar answered that because the donors trust him so he also trusts the donors. Thus the commitment is verbal. On the continuity of the program,

he is sure that this will continue as he feels that, Param-pita, the Supreme Father (God), will send donors for the work. He is the Supreme Manager of everything and He will do what is needed to sustain the work that He started. And that Dr. Rauniyar is only a medium. He is not worried.

Problems encountered

Problems do occur while carrying out such activities. Dr. Rauniyar did not like to go into the details. But he did mention that when Bal Bhojan started at Makhan Tole, the shop owners in the locality objected to the noise and the dirt that came with the children every evening and every morning. The street children even used filthy language. They spat and made things dirty without any thought. The people in the neighborhood were upset. But he knew that the children were like that and these were the very points he wanted to control. He was gathering them to improve them. Giving money would not improve them. He found that food was a powerful tool in this. He gained their loyalty to him through the food. He instructed them not to use foul language and not to make the location dirty. Now the children obey any instruction he gives them. If any of the children does anything serious repeatedly, the child is excluded from receiving a meal. This has happened a few times. One of the children even cut and destroyed his motorcycle seat as a "revenge" for being excluded from the meal. Greater punishments would not do well.

He has not used any other method. He has not raised his hand to any of the children. Dr. Rauniyar had to buy a new seat for the motorcycle. It took him six weeks to six months to gain control over the difficult children. Things are normal now.

Another problem he related was that after some time of conducting morning classes of Bal Shikhhya (Children's Education) in a room at Itumbahal in association with a school, the people of the neighborhood objected to the noise and the dirt that the children created. He had to leave the room. No house owner would let her house for classes for street children. So he took the class to his home for about nine months. The children centered around Makhan Tole area had to walk a fair distance daily to reach his house at Tahachal around 5 a.m. Later he found a donor to pay for the rent of a room.

“Behavioral attitudes are learned in the family. This passes from parents to children. I got these from my parents. So many of the children develop bad attitudes or learn bad habits at home. Nevertheless, such attitudes can be improved.”

Lessons Learned

1. Philanthropy is an instinct; follow it when you get the urge.
2. Do not wait when you feel like doing good for those who are less privileged; do what you can and let your cause be known to others personally and through other methods of communication. Like-minded people will

join you.

3. Nepalis will contribute funds for philanthropy if they like the cause and find a trustworthy manager.
4. Your integrity is important if you want to get the trust of others for the charity you pursue. You should trust others too.
5. Give love and you will be loved too; hatred invites more hatred.
6. Food served with love improves the attitude and behavior of those who are resigned to living in the streets without opportunities for regular eating. This can help them to return to families and attain self-esteem.
7. Do not expect everyone to follow your own faith; respect others' faith even if such people may be destitute.
8. Children are beautiful even when they appear dirty; learn to look beyond their physical appearances.
9. Do not be ambitious with plans and strategies; do not try to plan everything under your own control but be sensitive to indications observed and act on them as required.
10. Compassion begets support.
11. Philanthropy and religion of humanity go together. ▀

The Executive Committee of Bal Bhojan

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Notes

- 1 Bikram Sambat (Bikram Era), Nepali system of reckoning year which is 57 years ahead of the C. E., Christian Era, based on the Gregorian calendar.
- 3 NPR: Nepali Rupees
- 4 School Leaving Certificate: certificate of graduation from secondary school
- 5 Nepali month covering June 15 to July 15
- 6 First month of the Nepali calendar; generally covers April 14 to May 13 of the Gregorian calendar

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Case 11

Paropkar Sanstha

Background

The cholera epidemic of 1945 in Kathmandu, which killed a large number of people, traumatized one social worker in particular, the late Dayabirsingh Kansakar. He was one of the volunteers treating and helping the epidemic victims. The horrible scene of people dying of cholera made a deep scar in his psyche. He could not sleep well for about a month as he kept having visions of dead bodies. He became an insomniac.

When he recovered from insomnia with the treatment of a Sri Lankan monk, he started thinking about what could be done to prevent such epidemic in the future. To begin with, he kept a few medicines in his own house and started providing free first aid and primary health care services to the people in the community. The demand gradually increased. He then decided to scale up the services by collecting donations from the local people. Initially, a few donation boxes were kept at local shops. When he saw that people were becoming interested in giving, he increased the number of donation boxes at the shops. He also mobilized local youths for volunteer service in providing health services to the local people. Because of their selfless and sincere service, the volunteers became very popular in the

community.

When it became difficult for just one individual to manage the expanded services of Paropkar in the community, Kansakar, the founder, realized the need to institutionalize it. He made a petition to the then Rana hereditary government to establish Paropkar as an institution. A decree was issued to him that the petition would meet the approval of the prime minister if it was supported by five persons with their signatures. At a time when a gathering of five people in public places was considered against the law, the task of bringing five signatories in was a challenge for Kansakar. This was a time when a tacit movement had already penetrated among the middle class of Kathmandu to demand democracy, with the King functioning as the head of state and not the hereditary clan of the Ranas ruling the country as prime ministers. Any public request for a new institution was considered a threat to the ruling prime minister and his courtiers. Kansakar managed to get five signatories from among his relatives, and finally, the organization was registered as Paropkar Aushadhalaya, a philanthropic house for medicines (a pharmacy) in 1947 C.E. Interestingly, when the Rana prime minister was briefed about the purposes of the organization, he was

very happy about it and donated NPR 40,00 from the family privy purse. The donation was a great encouragement to the founders and volunteers of Paropkar. Initially Paropkar was allowed to establish itself as Paropkar Aushadhalaya, a charitable pharmacy, but not as a social welfare organization. The permission letter had clearly limited its scope of work to health services. The royal family and the governing prime minister were so impressed with the work carried out by Paropkar that in 1950, King Tribhuvan (grandfather of the present king) with all his three sons (Mahendra, Himalaya and Basundhara) attended the second general assembly of Paropkar. It is even said that after looking at the work done by Paropkar, the relationship between King Tribhuvan and Dayabirsingh Kansakar so developed that the Paropkar founder even convinced his volunteers to support King Tribhuvan in ushering in democracy in Nepal as desired by the King and his congress supporters.

Later in 1951, after the advent of democracy, Paropkar Aushadhalaya was renamed Paropkar Sanstha, a charitable institution, since Paropkar had taken on other philanthropic activities which had been growing because of the need in the society. It was not just a pharmacy anymore.

Organizational Structure and Staff

Paropkar is run by a 15-member executive committee which is elected from among the members of the organization. Each of the 10 district offices of Paropkar sends five members from whom elections are made for the executive committee. One representative from the orphanage also participates in the election. After the 15 members are elected, the position of chairman, vice-chairman and other executives are selected among them. Paropkar has 10 district offices.

Paropkar has a total of 28 full-time staff including the staff working at the orphanage. All the staff are based in Kathmandu. The volunteers manage the district level activities. The annual budget of Paropkar is NPR 3 million. The annual expenditure of the orphanage alone is around NPR 1 million.

Paropkar's Services

The major products and services offered by the Paropkar Sanstha are an orphanage, school, ambulance, and primary health care.

Orphanage

The orphanage was started in 1952 with 25 children. The number increased to 50 after six months. At present, there are 52 male orphans. All the orphans are given "Nepali" as their surname. This is done to develop a feeling of equality and long-term camaraderie among them as

they come from different castes or ethnicity. Secondly, since some of these boys are brought from the street when they are very small, it is difficult to ascertain their exact surnames.

The orphanage provides 10 years' education to the children. After they complete their secondary school, they leave the orphanage and make their living independently. Since in the Nepalese context it is difficult to have a reasonable quality of life independently with that level of education, Paropkar also helps them find sponsors for their higher education. There is an alumni of graduates from this orphanage. Some of them are very successful professionals, such as physician, engineer, pilot and diplomat.

School

With the objective of providing education to orphans, Paropkar started a lower secondary school in 1952, together with the establishment of the orphanage. In the beginning from 1952 to 1960, the orphanage school had only classes 1-7 with three vocational elective subjects: shoemaking, tailoring and knitting sweaters. Many of the graduates developed their careers in the areas of their elective subjects. But some of them went in the wrong direction becoming pickpockets, burglars and gangsters. Paropkar realized that some of its graduates took the wrong direction because of not having enough education, or having left the orphanage as adolescents, they lacked guidance. Paropkar

upgraded the school to class 10. This meant that the orphans spent four to five more years at the orphanage for more education and remained under care and guidance of Paropkar while they were still in their formative years. This would reduce the chances of the children taking the wrong course in life when they came out of the Paropkar orphanage. So in 1960, the lower secondary school was upgraded to secondary school offering education up to grade 10.

The school also admitted children from outside the orphanage. The purpose was to give the orphans an opportunity to mix with children who had parents so that they could see that they were not so different from children with parents, that they need not be frustrated or behave in irresponsible ways due to the social stigma of being orphans and that they had an equal opportunity to grow up with dignity to become normal citizens in society. Their feeling of inferiority would fade away. However, in the beginning very few external children were brought for admission to the school. This was because of the stigma that the school was for orphans of unknown parentage or caste and thus were untouchables. Parents did not wish to have their children associate with orphans of "unknown birth." To overcome this problem, Kansakar suggested that Paropkar members bring their own children for admittance to the school. This convinced the people that orphans were also good children and that there was nothing wrong with sending their chil-

dren to study with them. In the years that followed, the number of children in the school whose parents were outside the Paropkar family increased tremendously. When one of the orphans secured the first class first position in the school leaving certificate examinations in 1967, the parents and the neighborhood's attitude towards the orphans and the orphanage became even more positive. Paropkar members feel it as one of their great achievements to bring about this change in the social attitude of many people in Kathmandu.

At present the school has 1,300 students. The school has produced a number of national level record-breaking students. One such student was Dambar Bahadur Nepali who is a very well-known engineer of national repute. He is one of the board members of Paropkar Sanstha.

Ambulance service

Paropkar first started its ambulance service in 1954, receiving two cars as donation from a Rana official. It was the first one to do so as an organization in Nepal. It provides ambulance service to people who need urgent medical attention at a health establishment. Later when the Nepal Red Cross Society started providing ambulance service to most districts of Nepal through its branch offices, the government was said to have asked Paropkar to stop its ambulance service. This was an absurd suggestion as Kathmandu did not have enough ambulances despite the Nepal Red Cross Society's and other or-

ganizations' efforts. Paropkar did not comply with the government's suggestion.

