

today **in** nepal

The magazine of INF | Number 233 | September 2017

A climate for change

Building community action in a changing environment


INTERNATIONAL
NEPAL
FELLOWSHIP



EDITORIAL

WORKING IN A CLIMATE OF CHANGE

Extraordinary and devastating events over recent years have shown us that the affects of climate change and natural disasters have a magnified affect on the most vulnerable communities in Nepal.

Over the years INF has woven disaster response and resilience philosophies through much of its work to empower and equip communities into the future. Thank you for partnering with us as we build on that work. You can read about how we're doing this on pages 1 – 3.

SUSTAINED BY SUPPORTERS

It is such a joy to be part of a worldwide family that is passionate about supporting and sharing the story of God's work through INF in Nepal. Whether it's school children in New Zealand learning about our smokeless stoves project or a quiz night in Australia raising funds for a new X-ray machine at Green Pastures Hospital we are privileged to pray and partner with the people of Nepal. Read more on pages 8 & 9.

GREEN PASTURES RENOVATION AND RENEWAL OF PURPOSE

Green Pastures Hospital [GPH] in Pokhara continues to serve where the needs present themselves. Trauma now kills more people in low to middle income countries like Nepal than HIV, malaria and tuberculosis combined. In response, GPH is expanding its focus on orthopaedic and spinal disorders, providing high-level care for people living with disabilities related to trauma and other spinal complications. Dr Dipak Maharjan, GPH's Medical Director, shares about God's faithfulness at the hospital and describes the renovations necessary from earthquake damage as well as plans for a new chapel [page 10].

PARTNERSHIP IN PRAYER

Prayer is at the heart of INF's work, as we seek to bring fullness of life in partnership with the people of Nepal. Each edition of Today in Nepal will highlight a part of INF's work and its staff. This edition features INF's Community Development work and its staff [pages 13 - 15].

Thank you for being our prayerful advocates, your prayers and petitions are our foundation.

Alastair

Alastair Seaman
INF International Director

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a Christian mission serving the physical and spiritual needs of Nepali people

WWW.INF.ORG

INF's Vision
Life in all its fullness for Nepal's poor and disadvantaged

todayinnepal
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Cover
Rice field, Nepal

PHOTO: ROWAN BUTLER

A climate for **change**

Reducing vulnerability to climate change and natural disaster

Sharon Joshuwa Tiwari reports



INF's DRR team trekking through the rocky hills of Rolpa District
PHOTO: KARNA BAHADUR GURUNG

A mountainous landscape and low socio-economic status leave the people of Nepal incredibly vulnerable to ever increasing threats from climate change and natural disasters. INF has now woven disaster response and resilience philosophies through much of its work to empower and equip communities into the future.

Nepal currently sits among the top 20 countries considered most multi-hazard prone in the world. It is ranked fourth in the world on the climate change vulnerability index.* The affects of climate change are incredibly serious for the general well-being of Nepalis. Climate change threatens the country's food security, human habitats, water resources, livelihoods, health and safety, and tourism. Variations in the monsoon have major implications for agriculture, forestry and pasture resources. In the same way, drought, floods, landslides and soil erosion have a direct affect on farmers and rural communities weakening Nepal's ability to produce food for its population.

The remote, rural, rugged and fragile geography of Nepal's rural communities, combined with a weak economy and government, low literacy rates and a lack of public awareness, all cause climate change and natural disasters to have an even more devastating affect on the poor and marginalised communities INF is working alongside.

With these concerns in clear view INF has incorporated disaster risk reduction into INF's community work, particularly in more remote communities. Disaster risk reduction strategies have been integrated in both its Community Health and Development, and its Community

Based Rehabilitation work to empower and equip communities to reduce the impact of future disasters.

Educating communities about the affects of climate change and the importance of disaster risk reduction has seen INF empower communities to implement adaptive measures, reduce vulnerabilities and develop coping mechanisms. Much of this has been achieved through INF facilitated Self-Help Groups taking ownership of the challenges ahead. INF's Group Action Process among these groups is based on participation, empowerment and valuing local knowledge. Over the years INF has seen this to be a very effective approach as community members themselves identify their common problems, analyse them and make an action plan to implement [see examples on next page].