Blood donation service

Dayabirsingh Kansakar, the founder of Paropkar, is said to be the first person to donate blood willingly and openly in Nepal for the benefit of persons not related to him. Paropkar Sanstha started and organized blood donation service in Nepal when the majority of the people were reluctant to donate blood for fear that this would make them weak. Many blood donors would keep their donation a secret from families and friends for fear of being scolded for donating their blood. It was difficult to get blood when required. When blood was needed in a hospital, they used to call on Paropkar. Paropkar would send volunteers to the hospital to donate blood for the patient in need. After checking the blood group of the volunteers, the person with the right type would be chosen. Photos and details of the blood donors were recorded. Thus, Paropkar built up a large list of volunteer blood donors. Later, due to rising economic need, many porters started making themselves available to donate blood for money. Many of them "donated" every two to three months and wanted to "donate" even more frequently even when it was not right to do so. To identify healthy blood donors, lend dignity to blood donations and prevent any anomalous situation, Paropkar introduced the system of blood donor cards. Paropkar continued to provide this service with pre-

identified and listed blood donors until 1975 and a large number of volunteers donated blood. Paropkar also planned to establish a blood bank, but when the blood bank of the Nepal Red Cross Society became well established, Paropkar stopped the service in 1975 as it was already easily available to needy patients.

Primary health care

Currently Paropkar is working in 34 districts of Nepal in the field of primary health care. It provides two types of primary health care services—Prathamik Upchar Kendra (first aid center) and health clinic. It has 168 first aid centers and 17 health clinics across Nepal.

▸ First Aid Centers

Volunteers who have received training on first aid run the first aid centers. Paropkar provides first aid kits to each center and refills these kits every six months. In some districts, the local people themselves refill the kits by raising funds locally. Each center has a *pradhan sewak* (chief volunteer) and a nine-member executive committee. To establish a first aid center in any community there should be a minimum of 25 members. The entry fee for each member is NPR 10 and the annual membership fee is NPR 5. The individual membership is given for the first five years and if the member proves himself committed, his membership is extended. The centers are usually located at the chief volunteer's house and a signboard is placed there saying "Prathamik Upchar

Kendra."

▸ Health Clinics

The health clinics provide treatment facilities for illnesses that are more serious than those that can be treated by first aid. Physicians support these clinics. In some places where physicians are not available, senior health assistants (one level lower than a university graduate in medicine) run these facilities. The clinics are held for two hours daily. Paropkar pays the remuneration of the physician at a rate equivalent to that of the government. In some places, funds are also raised locally to support these clinics. For example, in Sarlahi district, fees in kind (rice and other food grains) are accepted from patients (or their families). In addition, they collect NPR 1 from each household every month to support the clinic. Any community interested in establishing a Paropkar health clinic should offer at least some space (even if it is only one room) for the clinic. These clinics are established only in places where there are no government health facilities. The oldest Paropkar health clinic outside Kathmandu is in Dhorpatan, Baglung in Western Nepal.

Grants

During the Panchayat period (1960-1990) of governance in Nepal, Paropkar used to receive grants from the government through the then National Social Services Co-ordination Council (NSSCC) for its three activities: Philanthropic Health Services (NPR 330,000 every year),

Philanthropic Orphanage (NPR 140,000 per year through Bal Kalyan Samanwaya Samiti), and Philanthropic Orphanage Extension at Duwakot, Bhaktapur (NPR 100,000 per year). In total, it used to receive NPR 570,000 per year until 1994. In addition, the Paropkar orphanage received an annual donation of NPR 6,000 from the late King Birendra from His Majesty's own privy purse. Currently Paropkar receives NPR 100,000 from the Social Welfare Council (SWC, which replaced the NSSCC) and an NPR 250,000 grant from the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare.

Fund Raising

Paropkar raises funds from various sources. However, at present its main source of funds is shop room rent.

1. Rent of the shop rooms and conference hall

Paropkar has built a number of shop rooms and a conference hall on its land. All these are rented out. The annual income from this is over NPR 2 million.

2. Grain sale

Paropkar has some farmlands donated by philanthropists. These farmlands are leased out to farmers for growing crops on share basis. This yields around NPR 10,000 every year.

3. Endowment fund

Paropkar has over 2 million rupees in its endowment fund, which accrues around NPR 200,000 as interest. The

major donors of the endowment funds were the Indian ambassador to Nepal (NPR 0.8 million) and the Chinese prime minister (NPR 50,000) when they visited the Paropkar premises.

4. Donations from occasional visitors

Visitors from both Nepal and abroad donate money for orphanage. Two groups, one from Japan and the other from Singapore, visit every year. The Japanese group provides an annual scholarship for college level education to four students who score the highest in the national secondary school examinations. The Singapore group donates money to buy furniture, computers and other necessities for the orphanage.

4. Donations from orphanage graduates

Graduates from the orphanage who have become successful professionals occasionally donate furniture and other necessities to Paropkar. They donate both in cash and in kind.

5. Donations in kind

Individuals and organizations, both from Nepal and abroad, donate various items to Paropkar. Cars for the two ambulances, the first ever to start in Nepal, were received from a Nepali donor. Patients in Sarlahi district in South Nepal have also donated rice and other food grains. The Rotary Club of Kathmandu and a German organization jointly donated 26 beds for the orphanage. Teo Baba, a Swiss citizen, donated 10 ceiling fans and two typewriters. An American visitor donated a VCR. A Japanese group

brings clothes and stationery for the students of the orphanage every year. In addition, people also sometimes offer meals to the children of the orphanage.

Paropkar has also received land and houses as donations in different parts of the country. For example, a woman donated an old house in the central part of Kathmandu. The house costs millions of rupees at the present price.

5. Membership fee

The local groups or branches of Paropkar collect a membership fee, which is spent in the respective branches. The entry fee is NPR 10 and the annual fee is NPR 5.

Lessons Learned

1. Transparency in the use of funds is essential to win donor trust.
2. A grant or fund should be accepted only if it does not affect the principles and identity of the organization. There was an instance when Paropkar refused a grant in order to maintain its identity. Before the Red Cross Society was established in Nepal, representatives of the International Red Cross Society visited in 1964 to provide Red Cross support to Nepal. They were very impressed with the works of Paropkar, particularly the primary health care services in remote rural areas. They agreed to support Paropkar but proposed to change its name to "Red Cross." Paropkar declined the offer on that condition.

3. Paropkar should not accept any grant to implement donors' projects on their conditions. It should accept only such grants or funds that support its own projects.
4. Since fund raising is becoming increasingly difficult, Paropkar is emphasizing thriftiness by reducing expenses. Nowadays, the giving attitude of people is declining due to degradation in moral values. Moral values are very important for the prosperity of any individual or organization.
5. Success should not be measured by the number of patients treated or services provided. Treating a large number of patients indicates that the health status of the community is poor. So Paropkar's efforts should be directed towards preventing sickness by creating awareness about hygiene and sanitation.
6. Criticism is bound to occur when philanthropic activities are carried out, but this should not deter an organization from moving on its course. Every attempt should be made to eliminate the causes of criticism if they are valid.
7. Keeping up the pace with developments in communications, a philanthropic organization also needs to maintain or enhance its visibility in the same way as other organizations, but this also requires resources.

Future Plans

Paropkar plans to:

1. admit female children and increase the admittance of orphans to 500 in its extension at Duwakot, Bhaktapur district (324 ropanis or over 16 hectares of lans);
2. establish a Briddha Ashram, a home for the aged, in Kathmandu;
3. request the government to return the Prasuti Griha (maternity hospital), which initially belonged to Paropkar;
4. start community-based health services so as to make the services more responsive to the community. ▶

Case 12

Team Organising Local Institute (TOLI)

Background

Team Organising Local Institute (TOLI) was established in 1993 by the former staff of the Dhaulagiri Irrigation Development Project (DIDP) when the latter developed an approach to implement its activities through NGOs. TOLI was further encouraged when it got another big project for implementation from the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) in 1995. Thus TOLI got one project after another and gradually emerged as a prominent NGO in the district. Currently TOLI has eight projects in the fields of agriculture, natural resources, irrigation and micro-credit. It is working in 16 districts of the Western Development Region (WDR) and two districts of the Mid-Western Development Region (MWDR).

Starting with 16 staff, TOLI currently has a staff of 102. Many of them have received training and exposure visits abroad. The annual budget of NPR 1.15 million in 1993 has increased to NPR 6.5 million in 2001. The current value of its total assets is around NPR 3 million. Its physical assets include two jeeps, four motorbikes and two bicycles. In addition, it has six computers, a photocopying machine, a video camera and an overhead projector.

TOLI has 10 members. All of them

are professionals. Padma K. Rana, the general secretary, said, "Since this is a professional organization, we do not want to have a large number of members. We have given memberships to only committed professionals."

Motivation

"The satisfaction we get from helping the community people for their empowerment is our main motivation for working in TOLI," said Padma Kiran. Other factors that serve to motivate TOLI's staff are opportunities for career development, freedom in work, no bureaucracy and a feeling of ownership in the projects and the organization.

Organizational Structure

TOLI consists of a general assembly, an executive board, a steering committee and a multi-disciplinary committee. The board with its seven members provides policy guidelines based on the mandate given by the general assembly. The steering committee looks after the day-to-day management of the organization and has eight members, each overseeing one department (organization, training, finance, social welfare, monitoring and evaluation, coordination, information and publica-

tion, and foreign affairs). The head of the steering committee is the executive director. The role of the multi-disciplinary team is to advise the project teams working in different fields based on its expertise and experiences.

In the beginning, the management of the organization was dependent entirely on the executive director. Even though the charter of the organization stipulated for election of the executive committee, it was not followed in practice. Decision making was not participatory and transparent since the donor influenced much of these. Only a few persons knew about the budget of the projects. There was no system of staff evaluation. All this has changed. The elections of the board and the steering committee are held every year. The routine decisions are made by the steering committee while the board makes decisions of long-term importance.

In order to prevent leadership crisis, second- and third-line leaders are trained to take over the frontline leadership at any time. The cadre of the second line has led the current board for the last two years. The heads of most departments belong to the second-line leadership.

TOLI's Experience with Donors and Grant Fund

In 1999, TOLI had a big crisis when one of its major donors put pressure on it to follow its conditions for the grants. TOLI had been working with the donor for four years and at the time of agree-

ment for the next phase, TOLI was asked to carry out the same volume of work with drastically reduced staff and salaries. "It was shocking to us. It was a big blow to our self-esteem. We started questioning ourselves if we were not becoming slaves of the donor," said the general secretary.

The issue was discussed in the executive committee and in the general staff meeting. Many of the staff viewed it as a humiliation to TOLI and suggested not working with the donor under such conditions. The views of the management and the staff were conveyed to the donor. TOLI was hoping that the donor would not be very firm with its conditions, as TOLI was the only organization with the expertise to implement the project. Contrary to its expectation, the donor remained firm in its stand and refused to negotiate further with TOLI. Instead, the donor approached TOLI's staff individually for hiring. Initially no one was interested but when the donor lured them with promises of higher training abroad, some of the staff succumbed and accepted the offers.