INF's experience working with local partner organisations and government in response to the major floods in August 2014 and the devastating April 2015 earthquakes, contributed to the more recent establishment of INF's Disaster Response and Resilience Department[DRRD].

The department's central aim is to 'reduce the impact of disasters in Nepal within INF and its working areas' and to build on the work already being done. INF's DRRD has initiated a community resilience project model for two districts particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and the affects of climate change - Kapilvastu and Rolpa.

Kapilvastu is on the terai [the southern flat plains] and is affected by flood, fire, epidemics and drought causing huge loss of property and life every year. Rolpa is located in the middle hills but is highly vulnerable to landslides and epidemics, particularly during the monsoon season. During June of 2017, Sharon accompanied INF staff on a visit to both districts to begin baseline surveys with community mobilisers on the ground and gain first-hand knowledge of previous disasters and specific challenges for each area.

The trip demonstrated the serious and significant risks faced by each community. It broadened my understanding of how INF is committed to reaching the most remote and vulnerable in Nepal. I reflected on God's faithfulness as I witnessed the Self-Help Groups, community mobilisers and INF staff working together to create a sustainable and safer future.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Please pray for those communities most affected by climate change and natural disasters in Nepal. Pray for the work INF is doing in those most vulnerable areas, and that communities would work together to adapt and cope in ways that reduce the potential risks ahead.

*UNDP/BCPR, 2004

Sharon Joshua Tiwari is a Donor and Funding Officer with INF Nepal



Landslide in front of a school in a remote village of Rolpa
PHOTO: INF FIELD STAFF



Dhan in his vegetable garden
PHOTO: INF FIELD STAFF



Shree Bhanubhaktra Secondary School
PHOTO: INF FIELD STAFF

By integrating adaptive and risk reduction strategies into its community health and development work INF is helping Nepalis tackle the affects of climate change and natural disasters head on.

POTATOES ALL YEAR ROUND

Dhan Bahadur Gharti Magar is 52-years-old and supports a family of 16 as a farmer in Rolpa District. Life can be challenging and it's not easy putting food on the table. Dhan joined a Self-Help Group when INF first began working in Rolpa. He participated in a three-day climate adaptation vegetable farming training session as part of INF's broader climate change awareness raising work in the area. As a result, Dhan gained knowledge and new ideas for his farming. The increased temperatures from climate change had created some planting opportunities. Previously he had only planted potatoes in the rainy season but the changing climate meant he could now grow potatoes in winter as well. It was no longer too cold for the potatoes to grow, in fact he can now produce them all year round.

He also started cauliflower and cabbage farming by using waste-water and his vegetable farm is now producing enough to feed his family and sell at the local bazaar. He is now able to support his children's education. Dhan has also been a positive influence to other farmers in Rolpa to adapt their farming practices.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF HOPE

Shree Bhanubhaktra Secondary School is the key to education for students across nine wards in Uwa Village Development Committee because it's the only secondary school in the area. Landslides in the rainy season meant students no longer had an outdoor play area but the reconstruction called for an impossibly huge investment from parents and the school.

A Self-Help Group facilitated by INF in Rolpa District had worked to mitigate further landslides by planting trees on the school site. Unfortunately the landslides continued and finally the SHG devised a plan to build a retention wall from wire. With the help of INF, fundraising by the school community and voluntary labour the fence was completed. The wire wall helped to control the landslide on one side of the school. Unfortunately a landslide subsequently destroyed one of the school's classrooms. Again students were put at risk but the success of the SHG's first wire wall had given the community the hope and courage to build again. The group developed an action plan and purchased more wire, the collaborative approach from the school, SHG and community members has seen benefits across the community.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Please pray for the work being done in Rolpa district to empower and equip communities vulnerable to the affects of climate change and natural disasters.

grassroots DEMOCRACY grows

Bijay Baral reports

An INF employee casting her vote in Pokhara
PHOTO: GANTHAN NEWS POKHARA

For the first time in twenty years Nepalis have had a say in who represents them at a local level. This grassroots growth in democracy has seen more than two thirds of the population exercise their right to choose local Mayors, Village Development Committee Chairpersons and other public officials in recent local elections.

The term 'local' has a range of meanings in Nepali. It can mean anything from authentic to healthy, pure or home-grown, and even strong and trustworthy. Nepalis are hoping to see many of these qualities in their newly elected leaders. Being a young population has meant that for many Nepalis this was their first opportunity to vote for a local voice. Local elections were last held in 1997. So far 2017 has seen six of the seven provinces successfully complete a peaceful election process. National media reported a significant turn-out to vote [70 %] despite the drawn out process. Vote counting is a manual process, and took several weeks to complete. With the exception of a small number of disputes, the counting in those six provinces went well. The result shows local representatives from the Communist Party of Nepal [CPN]-Unified Marxist Leninist [UML] winning in a majority of communities followed by representatives from the Nepali Congress [NC] and CPN-Maoist [Centre] add implications on INF's work.

The potential flow on affect of these elections for INF's work is still unclear. Newly elected local leaders may enable better coordination with local government bodies however proposed new regulations for organisations like INF are yet to be fully assessed.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Thank God for the successful and peaceful local elections to date across Nepal. Please pray for wisdom for those chosen to represent the people of Nepal at the local level.



through **AIMEE'S** lens

Volunteer Aimee Lewis recently returned to Nepal, five years after being inspired on a vision trip, to work with INF's communications team as a photojournalist and editor. While in Nepal she visited several of INF's programmes enabling her to capture and share how INF's work is empowering Nepal's most disadvantaged communities.

My first week began at INF's bi-annual Cerebral Palsy [CP] camp where the medical team worked tirelessly to create an encouraging atmosphere for families of children with CP. Over eleven days the team provided physiotherapy, strength training, and equipment to help improve the children's motor activity and their motivation. I saw the connection these children made with INF staff through the games, smiles and laughter. The impact on these family's lives was tangible, giving them hope for their children's future.

While at Green Pastures Hospital, I was able to meet patients in the spinal cord injury ward who were being given a second chance at life. INF doctors and nurses supported patients as they learnt how to navigate with a wheelchair and relearn simple everyday tasks. Frustration was always met with encouragement. Patients were able to smile and joke with each other, despite the serious challenges of their circumstances.

INF's Initiative for Financial Sustainability [IIFS] provides employment to those that would otherwise find it difficult, and simultaneously creates financial sustainability for the hospital's services. One part of IIFS is the Craft Centre where women who have had leprosy or with a disability produce beautiful handmade crafts. They manually spin, dye, and weave wool into colourful bags, bible covers, pot holders and many other products for sale to the public. IIFS also has a farm where patient's families or patients

themselves can work as a way to generate income for their family or to pay medical expenses.

I also had the privilege of meeting community members from Self-Help Groups [SHG] in Kapilvastu. Twice a month for two hours, SHGs come together to discuss important topics including hygiene, education, maternal health, and projects to improve the community's well being. One Self-Help Group had collectively invested funds to build water canals throughout their village to avoid flooding.

INF serves as Christ's hands and feet to empower the people of Nepal to live a life full of God's hope. Without these services, many of Nepal's poorest people would never receive the treatment they desperately need. Volunteering in the Communications Department to write stories, edit testimonies, and capture photos of INF's work is crucial to spreading and supporting INF's vision for Nepal. While temporary positions are welcome, INF is looking for someone who is able to use literary skills to share the story of God's work in Nepal through INF.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Please pray that others may be inspired like Aimee to share the story of God's work in Nepal through INF. May these stories enable others around the world to clearly see the needs of Nepal's most disadvantaged and prayerfully consider how they might partner in INF's work.

MOBILITY and HOPE

“My name is Shova Pun and I am from Pokhara. When my daughter was born, she looked and acted like all the other children her age. It wasn’t until at age two that we began to notice she had weak legs and her motor skills were limited. Concerned, we took her to many hospitals, hoping for a solution for what we now recognise as Cerebral Palsy [CP]. Doctors told us that surgery was not an option for our daughter and that exercise was the best solution. Soon after we received this news, a woman from local charity told me about INF and their CP camp.

My daughter has made a lot of progress after attending this CP camp. Before, she was unable to climb stairs or play with a ball, but, with the help and training of the physiotherapists and the leg braces INF provided, she is now able to conquer both. She has also learnt simple skills like putting on her shoes and braces by herself. Before this camp I never thought my daughter could accomplish these tasks on her own, so I helped her do everything. This camp has not only shown me that she can do it independently, but that it is important for her to learn these skills.