Since this was TOLI's largest project, most of its staff were supported by this project. When the incident occurred, TOLI encountered a serious financial crisis. It had a saving of only around NPR 500,000 at the time. Therefore, it decided that senior staff would work without salaries until they received some major projects and the supporting staff would be paid only a minimum subsistence allowance. It took about a year for TOLI to recover from this crisis.

From this crisis, TOLI learnt a big lesson, that it should not be fully dependent on grant funding. It should rather use more of the local resources than external resources for its activities. It discussed with the District Development Committee (DDC, the locally elected body for local governance) chairpersons of three districts (Parbat, Kaski and Tanahu) on how TOLI's expertise could be utilized in mobilizing local resources for development. It also developed linkages with local NGO networks such as SAP-Nepal Network, Permaculture Network and Micro-credit for Women (MCW) Network for local resource mobilization.

The general secretary said, "This crisis taught us a lesson about the sustainability of the organization. We made a decision to contribute 15 to 30 percent of our salaries to a fund which can be utilized during crisis. We also made a policy to charge staff when they used office equipment and vehicles for personal purposes.

"Before the crisis, TOLI's image was that of an 'NGO for making money,' although we just had NPR 500,000 with us then and were not even able to pay staff salaries. However, during the crisis we changed its image to that of an organization committed to mobilizing local resources to empower the local people."

TOLI's Efforts to Promote Community Self-Reliance

TOLI started a community-based self-reliance project at the request of a community in Eklekhet of Tanahu district. The community has 184 households. The land is dry. TOLI assisted the community to bring piped-in water from a small source at a distant location. Now they have communal taps for drinking water. Now women and children do not have to waste time and tire themselves fetching water. Rain-dependent summer maize and cowpeas are the only crops that the subsistence farmers of this community can grow. There is still a problem of water for growing vegetables. TOLI also takes the villagers on exposure visits. TOLI assists with literacy and sanitation programs too. It also supported installing methane gas plants using cattle manure. These have saved many women from having to go too far looking for wood fuel.

TOLI, on its own initiative, is trying to develop a model community for self-reliance through "system change" in Eklekhet. The Nepal Permaculture Group (NPG) provided a five-day training on sustainable agriculture. Two resource centers have been established based on sustainable agriculture system. These resource centers produce seedlings of off-season vegetables for distribution to the growers and teach the community about preparing geet mal¹ (manure cum insecticide) and chiya mal² (organic manure). In this community, people are gradually becoming self-sufficient in vegetable production.

Before the establishment of the resource center, the villagers used to buy vegetables from an external vendor³ on alternative days and had to spend a relatively big sum on vegetables.

The community has three women's groups which run saving and credit programs and vegetable nurseries. A number of visitors, international and national, come to see the activity of the community every year. These visitors also donate money to the community, and so far, the total amount of the donation is around NPR 70,000. Having seen the enthusiasm and commitment of the Eklekhet community towards the program, NPG has shown greater interest in supporting the community based on what the community can do for itself.

TOLI's role in Eklekhet is to act as a facilitator while allowing community people to take the lead in their own program activities. TOLI provides guidance only when the local community commits mistakes. As the communities become empowered, TOLI will gradually leave them on their own. The ownership of the program belongs to the communities. In addition, it is TOLI's wish that it not be the only organization to work in the area but invites other organizations to come help develop Eklekhet also.

Fund Raising

Because of its bitter past experience with grant funding, TOLI has given special focus to local resource mobilization

and has been using several methods for internal fund raising.

1. Honorary Members' Contribution

Individuals who contribute a substantial donation either in cash or in kind are offered honorary membership. Minoru Yoshida, a Japanese national and honorary member, has donated NPR 200,000.

2. General Membership Fee

There are 10 general members. Each pays NPR 150 per year. A total of NPR 1,500 is raised from the general membership every year.

3. Trainings

TOLI offers training in many areas, such as permaculture (fives days), off-season vegetables (two days), irrigation management (one week), and gender and development (three days). The rates for these trainings are NPR 20,000 for permaculture, NPR 10,000 for off-season vegetables, NPR 35,000 for irrigation management, and NPR 13,000 for gender and development.

Fifteen percent of the total cost of the training is placed in the core fund of the organization.

4. Quarterly Reports and Publications with Advertisements

TOLI regularly brings out a quarterly publication entitled *Shuva Yatra*, with the objective of sharing its experiences in different activities and updating government and non-government organizations and donors about its ongoing activities. The publication also carries advertisements,

which are a source of fund. TOLI raises around NPR 30,000 from the advertisements after deducting its cost of around NPR 7,000.

5. Core Fund: Staff Contribution and Surplus from Project Overheads

A core fund was established to run TOLI's own projects, meet exigencies and counter crises should they occur again in the future. The staff contribute 15 to 30 percent of their salaries to this fund. TOLI charges 15 percent overhead to the sponsors of projects. The surplus from the overheads is also collected in the core fund.

6. Vehicle Rental

TOLI has two vehicles. In addition to office use, these vehicles are also rented for private use by the staff for social purposes like weddings, picnics, and so on.

7. Computer and Photocopy Machine Rental

The private use of the computer and photocopy machine is charged.

In addition to the above fund raising methods, TOLI, explores the available resources in government organizations such as the Agriculture Development Office, Cottage Industry, District Irrigation Office, Women Development Office, and local bodies such as the municipality, the District Development Committee (DDC) and the Village Development Committees (VDCs). It supports the community people by providing information about these resources that are available in government organizations and local bodies and helps mobilize these resources in their

communities.

Lessons Learned

1. The projects should not be completely dependent on external donors. Such projects risk failure, particularly in their continuity. The projects should be sustained in the long run with the community's own resources.
2. TOLI should not accept any projects for financial gain. It should take only such projects that benefit the community and address the needs of the community. It should also not accept all the conditions of the donors. It should argue with the donors if the projects are planned only for their own interest and not for the community.
3. The software part of development should be given high importance. TOLI has been successful in creating awareness of development issues and in raising the confidence of the community people in interacting with outsiders.
4. TOLI should specialize in just a few sectors or fields so that it is recognized in that particular sector or field. At the same time, it believes that the integrated approach of development is essential for the balanced and sustainable development of the community.
5. TOLI does not completely leave the area or community after the comple-

tion of its projects. It continues doing follow-up activities until the introduced activities are sustained. In order to do this, sometimes, TOLI does the follow-up activities at its own expense.

6. In order to develop the communities with the organization's own internal resources, the development workers should keep their mind away from luxuries. If the development workers assess sincerely how much they have changed their society with the donors' fund, it is not very significant. Donor funds have made development workers "lame" (dependent on the donors).

Future Plans

TOLI plans to:

1. develop TOLI as a learning center of natural resource conservation at regional and national levels;
2. sell the training packages of its expertise in the areas of gender, natural resources and other areas of development as expertise develops;
3. replicate the low-cost technology developed in Eklekhet; and
4. construct a training hall in the community where it has worked for a long period. This will help the community to organize training for themselves and to generate income by renting it out to other communities and organizations. ■

Notes

- 1 It is made of the leaves of the Khirro (Sepium insigne), Neem (Azadirachta indica), Titepati (Artemesia vulgaris), Asuro (Adhatoda vasica), Simali (Vitex negundo), Sisnu (Urtica dioca), Aankhe timur (Xanthoxyllem spp.), placed in a gunny bag and dipped in cattle urine in a drum. This takes about a month to get ready for use as organic fertilizer. It kills insects and pests and provides nutrients to crops.
- 2 It is manure made from cow dung and water mixed in a ratio of 1:4.
- 3 Mahangi Lal, ("expensive person"), was the nickname given to the vegetable vendor by the community. He used to sell vegetables on credit and collect his money once or twice a month. On average, a household used to buy vegetables worth NPR 500 to 1,000 in a month.

Case 13

Forum for Rural Women's Ardency for Development (FORWARD)

Introduction

Established in 1996, FORWARD is a non-government, non-profit organization working in the eastern region of Nepal with its head office in Sunsari district. FORWARD aims at empowering women and disadvantaged people to make their lives better. It organizes women in groups, provides training to build their capacities and helps them in executing development activities.

The idea came from a couple from Tharu community from two different regions—the husband from western region and the wife from the eastern region of Nepal. Both were college graduates and the wife was working at the Social Welfare Council at a senior position. When they both came to the home district of the wife, they saw poor Tharu women selling subsistence/tenant-farm products at the weekly market, but surprisingly, saving little money. The couple thought that if these poor women only learned to save a part of the money from the weekly sales, they could use the money to bring about significant positive change in their lives. With this idea in mind, they, together with other local women, registered an organization to work with these groups of women.

In the beginning, the couple provided

managerial and financial support from Kathmandu to the local board members to run the organization. However, the organization could not grow because of the absence of leadership locally. It was a difficult period for the organization, as it did not have any source of its own fund. Later the wife resigned from her job at the Social Welfare Council and came to live in her home district to support the organization full-time.

Dinesh Chaudhary, executive director of FORWARD, related: "There was no fund in the organization. We had nothing. We used to get telephone calls in Kathmandu from here. So we had to send money from Kathmandu. We used to send some money for the house rent, telephone, etc., and the board members over here would also contribute. Our secretary used to work in a factory; she helped us a lot. She contributed four to five thousand. It continued like that for five to six months... Our chairperson finally decided to leave the work at the Social Welfare Council and come here and struggle to strengthen the organization. Since so many people had already been mobilized, they all had their hopes pinned on us. By that time, we had already been involved directly with about 300 to 400 women. So the chairperson resigned from Social Welfare

Council and came here. She was working in Social Welfare Council comfortably as a section officer.”

Initially they formed and worked with 13 saving groups of women, which later increased to 60. They raised NPR 13,000 by organizing cultural shows, film shows and collecting individual donations. The fund was used to conduct training on sewing and knitting to the members of the saving group, the first ever training provided by the organization. Then they conducted 20 literacy classes: 10 each in Sunsari and Morang districts with financial support from PACT. Next, they implemented a sanitation program with the support of UNICEF. Thus, they gradually received one pledge of support after another to run projects for the local communities. Their sources of funds so far include VDC2, DDC3, UNICEF, PACT4, PLAN5, The Asia Foundation, Nepal Rastra Bank and the Social Welfare Council. The development activities implemented from their support comprise adult and child literacy classes, legal education classes, sanitation awareness and saving programs.

Physical Assets of the Organization

FORWARD has three computers with e-mail and internet access, two motorbikes, 13 bicycles and some furniture. In addition, it has a training hall and accommodations for 30 persons.