This being our first CP camp experience, my expectations were high. Amazingly, they were met

with the incredible improvement my daughter has shown over the last few days. Before camp I used to think my daughter was the only one affected by CP, and I felt isolated and disheartened. Now, being surrounded by a community of people who share the same struggles, I am encouraged to continue with my daughter’s progress. Soon, she will be able to walk without needing the support of her leg braces.

I thank INF from the bottom of my heart for the hope they have given to us parents whose children are affected by CP.”

Shova Pun shared her story with INF volunteer Aimee Lewis who visited the CP camp at Green Pastures Hospital earlier this year.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Please pray for all the children and their families who attend the bi-annual CP camps at Green Pastures Hospital. Pray that they would not only grow in strength, mobility and independence but in their hope for an inclusive future in their communities.



“before the camp I used to think my daughter was the only one affected by CP, I felt isolated...”

Shova with her daughter Jiya
PHOTO: AIMEE LEWIS

Critical Vacancies

Is God calling you to Nepal? INF uses a special combination of expatriate and Nepali expertise to apply international level practice in a way that is relevant to the local context, always with the aim of increasing capacity in Nepal. Here are a number of current key expatriate needs in the organisation [to explore more opportunities to serve please visit www.inf.org/join-us]:

PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Many of INF's expatriate families live outside Kathmandu, in areas where the needs are greatest. To enable them to stay there, we need primary school teachers to work in our small study centre in Pokhara.

EDITOR

Has God gifted you with the skill of storytelling that inspires and motivates others? If so, our Communications Department needs you.



ANAESTHETIST

Green Pastures Hospital in Pokhara is looking for an expatriate anaesthetist to work in the hospital and train up a Nepali counterpart.

REHABILITATION PHYSICIAN/DOCTOR

Green Pastures Hospital in Pokhara is looking for a Physiatrist to help support the expansion of its rehabilitation work.



If you're a Christian interested in working in an exciting, international, cross-cultural mission, email recruitment@inf.org

To find out more or for a no-obligation chat about the US and Canadian Board vacancies contact INF's International Director Alastair Seaman, id@inf.org, skype: [alastair.seaman](https://www.skype.com/en/contacts/alastair.seaman)

FUNDRAISER/DONOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST

INF needs a Christian with experience in fundraising, PR or donor relations to lead and work with Nepali colleagues to support programmes.

HUMAN RESOURCES ADVISOR

INF Nepal [our major implementing partner] needs help to develop Nepalis to recruit and support the expatriate expertise that it needs to realise its exciting vision.



INF US BOARD CHAIR

INF's International Director is currently chairing the INF US Board but we are looking for someone to take this on as soon as possible.

INF US TREASURER

The treasurer will oversee the financial matters of INF US in line with good practice, US law and our articles of association and report to the board of directors at regular intervals about the financial health of the organisation.

INF CANADA TREASURER

The treasurer will oversee the financial matters of INF Canada in line with good practice and in accordance with the governing document and legal requirements and report to the board of directors at regular intervals about the financial health of the organisation.

Around the world...

Be encouraged to

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE

Australia



KARNA DAS DOWNUNDER

Renowned Nepali singer and INF brand ambassador Karna Das had a wonderful time in Sydney and Canberra at the start of June, sharing his musical gifts and testimony through live events and media. INF was introduced to many Nepalese communities for the first time and \$7,000 was raised for Green Pastures Hospital. United Nepal Christian Community [UNCC] church in Liverpool provided enormous support without which the tour wouldn't have been possible.

GETTING A CLEARER IMAGE

A quiz night held in Adelaide in June raised over \$15,000 to buy a much-needed X-ray machine for INF's Green Pastures Hospital [GPH]. A large part of GPH's work includes treatment and rehabilitation for people living with spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities making the X-ray machine invaluable. \$10,000 of the funds were raised thanks to a generous grant from Regency Park Rotary.

New Zealand

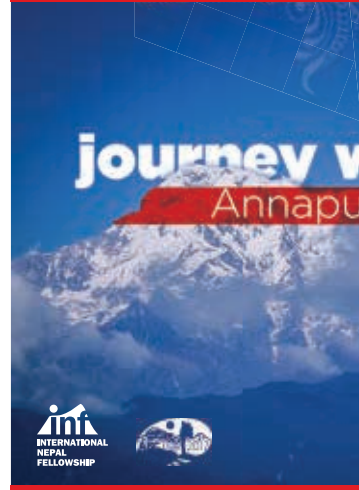


ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

INF New Zealand's Director Sean Martson recently spoke to a group of 120 seven to ten-year-olds at a local school in Blockhouse Bay, New Zealand. Sean spoke about the effects of the 2015 earthquakes as well as INF's Smokeless Stoves Project. The Smokeless Stoves Project seeks to reduce both deforestation and the workload for girls collecting firewood. It also hopes to reduce burns and other health concerns from open fires.

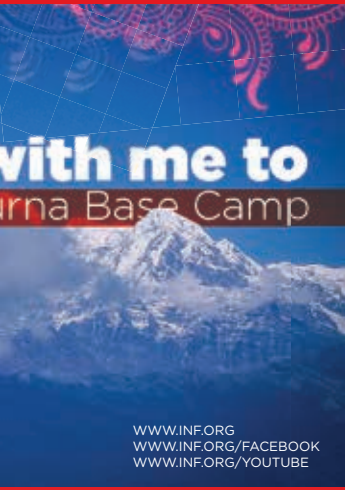
Sean also spoke at a retirement home whose residents had raised significant funds for the INF earthquake appeal. He gave an update on where the funds had been used and progress on the rebuild. Sean encouraged both groups to consider ways they could continue to support these projects and INF's work more broadly.

ABC TREK ...



In November this year INF staff member Selena Courtness will be trekking with a team to Annapurna Base Camp [ABC]. "My journey is much more than reaching ABC. I'm inspired by the work of INF and hope to raise funds towards their work in Nepal," says Selena.

COME ALONG!



GET ON BOARD THE VISION

An INF Vision Trip is an exciting way to experience first-hand the work of INF and partner organisations as they serve in an incredibly beautiful yet extremely challenging environment.

You will learn about how INF and partner organisations bring hope and relief to those affected by poverty, disability and natural disasters; see how INF's international workers partner with the local church and Christians to live out the command to 'love your neighbour'; and reflect on your faith as you visit vibrant Nepali Churches. Most trips include an optional trek component.

If you are interested in joining a trip next year contact the INF Australia office at ausoffice@au.inf.org.

If you've been encouraged or inspired by any of these activities, get in touch with your local INF office [see back cover for details] or our website on how you could support us through praying, donating, serving with us, or sharing our stories!



PASS IT ON!

According to recent surveys, two or three people read each copy of a contemporary mission magazine. After reading it, why not pass on your copy of 'Today in Nepal' to a friend? Or share the magazine online at www.inf.org.

PLEASE NOTE

Letters and emails are most welcome and should be addressed to TiN, The Editor, INF, PO Box 1230, Kathmandu, Nepal / tin@inf.org or get in touch via Facebook or Twitter.

Readers are welcome to re-use articles from 'Today in Nepal' with due acknowledgement to INF – Ed.

a holistic approach to care

Dr Dipak Maharjan [Medical Director, GPH] reports

It gives me great pleasure to share with you how faithful the Lord is, and continues to be, with all the things He has placed in our hands to steward.

For more than 60 years Green Pastures Hospital [GPH] has served those with disabilities from leprosy until the work broadened to include rehabilitation for those with spinal cord injuries and strokes. In November of 2015 GPH opened it's Ear Centre providing a centre of excellence for ear diseases and serving Nepalis across the country. Now, GPH is focusing its work on orthopaedic and spinal disorders, providing high level care for people living with disabilities related to trauma and other spinal complications.

Over the past three decades there has been a shift from high levels of disease from infection and malnutrition to trauma, which is now considered by many to be a silent epidemic. Trauma kills more people in low to middle income countries like Nepal than HIV, malaria and tuberculosis combined*. An increasing number of young people are disabled which has a profound effect on their families and eventually on the socio economy of the country. One of the United Nation's sustainable development goals is now focused on reducing trauma.

GPH has developed a holistic approach to the care of each of its patients. From ensuring patients receive appropriate medical treatment including surgery to full rehabilitation. The Rehabilitation Unit at GPH provides complete post-surgery care including village life simulation, vocational training and assisted community integration. Peer counseling and pastoral care also play an important role in the overall care of patients.