Current Activities of FORWARD

Health and Sanitation Program

This program is being implemented in six VDCs with the joint funding of UNICEF and VDCs. Under this program, the NGO's staff train FCHVs (female community health volunteers) of all the wards of six VDCs on basic health and sanitation for four days. These NGO staff members were trained by professional public health experts. Each of these trained FCHVs was provided with a kit with general medicines. The project also established a revolving fund of NPR 20,000 with the contribution of NPR 10,000 each from UNICEF and VDC for the purpose of refilling the medical kits.

Out-of-School Program for Children

This is being implemented in 10 VDCs of Sunsari district and is funded by UNICEF. In this program, literacy classes are conducted for children who are out of school. These children are later admitted into schools at the grades appropriate for them.

Parent Orientation

Realizing that lack of knowledge about child nutrition among parents is a major cause of the poor health of children, UNICEF and PLAN have funded a program to orient parents on child growth, prenatal check-up of pregnant women, iodized salt and vitamin A. The NGO staff holds formal discussions with the parents

using flip charts and other teaching materials to facilitate the discussions.

Village Bank Program

FORWARD has 126 saving groups of 3,000 women in Sunsari and Morang districts. PACT Nepal has provided NPR 100 per group as management expenses. FORWARD plays the role of an intermediary to merge these small saving groups to form a village bank.

Legal Education Program

FORWARD has been providing legal education to the women with the financial support of The Asia Foundation. This program is also being run in Sunsari and Morang.

Decentralized Planning for the Child Program

With the funding from the District Development Committees (DDC), FORWARD has been implementing various programs for children in Morang and Sunsari.

Structure of the Organization

The general assembly is the highest authority of the organization. It meets annually to approve the annual program of the organization. The assembly also elects the board members of the organization. The board consists of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer

and seven members. The board gives policy directives to the management of the organization. The executive director looks after the day-to-day management of the organization.

There are 328 members of the organization; all except 26 are women. In the beginning, there were 1,600 members as all those who formed the saving groups were given membership. But later, many of them did not renew their memberships and the organization also realized that a large number of members did not help in the effective management of the organization.

The Role of Board in Fund Raising

All the board members are women from Tharu community except one, who is from Rai community and a nurse by profession working at BPKIHS6, Dharan. There are four departments in the organization: education and child development, information and institutional development, health and sanitation, and savings and credit. Two board members look after each of the four departments. There are three board members from among the paid staff of the organization.

The board members, besides their specified responsibilities, also help in raising funds from personal sources in times of crises. Some of them have even sold their gold jewelry to meet the administrative costs at the initial stages of the organization. They have such a strong feeling of ownership for the organization that

even now they are ready to sell their personal properties to financially support it.

The Staff and Their Roles

There are 18 staff members in FORWARD, 11 of whom are full-time and seven part-time. FORWARD had to lay off ten staff members when one of the projects was phased out.

Many of the staff are from Tharu community. According to the organizational policy of FORWARD, it should hire the staff from the same community for whom it is working. This is because the person is already familiar with the people and culture of the community. Outsiders need some time to understand the community before (s)he can start the work of the project. Secondly, the trained man-

power remains in the community even after the project is over. This can help sustain some of the activities and stimulate development of other non-governmental organizations in the area.

Dinesh Chaudhary: “We try to make sure that the staff are from within the community, from the VDC itself. We insist on having a staff from the VDC in which we have the project... As most of the target population are Chaudhary (Tharu), the staff will be similar. But if we do not find anyone, then it is a different matter.”

However, FORWARD realized later that having all the staff from Tharu community was also a problem, as they faced difficulty in dealing with non-Tharu-speaking people at meetings, trainings, and other project works. They

In the beginning, because of the language difference, there were difficulties in receiving telephone calls and in receiving guests. They were not able to speak Nepali clearly. So they were reluctant to speak with outsiders. We received a lot of comments about this from our donors and implementing partners. Then we decided to make it compulsory to speak Nepali from ten to five in the office. The community complained that we were working with Tharu and Madhesi but we had made Nepali compulsory in the office. But we only did this three to four months so that the staff would be able to speak clearly in Nepali. Some of the staff had a lot of problems, three to four would not speak at all. But slowly they have improved a lot. Now they are able to take part in discussions. It was all right within the office but there used to be a problem when someone from outside visited us. Just like we have problems in expressing in English, they had the same problem with Nepali; they could not express everything that was on their minds. There was very good improvement once we made Nepali compulsory for three to four months. We started by asking the staff to speak in Nepali or if possible in English within the office and only use the local language when people from the community came. Now the staff can speak Nepali quite clearly.

(Dinesh Chaudhary, Executive Director of FORWARD)

could not communicate well with staff in Nepali. So, the board decided to hire staff from the non-Tharu community also so that the staff members from the Tharu community could learn the Nepali language from their colleagues as they worked together.

Fund Raising Activities

Renting the training hall

FORWARD has a facility for residential training. It has accommodations and catering facilities for up to 30 participants. It charges NPR 500 per day for the hall and NPR 200 per day per participant for food and lodging. It earns around NPR 100,000 each year from renting out the training hall.

Trainings

FORWARD provides training mainly on district level sanitation. It also provides training on child nutrition, health and sanitation, facilitation of adult literacy, savings and credit program, PRA and gender and development. Such training is provided mostly to the members of the community, NGO staff and volunteers. The training on gender and development is also given to district level line agencies. The duration of the training ranges from two days to two weeks. The executive director, Dinesh Chaudhary, is the resource person of the gender and sanitation training, while the board chairperson, Bhagawati Chaudhary, is the resource person for PRA, micro-finance and training

on other subjects. Dinesh Chaudhary attended one month-long international training on gender in India as NGO representative of the eastern region of Nepal. The training was organized and sponsored by UNICEF.

When the staff and volunteers of FORWARD work as resource persons on their own for outside organizations, they give 10 percent of their fees to the organization.

Staff contribution

The staff contribute 10 percent of their salaries to FORWARD. At the time when there were 28 staff members, it used to receive around NPR 9,000 per month from staff contribution. At present, the staff contribution is three to four thousand rupees per month.

Overhead

FORWARD charges overhead fees only for donor-funded projects. The overhead of FORWARD ranges from 5 to 14 percent of the total cost and depends on the size, length and the nature of the projects. It charges a lower overhead cost to large and long-term projects, while it is the reverse for small and short-term projects.

Experience with Using Grant Funds

- ▶ It is easy to enter the community but difficult to continue the program

When there is assured funding for a program, people show great interest in participating in the project. It is also easy to build a relationship with the community. The project will have no financial constraints and can be run for the whole period planned. However, once the funding stops, it may be difficult to continue the program.

- ▶ Donor-funded projects may misuse resources

The community people may not be as serious in utilizing the donor funds as their own funds. An example is that of the case of saving groups. Before the program received a loan from Nepal Rastra Bank, the groups were functioning well. Its loan recovery rate was almost 100 percent. But when they later learned that the program had gotten a loan from Nepal Rastra Bank, people started borrowing amounts greater than their actual needs, using the borrowed money for purposes other than what they had been requested for and not paying the loan back when it was due.

- ▶ Donor-funded projects help in producing skilled resource persons

This is true for both the NGO and the community. The projects train people in identifying their needs, and planning, implementing and evaluating programs. These trainings are essential but difficult to organize in the case of activities carried

out with the resources of the local community because of financial limitations. For example, if an NGO implements an education program with the donor fund, it also gets training on planning and implementing the program. This later becomes an asset of the NGO.

Problems Encountered

- ▶ Financial problems during the establishment of the organization

There was not enough money to start work in the community. Sometimes it was even difficult to pay the rent and telephone bills. Some staff worked without salaries for a few months. The board chairperson and other members sold their jewelry to run the organization. Dinesh Chaudhary related: "For about six months we had to struggle a lot to establish this organization... I remember the support from the savings groups. They understood that we were struggling for them. We had a small child at that time, about two and a half months old. We would go around talking about development carrying our child. For that reason, too, we were loved and cared for by the members of the community. They understood that we were living in a rented house. So they would help us by sometimes bringing vegetables and other items of food. This was good support from them. Three board members know about this. Lalitaji, Hiraji, and the president. It was a very difficult struggle at the time."

- ▶ Community people losing their faith and trust in FORWARD

Once the organization started becoming stronger, people started thinking that it was not working for the local community anymore but for those working within the organization. This feeling developed among the people when they saw the staff and volunteers of FORWARD traveling on motorbikes when they used to walk on foot. They also saw sophisticated furniture in the office. Dinesh Chaudhary said: "People here did not know about the functioning of an NGO. People used to be involved in business, or worked in factories; they did not have any thought about what an NGO does. So when we went to them with a project, they felt that we were doing all this for money and for ourselves only... People started traveling on vehicles. Motorcycles replaced bicycles. After this the feeling changed in the community. (They did not know that) because our work area had gotten bigger, we had to change our vehicle."

When the staff and board members bought land, the community people suspected FORWARD of misusing the money of the saving groups. FORWARD had to prove that it had not misappropriated their funds. Chaudhary related: "When we decided to stay and continue to work here... we decided we needed to buy land here, and so later we bought a piece of land. We did not have much money for purchasing the land. At my home, in Dang (western part of Nepal), we are the head family/clan of six settlements, a kind of

chief of the area from the times of our forefathers. We still have a lot in Dang, so I asked for support from my father and bought a piece of land here for NPR 200,000... Bhagwati (his wife) also insisted on purchasing the land. Our brother-in-law is a landlord in Morang. He also helped us in purchasing the land. At that time also the people thought that we had bought the land with their money... When the savings groups came with the complaint that we had bought the land with their money, the whole board roamed around the communities for 15 days... We felt like stopping the saving schemes. We felt that it was a waste and we could not do it. We had to call the presidents of every savings groups and prove to them that we had not used their money. We had to show them the sums of how much money everyone had deposited and how much interest accrued to each of them. And how and where the money had been kept. This was another struggle. Somehow we managed to pass through that phase too. At that time I was thinking, 'What am I doing here, why have I come here?'"

- ▶ Unhealthy competition with other local NGOs

As the popularity of FORWARD grew, the other local NGOs felt threatened. They tried to damage FORWARD's reputation in the communities. In VDCs where the elected officials were from the ruling Nepali Congress Party, they said FORWARD was communist. In communist VDCs, they said FORWARD worked for an

NPC member of parliament. They tried to cast doubt on Bhagawati Chaudhary's integrity, saying that being from outside the district, she would run away with the money of the saving groups. Said Dinesh Chaudhary: "We found that these lies were being spread by people from other NGOs who had no program of their own, did not know any concept about NGO... They would go to the savings group and tell them not to do the savings, as I would run away to Dang with their money... Our local vice-president and Lalitaji from Morang, they took the guarantee. They said that they were from here and would not go anywhere... We even thought of leaving the organization as we had the qualification and capacity to get jobs in any other NGOs. But we also felt that we were loved by many people and decided not to go. There was a lot of commitment from the friends in the board. When we decided to stay and continue to work they were very supportive.

"Some NGOs then started saying bad things about us to the donor agencies. 'FORWARD is mismanaging, why should you only give the programs to FORWARD?'... For example after we became the lead NGO on sanitation, we got a lot of comments. There is an NGO Coordination Committee in the district. They complained a lot. 'Why should FORWARD be given the role of lead NGO? On what basis?' There were many comments... All have some weaknesses, and the NGOs would take our weaknesses to the donor agencies and hide our positive points."

Lessons Learned

1. The key members of the NGOs should be from the local community.

People trust local people more than outsiders. They also feel comfortable about sharing their problems and conditions with local people. Likewise, the local NGO workers know the community people well, and do not have to spend much time in building relations with the communities.

2. A detailed study should be done before working in any community.

The study should cover such issues as population, demographic characteristics, socioeconomic characteristics, local resources and people's needs. This will help assess the feasibility of working in the community and also help design the appropriate programs that address the problems of the community.

3. Board members should be committed and willing to help financially.

This will enable the organization to survive any crisis that comes into it. Committed and motivated board members also provide encouragement and strength to the staff to work hard for the organization. Said Chaudhary: "The board should also have the capacity to contribute something. If all are penniless, then an NGO cannot be run. One should be able to contribute some time to the NGO. As I have already told you, if this NGO faces any problem, then the board members are ready to provide their gold and silver to

help continue the work. Such commitment is necessary. I have seen this in our board. This is why to fill in the gaps, for example, before this sanitation program, there was a gap of three months when we did not have any program, the board helped stabilize things. The staff too volunteered. The board also supported the management to some extent.”

Future Plans

1. Buying land for the construction of resource center

In order to make the organization independent, FORWARD is going to buy some 0.33 hectare of land worth NPR 300,000 at Bhambhri, seven kilometers west of the present office location. It aims to establish a resource center there within two years. The center will train the local people in various fields of development. This will be equipped with three to four staff and will run at very low cost, using local resources. It hopes that this will greatly reduce its present dependency on external donors.

The resource center will be constructed using the money from its institutional development fund. The fund has at present NPR 100,000. FORWARD is planning to raise the remaining money from its board members. The landlord has already been given NPR 10,000 as an advance and the process of purchasing has already been initiated to complete within three months.

2. Working entirely with own target groups

At present FORWARD runs many programs in the communities suggested by the donors. These are not integrated, they are sector-specific. This does not help improve the overall conditions of the local people. So in the future, FORWARD is going to suggest to donors that it wishes to work with target groups selected entirely by it so that the program fits completely with FORWARD's plans and can be continued even after the donors' support ceases.

3. Working as financial intermediary

FORWARD has been selected as a financial intermediary (FI) of a micro-finance scheme. It needs to obtain a license to operate as an FI. The board has already initiated the process for this.

4. Involving men in the board

At present, it has only women on its board. Realizing this was not being consistent with its organizational policy of gender equality, it is considering including men on the board. ▸

Executive Members of FORWARD

Chairperson:	Bhagawati Chaudhary
Vice=Chairperson:	Hira Tabadar
Secretary:	Raj Kumari Tabdar
Vice-Secretary:	Lila Yadav
Treasurer:	Lalita Chaudhary
Vice-Treasurer:	Kalabati Chaudhary
Member:	Sarita Chaudhary
Member:	Nirmala Chaudhary
Member:	Shyam Kumari Khan

Member: Rita Chaudhary

Member: Debu Rai

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Notes

- 1 One of the ethnic tribes/original inhabitants of some warm areas of Nepal
- 2 Village Development Committee: politically elected village-based committee for local governance
- 3 District Development Committee: politically elected body over all the VDCs in a district for local governance
- 4 An INGO supporting NGOs in social development and literacy
- 5 A child based INGO supporting social and community development
- 6 Bisheswar Prasad Koirala Institute of Health Sciences (with medical college and hospital)

Case 14

Purbanchal Anathashram

Introduction

The Purbanchal Anath Ashram was legally established in 2044 as a non-government, non-profit organization in the eastern region of Nepal in the city of Biratnagar. It provides a home for children who have been orphaned or deserted by their parents. It is based on “punya kamaunu (to earn a good deed).” In the beginning there were six babies who needed bottle-feeding and there were no helping hands then. Adequate funds were not available and Sita Pokhrel, the founder, had to go around begging and used to collect two to three rupees from an individual every month as “muthi daan.” All this was difficult work but there was no turning back for her.

Said Sita Pokhrel, the founder and chairperson of Purbanchal Anathashram: “I believe in ‘punya kamaunu’ in the most difficult way. That difficult way is good I believe. It is punya. I thought it was good work I was doing... I wanted to provide some sort of service. I used to see child labor at some people’s home and I felt pity. It is my own creation. I talked to my husband and he said: how could you do this kind of work? But I started anyway... I have never felt like that. This is because for earning punya, one needs to be able to sacrifice. Another thing is the mother-

hood. Once that happens you start loving the child and you will not consider caring for the child as hard work or a problem. I used to wash my clothes at night, as I was too busy during the day. I had to do begging during the daytime.”

All this work was an uphill task but Pokhrel’s self-confidence and determination took the organization forward. It was these same qualities that impressed the royal couple when they met her. Pokhrel recalled: “I had met with His Majesty and Her Majesty in 2044. They said, ‘This is a difficult job, why do you choose to do this type of work. Couldn’t you have selected other kinds of social work?’ And then I replied, ‘I like it this way.’ ‘How will you collect your resources? In it lots of sources are needed. Who will provide you? From where will it be available? At present, organizations are facing hard times due to lack of resources,’ Her Majesty said. And then I humbly replied, ‘Your Majesty, I will go to each local resident’s house in the village, visit door to door, I will go to every house and ask for a handful of rice. I will beg for a handful of grain for each for the social work I am going to start’... Her Majesty must have been impressed for which she noted down my name and address herself.”

The work started when a child was

brought from a village in Morang district and the next was the daughter of a Chaudhary. They kept arriving. Some infants had lost their mother during birth and some were found discarded in rice fields, irrigation canals or by drainage canals. Presently there are 63 children from many communities with the youngest one year old and the oldest about 20 or 21 years old. Most of the children are from the 11 to 14 age group. Of the 63 children, there are 26 girls. Except for seven or eight, all the children are attending school. In addition to the children, there are also 15 elderly people of whom three are males. These elderly people are mostly those who have no children or were forced to leave home. The age limit for elderly people is 65 years and above.

The manner in which the present land of the organization was bought is an interesting tale. It was during a program in Janakpur that a man from Pokhara raised Rs. 5,000 from the participants to buy the land and it started from there. After that another person donated Rs. 3,000 and within a week a total of Rs. 48,000 was collected. Even Pokhrel's husband donated Rs. 21,000. She related: "Patrons joined in and got together... we had a bank balance of two lakh rupees. Then suddenly Spanish people came and five to six Spaniards insisted on becoming members. They became a member by donating Rs. 51,000 each... We had seven lakh rupees... There was just two days left for the land to exchange hands... We had to immediately deliver the money and we

did not have enough money. Dr. James Thomson of Canada had said that he would provide the money for construction of the building after the land was purchased. I told him that I had already selected the land and I was getting the land in a cheap price. I did not have enough money. So he agreed to give three lakhs from the money he had allocated for building construction... At first we started the building at a cost of 45 lakhs from the donation of Dr. James Thomson... Then the hall was built by the Rotary Club... He collected the money in the Rotary Club and I have heard that even the Canadian government donated some amount... The land cost 15 to 16 thousand less than 10 lakhs."

The construction of the building for the elderly was entirely donated by Dr. Bijaya Laxmi Shrestha. She paid for the construction of the ground floor, which amounted to Rs. 30 lakhs. This building was constructed in her parent's name, Purna Kantha. She even paid for the construction of the cowshed at the ashram. All this was done through her personal funding.

The ashram requires a budget of 15 to 16 lakhs annually but the cash turnover is not that high due to donations that come in kind rather than cash. Of the 15 lakhs, four to five lakhs are allocated for food grains and the remaining for school fees, books, medicines, transportation, etc. The ashram also has its own kitchen garden to grow its own vegetables, a cowshade for cows and a biogas plant. Per

meal, the ashram requires a total of 20 kg. of rice, 4 kg. of pulse and 20 kg. of vegetables to feed everyone at the ashram. The ashram requires 150 quintals of rice annually. This is a huge amount, so all the personnel work very hard to meet this goal. Thus, they have the Muthi Daan program and their own production for food, and the money from foreign organizations is spent on construction and education.

Besides the local people, the various organizations that support Purbanchal Anath Ashram are the Rotary Club (Canada), Amigos Del Nepal (Spain), and the Social Welfare Council of His Majesty's Government, Nepal.

Physical Assets of the Organization

The physical assets of the Purbanchal Anath Ashram consists of three Bigha, five Kattha minus 10 Dhur land, a Trax vehicle (purchased for six and a half lakh rupees) and the buildings with the required beds and beddings.

Current Activities of the Organization

Orphanage for the Homeless

This organization started out with the aim to provide a home for orphans—children who have been deserted by their parents and children whose parents have expired. The ashram provides them with a place to stay and ensures their education. The ashram has a building for these

children which is equipped with adequate beds and beddings. At present, there are a total of 63 such children in the ashram. Occasionally they are assigned light chores and it is mostly the bigger ones who do the laundry, clean the rooms and wash the plates after eating. In this manner the children get food, clothing, shelter, education, people who look after them, and a family to support them.

Home for the Aged

Although this organization was established to provide a home for homeless children, it has also provided a home for the homeless elderly. At present there are 15 elderly people in the ashram of which three are male. These people usually have no families or were forced to leave their homes. They have to be 65 years old and above to be taken into the home. Their age can be seen in their citizenship cards or from recommendations. The organization does not usually accept men; there are just three at present. These people are assigned chores suitable to their ages, and they sing bhajan and kirtans in the morning and evening. This service by the ashram has helped these aged people to pass their remaining days peacefully. In the ashram, they have peace and a family, which they did not have or who had discarded them.

Volunteers at the ashram

The volunteers do most of the chores at the ashram. The volunteers at the

ashram are mostly persons with speech disabilities, people who cannot speak but know how to work. They are usually the ones who face hard times in society. Medical treatment is made available to them whenever it is required. During festivals they can go shopping in small groups and pocket money of Rs. 100 to 200 is provided them. Clothing is provided by the ashram. In this way, they get shelter and the ashram gets a helping hand. This practice has been beneficial to both the volunteers and the ashram.