A multiple purpose chapel and training hall are in the works for this year along with plans to renovate and upgrade the physiotherapy unit. With an increasing number of patients with trauma and spinal disorders, developing a specialised trauma centre is now a pressing need. Work is already underway to develop a funding proposal.

The Department of Health Services Development has been established to oversee these exciting developments. It will focus on developing new clinical programmes, increasing donor support, and establishing working groups to develop the facilities so that GPH will become a world leader and model for rehabilitation and trauma care in low to middle income countries.

*WHO, 2017



building a bright future

After nearly six decades of service to the poor and marginalised of Nepal, Green Pastures Hospital [GPH] has had its first major restoration and renovation, enabling it to continue providing excellent care to its patients.

Sunday 23 July saw the official opening of the newly refurbished rehabilitation centre at the Green Pastures Complex. The work was partly in response to damage from the 2015 earthquakes that left several original buildings unfit for patients but it has also been part of a long-term plan for developing GPH.

GPH hopes to become increasingly self-sufficient and so the new wards have been built to increase the number of outpatients who are able to pay for their treatment whilst still caring for those that are unable to afford treatment.

New technology has been incorporated in the new building, wards feature epoxy flooring that stops bacteria from growing and helps maintain a sterile work environment. Other improvements include a brand new operating theatre equipped with an audio-video system to enable doctors to communicate better during surgery. In an effort to keep costs down some of the original bricks were cleaned and recycled into the new structure.

The inauguration ceremony was celebrated amongst the INF family, INF Nepal Board members, AGM members, local church leaders, ex-pat friends and INF staff at the GPH complex today. INF/UK CEO, John Reynolds, and INF Nepal Board Chairperson Mr RC Timothy officially cut the ribbon. The ceremony also included the foundation laying of the multipurpose chapel at the heart of the GPH complex, which will be completed in mid-2018.

“I walked the site a few days ago with Dr Dipak [GPH’s Medical Director] and ... it looks absolutely lovely. We again have a hospital building that we can all feel proud of,” said John Reynolds. “Green Pastures was [always meant] to be a place where patients could find healing, and be refreshed, physically, emotionally and spiritually – a place to meet the needs of the whole person.”

The newly renovated buildings and the promise of a chapel will ensure GPH can deliver this to every patient that comes through its doors.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Please thank God with us for the newly renovated buildings at Green Pastures Hospital and the Chapel that will be added to the complex. We are thankful to all those who have supported us in prayer and financially around the world. Please consider giving to the work of Green Pastures Hospital and partnering with INF’s staff as they work tirelessly to provide a holistic model for rehabilitation and trauma care to those who need it most across Nepal. www.inf.org/donate

Window overlooking the OT for training purpose
PHOTO: AIMEE LEWIS



Newly reconstructed GPH building
PHOTO: AIMEE LEWIS



inspired to serve



PHOTO: ROWAN BUTLER

Prem GC began working with INF after the devastating earthquakes of 2015. Inspired by the organisation's track record working with Nepal's poor and marginalised, he joined INF as they began work in Gorkha, the epicentre of the quake, empowering and rehabilitating those affected by the disaster. Prem shares his INF journey...

The first time I heard about INF was when a neighbour in my village affected by leprosy was treated at INF's hospital in Dang. I grew up in a remote mountainous area of Pyuthan District in the Mid-West of Nepal before moving to Pokhara to further my studies. In Pokhara, I witnessed the excellent services Green Pastures Hospital was providing to the sick, poor and marginalised. I hoped I would be able to serve through an organisation like INF.

After the devastating earthquakes shook Nepal in 2015 INF began its rehabilitation and empowerment project in Gorkha. I heard the project was looking for staff and applied for the role of Community Based Rehabilitation [CBR] supervisor. I was fortunate enough to get the job and am currently enjoying serving people with disabilities in ten remote wards in the District.

Although many relief and rehabilitation projects exist in the earthquake-affected areas of Gorkha District INF is the only organisation working alongside people with disabilities. The project is specifically focused on rehabilitating and empowering people with disabilities, their families and communities. My work involves modifying or building houses for people with disabilities, and rebuilding or refurbishing schools to make them disabled friendly for students. The project also assists in the treatment of people with disabilities by providing assistive devices, supporting income generation activities as well as creating and capacity building Self-Help Groups.