Collection of old clothes and their distribution

The organization has been actively extending its services outside the ashram. The organization has also been collecting old clothes from the villages and cities. Before, while going out to ask for grains, they would also ask for donation of old clothes, but nowadays the local people collect these themselves and make them available to the ashram at all times. These collected clothes are sorted out and distributed to places where they are needed most—areas hit by floods or a major fire or a natural calamity.

Skills development programs

Skills development programs are run for the girls. They are trained to sew and knit. The training programs are developed to help the participants become self-sufficient in the future. This type of program was more convenient when the ashram

was located in the city area, but now it has its own building. They plan to move this program back to the city area to enhance its effectiveness. A place has already been rented and technicians are already available.

Structure of the Organization

The general assembly is the highest authority in the organization. A 15-member board meets weekly or biweekly. The members of the board are industrialists, businessmen, some from educational institutions and some retired personnel. The board is made up of the president, coordinator, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and other members. Despite the presence of the board, the president is mainly responsible for the organization.

“More than an organization, this is a home,” said Khagendra Acharya, treasurer. “It is an organization but it has been running as a home. The president does the ‘then and there’ decisions; she has been given that authority by the board. And there are no objections to her decisions from the board... Some decisions cannot be for the board. This is all related to humanity. The board works on proceedings and formatting at intervals of a week or two: what is happening, what should be done next and its policies and decision making...”

For work outside the ashram, such as going to the office chief district officer (CDO) or the municipality, one or two board members take the responsibility.

The president does all the internal work at the ashram.

The board members of the organization also take up certain duties. For example, Dr. Bataju looks after the medical needs of the ashram. He looks after the injuries and illnesses in the ashram and he also provides the sample medicines, which doctors get to the ashram.

Besides the general assembly, there are 150 to 160 ordinary members and life members. The meeting of the general assembly is called once a year. But the problem is that some are from Kathmandu, some are from foreign countries, and some are people that they have never met before. Thus, the organization always faces the difficulty of making up a quorum, as the requirement is at least 50 percent.

Volunteers do most of the daily work in the organization. The children are sometimes asked to do light chores. Besides the volunteers, there are the driver, the goatherd and the night guard who are paid salaries. The committee decides their salaries.

Fund Raising Activities

"Muthi Daan" Program

This is a very old concept in Nepal. This organization started out on the basis of this concept to meet its requirements and this is still continuing to date. In the beginning the founder used to collect Rs. 2 to 3 from an individual as muthi daan. But now the organization has distributed pots to those houses that are willing to

donate food for this noble cause. The donors are told that grain donation is a "life" donation and ask them to donate a handful of rice from what they will be eating that day, if it does not affect them greatly. What these households do is put the handful of rice in the ashram's pot every day. When these pots get filled, the organization gets the rice or the households themselves deliver them to the ashram. Each pot can hold five kilograms and it takes less than a month to three months to fill it. The jobholders and people from the hilly region like this concept. To date, such pots have been distributed in nearly a hundred houses and they have an additional four hundred such pots which they plan to distribute in the near future. On a yearly basis, a total of 150 quintals of rice is needed and all the rice is collected through muthi daan. But the books show that rice is purchased as well and this happens when people give money for the purchase of rice. This practice that was adopted by the organization to raise the rice required to feed the children has been very successful in meeting its objective.

Donation/Help

Wealthy people usually donate clothes and businessmen usually donate rice in large amounts, on a yearly basis. There are people who give a sack of rice or cooking oil or flour from time to time. Some donors even provide clothing for the children. Some donors invite the children for a meal but this has been discouraged by the organization. So, such people cook

the food and the cooked food is served at the ashram. Such people are usually from the Marwadi community who do this when it is either someone's birthday, or the shradha. Some send fruits in seasons. Such activities take place once or twice a month. The vehicle owned by the organization was also donated by Spanish people much before the establishment of Amigos Del Nepal in Spain.

Life membership fees

The general assembly consists of 150 members, who are life members and ordinary members. There are only seven ordinary members, while the rest are life members. The life membership fee per person is Rs.1,500 but not everyone is provided with a life membership. It is at the discretion of the board whether to grant membership or not. There are certain criteria that need to be fulfilled in order to become a life member, and these are that the individual should have an interest in social work, his/her historical background should not be offensive to the organization, among others. It is the duty of the committee to do this screening. There is no age bar for life membership but it is generally expected that the applicant be a little mature. There has been no distribution of new membership for the past two years.

Rent from rickshaws

The organization also used to rent out the rickshaws owned by the

organization. But this practice has stopped and presently the organization has no rickshaws.

Donation box

The concept of the donation box started only five to seven months back. As soon as the donation box gets filled, the money is taken out and billed. This concept is still new to the organization and it is not possible yet to say how effective it is.

Grant Fund

Amigos Del Nepal (Friends of Nepal)

It is an organization from Spain that gives funds to pay the school fees and other education-related expenses of 50 children, about US\$2,500 every three months. This is the only regular income of the organization to date. The organization has also taken two to four children from the ashram to Spain. In the beginning they used to provide for the education of 35 children but that has now been increased to 50. From the tuition money meant for the 50 children, the organization is able to save and cover almost all the expenses of the children. Said Pokhrel: "We get US\$2,500 dollars every three months and from that money we manage the school fees of the children. Now the new session has begun. Right now we have bills totaling about 32 to 33 thousand rupees for books only. Still all the books have not been bought..."

The organization does not have to spend much on the food as the rice comes from the Muthi Daan program, the vegetables come mostly from the kitchen garden, the fuel comes from the biogas plant, and the organization saves on the consumption of electricity, and so on. Said Acharya: "The Friends of Nepal supply money for the education of the children. We manage the electricity and telephone from the same money. We will need electricity for the children to study, won't we? They send US\$2,500 every three months. We have to economize and divide its use for various purposes..."

Social Welfare Council, HMG Nepal

The organization realized the need for a permanent and long-term solution in terms of finance and approached His Majesty's Government. Currently the government is providing an amount of Rs.1 lakh per year through the Social Welfare Council. This amount has been received by the organization for the past two years and the organization has not received any other from the government.

Problems Encountered

Ethnicity and Citizenship

When the children arrive, it is difficult to know their ethnicity or religion, as it is rare to find children who possess an identity card. Nowadays, children are received through the recommendation of the VDC (Village Development Committee) or the ward or the police. A letter from

the CDO (chief district officer) and from the police is required when he/she goes to receive his/her citizenship. In some earlier cases this procedure was not fulfilled and such people have not yet received their citizenship.

The surname preceding the first name of any person is important in Nepal as it is elsewhere. If it is possible to know the surname of the deceased mother and father then this is not a problem but in most cases this is not so. Thus, it is difficult and almost impossible at times to find out the surname of the child. Said Pokhrel: "All who come here are all Nepali mother's children, so keeping this in mind, we sur-named them all 'Nepali.' But now because of problems with the citizenship we have been differentiating now. Those who we know are Nepali, only they write 'Nepali.'"

Once a child reaches adulthood, he/she has to leave the ashram. It is considered necessary that the ashram show him/her the way as well and the first thing that is required of them is their citizenship. It is only after one has citizenship that he/she is legally acceptable in society. Skills are important to earn a living in the society but citizenship is equally important. The citizenship is needed virtually at every stage in life. Sometimes the parents of the children are discovered and these parents want to transfer their property in their child's name but their surnames do not match and problems arise.

Given the legal provisions for such cases, it would not have been very diffi-

cult to get citizenship after the recommendation of the CDO, but the frequent transfers of the CDOs pose a problem. Even the constitution has made provisions for children whose fathers are not known, but this has not been implemented. In such cases it is essential to get the approval of the ministry to provide citizenship but this is a very lengthy and time-consuming procedure.

Irregular foreign help

The help provided by the foreigners for construction finished as soon as the construction was over. Said Acharya: “Then nothing more came. Sometime ago we approved additional construction work. We requested those helping us for help saying that we have a problem with the kitchen. First they asked for an estimate... We sent them an estimate... They sent Rs. 6,000 in two or three batches. We started work... But they sent the money according to their wish, when they feel like it. But this is not possible for regular operations...”

Uncooperative government agencies

Besides the problem at the time of citizenship, there were other instances as well when the organization had difficulties. During its registration and when the ashram requested for discount in the purchase of timber are two instances when the ashram faced difficulties with the CDO office. The processes were very lengthy and time-consuming. Proper care and consid-

eration is not provided to organizations providing services.

Absence of second line of leadership

To date the founder, Sita Pokhrel, has done all the internal work as well as most of the external work and the organization has not thought about the second line of leadership for the organization, which is essential. There could be times when she could fall ill or have to go abroad for a long period. The organization has not thought of providing a second line of leadership for the ashram in case of such contingencies.

Lessons Learned

▶ Lesson from the “Muthi Daan” Program

When the personnel of the organization go around to distribute the pots, they occasionally meet people who do not want to take the pot but are willing to provide a sack full every year. Such people are made to understand that it is the emotional attachment that comes along with this type of regular donation that is important.

▶ Donations need feelings in addition to ability

It is the feeling that generates commitment within the donor which is more important than his ability to donate. Until the person develops a certain feeling towards the cause, he/she would only be generating half-heartedly.

“I had gone to the shopkeeper to ask for the Rs. 2. He said that he could not provide. Later, he came and asked for forgiveness. He said he had made a mistake. Then he sent 10 sacks of rice. It happens that way sometimes,” said Pokhrel.

“Among the locals, some consider it a religion, some as social service and some might just be doing it because we keep on asking them to...,” said Acharya.

- It is important to be self-sufficient

The daily need of vegetables is 20 kg. but the kitchen garden provides enough vegetables for the ashram and they hardly have to buy from the market. Also the milk required at the ashram comes from the ashram's cows. This has helped the organization a great deal to save its scarce finances.

- It is important to cut costs as well

It is not only important to generate more income for the organization but it is equally important to cut the costs within the organization. A need for the development of a cost control mechanism has been felt in the organization in terms of saving the consumption of electricity within the ashram.

- Local support is vital

Irrespective of the amount of foreign help that the organization gets, the help and support of the local people occupies a significant role. The donations of locals are the most regular of the help. The organization has to rely on the help of the locals to maintain regular operations of the infrastructure built by foreign funds.

“(Foreign donors) can build a home and they will build it, but we will not have the resources of managing the home. The local society needs to take responsibility of regular operation... need of mobilization of local resources...,” said Sita Pokhrel.

- Success is a continuous process

The work being done in the ashram does not produce immediate results that are clearly visible. The results of their effort take time to show, thus, continuous effort, patience and dedication are required to do such work.

“Talking of success, how can I say that the work that I have done is successful? One aim is to establish these sons and daughters so that they will be able to stand on their own feet. The next is that they should be good and dedicated citizens. If they are able to provide service to others then I will consider my work to be a success...,” said Pokhrel.

Future Plans

“Sakcharta Abhiyan” program

This awareness program was carried out in the past with the aim of educating those children whose parents are not able to send them to school. This activity was carried out for a period of two years and 66 children benefited from this program within that period. This program is not currently being run but there are plans to start this program again as it has proved to be very effective.

No child goes empty-handed

To date the organization has not let any child who is eligible for the ashram go empty-handed. The organization is very careful to make sure that the child does not have parents or else it would be setting a wrong example in the society by making the lives of the parents easy. It has been the same with elderly people, too.

“There is no limit for the food... here the beds are free. Whether it is a child or an elderly,” said Pokhrel.

The ashram hopes that this capacity for serving and helping disadvantaged people continues to grow with time.

“This is a service sector. There are no sums for this... There is no limit for service; one has to try to increase the services as far as possible,” said Pokhrel. ►

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Case 15

Under Privileged Children Association (UPCA)

Background

UPCA was established in 1993 in Dharan, the eastern part of Nepal. Its aim is to protect and promote children's rights, particularly underprivileged children's rights, and improve their quality of life. It is against all forms of child labor, exploitation and abuse at work, in the family and school.

The idea emerged when the founders saw many children sleeping hungry in the streets of Dharan in 1993. Initially, they used their own money to feed some of the children. But when it was not possible with the money of one or two individuals to support these children, they thought of establishing an organization for them. After establishing the organization in 1993, they started to support these children in an organized manner by collecting resources within and outside the country. UPCA recruited some volunteers who collected funds and used clothes from local donors and distributed these to the street children. Outside funds were sought when the local resources were not enough to support the children.

Physical assets of the organization

UPCA is housed in a rented building in Dharan. It has two computers with e-

mail and internet services. It also has enough furniture and furnishings for its main office in Dharan and site offices in Itahari and Damak.

Structure of the Organization

UPCA has 18 general members. Due to the difficulty of renewing membership every year, they all are lifetime members. The membership is limited so that only people sincerely interested in contributing to the organization can become members. There are four kinds of members: general persons with a volunteer spirit, professionals in the field of child development and child rights, sponsors of the UPCA program, and staff who have been working for more than one year at UPCA.

The general assembly, which is comprised of the general members, meets annually to review the progress of the organization, and also to elect its executive board. The seven-member executive board functions as an advisory board and provides policy and program guidance to the management committee on a regular basis. They generally meet twice in a period of three months. However if required, they can meet twice in a month. The management committee has four members—the executive director, executive coordinator, finance and

administrative coordinator, and child sponsorship coordinator. The committee looks after the day-to-day management of the organization.

Staff and their roles

UPCA has 14 staff, nine females and five males. All of them are experienced and well motivated. They are willing to work at a time of crisis even at less salaries and benefits.

UPCA also has three volunteers, two females and one male. Based on performance, they might be hired as staff later.

Current Activities of UPCA

It runs rehabilitation programs for the urban street children of Dharan, Itahari and Damak municipalities, and a preventive program for the rural children in a village of Sunsari district.

Contact centers

The contact center in Dharan has been running since 1994, and the center in Itahari was established in 1997, supported by Save the Children, Norway. A new contact center in Damak started in 2000 with the support of Action Aid. Last year, 94 street children (79 boys and 15 girls) were admitted to the Dharan contact center, of which 32 street children (24 boys and eight girls) were admitted in 2000 and the rest, more than twice the number, in 2001. The activities of the contact centers include non-formal edu-

cation, exposure visits, creative work, socialization, counseling, primary health care, night shelter, cooperative kitchen, skills training, saving program, food for needy and schoolgoing children, family reunion and rehabilitation. These activities are described below:

• Non-formal Education (NFE)

The purpose of NFE is to help the children read and write. NFE facilitators take the classes for one and a half to two hours a day for six days a week. The textbook used for NFE is *Navajivan* (New Life), which was specially developed for street and working children by UNICEF/Nepal. About 36 percent of the children attend the classes regularly.

• Creative Work

Creative work helps children develop their potential and also protects them from indulging in bad activities. Creative activities in the contact centers include making greeting cards, envelopes, paper flowers and handicrafts.

• Skills Training

In order to enable the children to stand on their own two feet, they are given training on skill-based works such as making potato chips and bhujija.

• Saving Program

The street children usually cannot save the money they make from ragpicking or other means, because of the fear of the money being snatched by the senior children. To protect them, the contact centers run saving programs for these children. In the year 2000, 40 boys ben-

efited from this program.

▶ **Extra Activities**

To promote socialization and informal learning, extra activities such as exposure visits, picnics, sports competitions are organized by the contact centers.

▶ **Food and Kitchen**

The schoolgoing children are given two meals a day, while those attending NFE classes are given an evening meal. For other street children, there is a kitchen service, which includes free use of firewood, kitchen utensils and appliances.

▶ **Night Shelter**

Street children are provided night shelter at the contact centers. A caretaker watches over them. Children get protection from abuse and exploitation while they stay at the shelter at night. Television viewing, entertainment, social meeting and health services are also provided the children when they come for night shelter.

▶ **Health Service**

Most of the street children live and work in unhygienic and risky areas. They also eat unhealthy foods. The contact centers provide first aid, regular health check-up, immunization, and hospital service to the children.

▶ **Rehabilitation**

The ultimate aim of the contact centers is to rehabilitate street children at risk back to the family and society in order to make them good and responsible citizen of the future. The rehabilitation activities

include family reunions, formal school admission through sponsorships, and family visits.

Community empowerment

In order to create awareness of the social problems of children such as drugs, HIV/AIDS, and domestic violence, and their rights, UPCA runs interaction programs in rural communities. Such programs are intended to empower the local children and their communities so that they would be able to understand what is good and what is not good for them. The Bishnupadika VDC in Sunsari district is one area where UPCA is currently running the program. It is sponsored by Action Aid.

Publishing wall newsmagazines

UPCA publishes a wall newsmagazine called *Bal Charcha*. All the items are written by street children. The newsmagazine is published quarterly. It is hung on the walls of the contact centers and UPCA office and distributed to affiliated organizations. The newsmagazine is also available for sale.

Fund Raising Activities

It has established a fund called the "UPCA Fund." The fund is used for special purposes, such as meeting financial crises and organizational development. Although there are no defined sources for this fund, it mainly receives from staff

contributions, project overhead savings and product sales.

The UPCA also has a revolving fund which it uses for the continuity of the contact centers. The fund gets money from the donor-supported projects. Five percent of the total budget of each project is allocated for the revolving fund. According to the UPCA executives, it was at first difficult to convince the donors about the importance of this fund, but now many of them have realized its value and agreed to provide money for it.

UPCA receives funds both externally and internally. However, for our purposes here, we will only discuss its internal sources of funds.

Staff contribution

At the beginning of the establishment of the organization, the staff contributed 10 percent of their salaries to the UPCA fund. Later as the number of staff increased, the rate was reduced to seven percent.

Training

UPCA staff work as resource persons for various trainings for other organizations. They contribute part of their earnings from the trainings to the UPCA fund. The rate of contribution depends on the duration of the training. If the duration is five days, they have to contribute 10 percent; if it is five to eight days, the contribution is 20 percent; and

if it is nine days or more, the contribution is 30 percent.

Local governments

(municipalities and VDCs)

UPCA also receives funding from local governments—municipalities and VDCs. The Dharan municipalities together with other sponsors gave financial support to build the community center in Dharan.

Sale of magazines

UPCA earns money from the sale of its quarterly newsmagazine, *Bal Charcha*. It is sold to local NGOs, INGOs and other related organizations, and the income from the sale of the magazines is around Rs. 1,000 a year.

Products sale

UPCA trains children in making greeting cards, paper flowers and other handicraft. These items are sold to souvenirs shops that cater to foreigners, and they make around NPR 2,000 to 4,000 in a year.

Contributions from individuals and organizations

UPCA was able to raise NPR 60,000 for the Global March for Children in 1999 from local individuals and organizations. The funds were raised from 135 organizations and many individuals

of Sunsari district in a period of one month. These organizations included youth clubs, schools, NGOs and private and government organizations. The amount collected ranged from a minimum of NPR 60 to a maximum of NPR 4,000 from an organization.

Donations in kind

Local clubs such as Lions Club, Rotary Club, Satya-Sai Club, Bramhakumari Club occasionally offer lunch or dinner to children at contact centers. Local businessmen and affluent people also sometimes provide clothes for the children.

Problems Encountered

► Difficult to establish organization

Establishing the organization was similar to bringing up a baby. The founders had to work hard—fom arranging the physical office, designing programs, to exploring funding agencies. In the beginning the organization did not have any reliable source of funds. It used to get funds for a period of time and then remain without work for some time. This used to create frustrations in the founders of the organization.

► Trained staff leave the organization

The organization spends a lot of resources and time in training staff, who sometimes quit without giving enough time to turn over their skills to other staff. They leave the organization for higher studies in the capital city, Kathmandu, or

due to small conflicts with the management. It requires a lot of effort to replace the staff when they leave.

Lessons Learned

1. Motives should be for social service rather than employment

Many people open NGOs with the motive of having their own employment rather than sincerely serving the communities. NGOs established with such intention do little good to the communities for which they said they are working.

2. Programs should be integrated

Any issue should be addressed with a multi-dimensional or integrated approach. In dealing with the issue of street children, simply rehabilitating them may not be a permanent solution. An integrated program that includes preventing them from living on the streets may be needed at the community from where they originated.

3. Local resources should be mobilized

External sources are not reliable. They may or may not be available consistently. For a dependable funding source, the organization resource base should be local. The use of local resources in implementing programs also give pride to the members of the NGO.

Future Plans

Realizing the importance of local fund raising, UPCA has been considering the use of piggy banks for school children, and approaching commercial organizations and ex-armies for larger contributions by developing impressive brochures to suit different organizations and individuals. ▶

Contact Persons and Mailing Address of the Organization

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Case 16

Nari Bikash Sangh

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Background

Nari Bikash Sangh (Women Development Organization), established in 1981, is a non-government, non-profit organization working in 12 districts of five development regions of Nepal. Its head office is located in Biratnagar, Morang district. It aims at improving the lives of destitute women, focusing on social, economic and educational aspects by mobilizing local resources.

The idea of establishing an NGO first occurred to nine women, the founders of the organization. Seeing women's sorrow and suffering, from domestic violence to women trafficking, they realized that something needed to be done. The women have to work 17 hours a day while the men work only five hours. The work of women is given less value although they have to toil from dawn till dusk. Regardless of this, they are ill-treated, chased and expelled from their houses.

Said Tara Sharma, general secretary of Nari Bikash Sangha: "Women are unable to express themselves and their sufferings. Women are involved in work early in the morning, from when they wake up. From the time of opening of the doors till the closing of the doors, they are busy in their work. But there is no value for the work they do. The men work

for five hours in their office and it has so much value... Women have to look after the goats, collect the forages, collect water, and feed the children, and so on... even for ploughing their fields, women have to take the plough to them. But the men will have a greater value for the three hours of ploughing that he had done. For the ploughing work, the men can get 150 rupees... How would you assign a value or price to the work done by women at her home?... A servant has to be hired to work at the home, for doing the same amount of work worth equally as much... From birth there is discrimination between sons and daughters."

The social injustice to women made the nine women realize that something must be done for the welfare of women. Sushila Chapagain, one of the founders, was at that time working at the Social Welfare Council as a member. She resigned in 1980 and took initiative of establishing the organization for women.

The founders of Nari Bikash Sangh felt that their time was best utilized doing social service than staying idle at home. Social service can make a lot of changes in the lives of women suffering from exploitation, discrimination, violence and injustice. Gender coordinator Ambika Sharma mused on what the organization

was trying to do: “To liberate women from sorrow and suffering, to make changes for women... There is no place for women like us in our country... people try to suppress us....”

Nari Bikash Sangh was formed and now works with 350 saving groups of women. There are 9,065 women affiliated with these groups. Each saving group has NPR 50,000 to NPR 400,000 cash in hand.

Objectives

The overall objective of the organization is to empower destitute women. The specific objectives are:

- ▶ to create awareness on women's rights and conditions;
- ▶ to improve the economic conditions of rural women by enhancing their literacy level;
- ▶ to implement community programs to increase self-employment opportunities for women;
- ▶ to provide moral and legal support to helpless women;
- ▶ to mobilize local resources so as to reduce the organization's dependency on outside resources;
- ▶ to develop and implement programs on gender equity; and
- ▶ to build the capacity of human resources at every level of the organization.

Programs of Nari Bikash Sangh

Women Awareness Community Development Program

Nari Bikash Sangh has been implementing this program in partnership with MS Nepal since July 1999 through its branches in Biratnagar, Salakpur, Kerabari, Mahuli Saptari, Itahara, Hetauda, Sindhuli, Rupandehi and Thutipipal. The program activities include trainings in small business development, skills development and account keeping, a workshop on gender equity awareness, observation tour, saving and credit program, and income generating program.

Women Self Reliance Program

The program has been implemented through five branches of Nari Bikash Sangh—Dharan, Baklauri, Chakarghati, Dhankutta, Rajarani, and Murtidhunga—in partnership with SMF Bangladesh since July 1999. The activities include saving and credit program, skills development training, income generating program, vision building training, leadership development training, observation tour, account keeping training, people-based development training, and small business development training.

Community Development Monitoring Program

The program has been implemented since 1997 in 10 VDCs of Morang district in partnership with PLAN Interna-

tional. The program monitors the management of 39 saving and credit groups on a monthly basis. The activities of the program include saving management, credit management, account management, and regular meeting and interaction program.

Women Empowerment Program

Nari Bikash Sangh in partnership with World Literacy Center, Canada, has been implementing the women empowerment program in VDC Belbari of Morang district since 1998. The activities include informal adult literacy program, emergency credit, credit and income generating program, saving and credit management, and skills development (fishery training).

Integrated Pest Management Program

With financial support from World Education, the program has been an action project in Belbari VDC of Morang district since 2000. This program helps local farmers identify useful and harmful insects, and protect the crops from harmful insects. This eventually contributes to the increase in crop production. The activities of the program include a farmer school, prevention and control of rodents, and protection of grain stores from insects.

Family Welfare Program

With the support of The Asia Foundation, the Family Welfare Program has

been implemented in 17 VDCs of Ilam district. The activities of this program are a permanent family planning clinic, a mobile temporary family planning clinic, and the promotion of family planning.

Silk Farming for Rural Development

Nari Bikash Sangh, in collaboration with the Silk Association of Nepal (SAN) and the UNDP, has implemented the silk farming program to the farmers of eight VDCs and one municipality of Ilam district. The activities of the program are silkworm keeping, kimbu farming, social mobilization and credit program, and account keeping training.

Informal Education Program

With the financial assistance of Plan International, District Education Office, World Education and UNICEF, the informal adult and child literacy program has been implemented in 14 VDCs of Ilam and Morang districts. The activities of the program are the facilitation of informal adult literacy training, informal child literacy training, and parents education training; the conducting of informal adult and child literacy programs and parent education classes, child health improvement training, establishing child development centers, the facilitation of literacy oriented education training, and literacy and health education program.

Social Mobilization Program

In partnership with SNV/Nepal, this program has been implemented in a VDC of Panchthar district since 2000. Its activities are group formation, saving and credit program, income generating activities, observation tour, skills development training, and literacy program.

Nutrition and Kitchen Garden Program

With the support of Hellen Keller, the program was implemented in five VDCs of Morang and Sunsari districts from 1996 to 1999. Its objectives were to create awareness about diseases caused by Vitamin A deficiency and preventive measures, and to encourage women to grow green leafy vegetables rich in Vitamin A in their kitchen gardens. A total of 1,034 households benefited from this program. Its activities were growing vegetables in kitchen gardens, saving and credit program, establishing a model resource nursery, vegetable seed production training, and nutrition education.

Structure of the Organization

The central assembly has 65 members who are elected from its five regional and 24 branch offices. The members of the central assembly elect a 15-member board, which has a president, two vice-presidents, a general secretary, an undersecretary, a treasurer, program director and eight members. The board gives the policy directives to the management of the organization. There is also a pro-

gram director on the board, who participates in the board meetings as a staff but does not have the right to vote.

All 15 board members are from Biratnagar, except Radha Chaudhary from Rajbiraj and Ambika Subba from Belbari. Regular board meetings are held every month, but when needed the board may meet more than once a month. Each board member receives 150 rupees per month as meeting allowance for their transportation expenses. The roles and responsibilities of the board are to formulate policies for the organization, review the performance of ongoing programs, and give policy directives for planning and implementation of programs.

The organization has a total of 1,351 members, of which 216 are life members. The membership is distributed among the branch offices. Each branch office has a working committee of 13 members.

Staff and Physical Assets

There are 51 staff members in the central office of the organization—14 of them are office-based, while the others are field-based. Among the office-based staff, four are full-time and the rest are part-time. The organization has four motorbikes, two computers and adequate office furniture for the working staff and volunteers. It also owns a training hall and some pieces of land in three or four locations, donated by individuals and the public. The central office and many of its branch offices are housed in the central

and branch presidents' houses.

Fund Raising Activities

Rent of the training hall

The organization has a training hall with facilities for lodging and catering. Accommodations include dormitories with six beds and cubicles with two beds and attached bathroom. The rent for one bed in the dormitory is 30 rupees, and for a cubicle, 75 rupees. The price of meals per day ranges from 150 to 350 rupees per person depending on the type of food served. Its annual income from the training hall is around NPR 700,000 to 800,000.

Nari Bikash Sangh got some financial support from MS Nepal (Danish INGO) for the construction of the training hall. It is planning to invest its earnings to add another floor with more rooms for accommodation and office use at the training hall. After the construction of the second floor, the office will move from its current location. Currently the new building is inaccessible during the rainy season, as it is located across the river. So, it is raising funds both internally and externally to build a concrete bridge over the river so that the training hall and the office building can be used throughout the year.

Trainings

The organization provides trainings on leadership, management, gender

awareness and account keeping for its own groups, for groups formed by other NGOs, and also sometimes for the staff and volunteers of government and non-government organizations. The trainers could be Nari Bikash Sangh volunteers and staff; the volunteers contribute 10 percent of their remuneration to the organization, while staffs have to contribute 50 percent of their remuneration.

Staff contribution

Staff members contribute 10 percent of their regular salaries to the organization. This is collected to meet any future crisis and for the sustainability of the organization. The fund thus collected can be used to pay the salaries of the staff when there is no outside support for the organization.

Membership fees

The ordinary members pay an annual fee to the organization. There are altogether 1,135 ordinary members. The life members pay only once but pay a bigger amount to the organization.

Income generating activities

Nari Bikash Sangh has leased about five hectares of land from the local school in the suburb of Biratnagar at a price of NPR 15,000 per year. It grows food, vegetable and fruit crops and also raises pigs on the land. Its annual income from the land is around 150,000 rupees.

Problems Encountered

Political disturbances

After the People's Movement in 1990, the organization came under political turmoil. Its members were divided into different political parties—Congress, Communist and Mandaleys (supporters of former rulers), which also occurred in many government and non-government organizations during that period. In Nari Bikash Sangh, this created an environment of suspicion and mistrust among the members. The organization was suspected as the Queen's organization because the founding member Shushila Chapagain served for a time as a member of the Social Welfare Council, which was then headed by the Queen.

Donors imposing their policies and programs

Having worked in the area of social development for a long time, the volunteers and staff of the organization have a knowledge of what works and what does not work in the community. Based on these experiences, they offer their suggestions to the donors who come to work with them in partnership. But very few of them take the suggestions for adjusting the programs designed to improve the livelihoods of poor women, an area in which Nari Bikash Sangha has been working for the last over 20 years.

Lessons Learned

- ▶ The vision, mission and goals of the organization should be clear.

The organization and its members must be clear about its destiny, and also know where it is now. This will guide them to move on the right track of achieving goals. An organization that is not clear on its objectives may spend resources on the activities that do not help improve the livelihood of their target groups, thereby wasting energy and resources.

- ▶ Board members must be committed

For the organization to function successfully, its board members must be committed. The policies and programs of any organization and their successful implementation depend on how seriously the board works for the organization. The board is also responsible for bringing in projects from the donors to the organization; hence, its members must be active and spend more time for the organization.

- ▶ Social workers should have motive of community service, not money

Social workers should always have in mind the serving of people (poor and destitute women). In this context, the president of the organization said that social workers should have the feeling of giving service to the people with heart, word and work keeping witness to the soul (aatma sachi rakhi man bachan ra karmale sewa garaun).

- ▶ Diversify the donors

Working with only one donor is as

risky as putting all of one's eggs in one basket. Diversifying the donors helps towards financial sustainability of the organization. Working with many donors also exposes the organization to different approaches and programs in the area of women development.

Contact Persons and Mailing Address of the Organization

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Future Plans

1. Completion of the training hall and office building

Nari Bikash Sangh is collecting funds to complete the ongoing construction. Once the construction work is completed, the office will move to the new building. There will also be an increase in the earnings from the training hall.

2. Upgrading saving groups to cooperatives

Nari Bikash Sangh has 350 saving groups of women. Each saving group consists of 30 to 35 members and has NPR 50,000 to NPR 300,000 savings. The upgrading of these saving groups to cooperatives will give them legal status to work independently. ▶