I am very happy working with INF, an organisation with a great history and strong values. I'm particularly inspired when my role takes me to remote communities to work alongside those with disabilities. I feel the weight of responsibility and am encouraged to work harder. Seeing hope and happiness return to people's lives through our support brings me enormous joy.

I have always been inspired by how INF has lived out the teachings of Christ in their service to the community. It impacted me personally and I accepted Christ as my saviour ten years ago. Serving through INF is an opportunity to share God's love, to live out the gospel through work and obey God's greatest commandment. I am grateful to INF for this opportunity and feel blessed to be able to serve through INF.

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Please pray for Prem and others working on the Gorkha Rehabilitation and Community Empowerment [GRACE] Project, that they may continue to effectively help those living with a disability to rebuild their lives following the earthquakes of 2015. Please consider supporting the project: www.inf.org/donate/

partners in prayer

Prayer is the great enabler and as our faithful prayer advocates, we thank you for enabling INF's work to bring hope and restoration to Nepal.

Each edition of Today in Nepal highlights a part of INF's work, and hence covers all INF's work and staff over the three editions published each year. For up-to date prayer information go to www.inf.org/pray, where you can also sign up to receive monthly Prayer Notes. This edition features INF's Community Development work and staff.

"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners..." Isaiah 61:1

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In some places where INF works, bonded labor and oppressive behaviour towards women are a part of everyday life. INF seeks to build communities where all can thrive, using their gifts and talents. INF wants to see children reach their potential through education, and for healthcare to be accessible.

In order to serve remote communities, staff often undertake long and treacherous journeys, leaving family and friends and moving to areas where they feel isolated.

INF's community work is led by **Dr Buddhi Thapa**.

The community funding team is led by **Deepak KC**, supported by **Bhagirath Bhandari** [Dang], **Amitdan Gurung** [Jumla], **Esther Gurung** [Banke], **Nilisha Lama Karki** [Kaski] and **Sharon Joshua Tiwari** [Pokhara].

DANG CLUSTER [DANG, ROLPA, KAPILVASTU]

Shyam BK oversees INF's community work in the Dang cluster, supported by **Anjali Baral** and **Arjun Kapri**.

INF's work in Dang cluster includes a focus on maternal and child health, supported by **Inge Baumann-May**.



DR BUDDHI THAPA



DEEPAK KC



BHAGIRATH BHANDARI



AMITDAN GURUNG



NILISHA, SHARON AND ESTHER

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks for the community agreement that has been signed, enabling INF to proceed with its work.
- Give thanks for each team member's gifts.
- Pray for funding of INF's work and for recruitment of skilled Christian staff for work in remote districts.
- Pray for the new community work in Kalikot including good relationships to form.



SHYAM BK



ANJALI BARAL



ARJUN KAPRI



NEIL AND INGE BAUMANN-MAY

Keshav Chaudhary works with Self-Help Groups for people living with a disability or HIV/AIDS. Keshav says that often people are reluctant to seek help because of the stigma attached to their conditions. He is thankful this is beginning to change.

INF Dang's other areas of focus include:

- hygiene and safe water
- improving health for poor and marginalised people
- helping people out of poverty

“For I know the plans I have for you’, declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and future.” Jeremiah 29:11

JUMLA CLUSTER [JUMLA, SURKHET, KALIKOT]

Dhirendra Rai oversees this community cluster with support from **Jeewan Giri**. The Surkheta community work has been completed and now work begins in other poor areas.

Projects in Jumla now include:

- Community Health and Development and the Nutrition Project.
- Sabalata Project – supporting people with a disability

BANKE CLUSTER [BANKE, MUGU, BAJURA]

The work of this community cluster is overseen by **Ram Bahadur Sjinjali**, with **Daljit Gharti**, **Avishek BK** and **Juwari Lal** managing work in the Mugu, Banke and Bajura Districts respectively.

Banke District borders India, and is a key channel for Nepalis to migrate. Faced with high levels of political and religious confrontation, staff find it challenging to support safe migration.

Three new projects are starting in the hilly district of Bajura. In order to access some areas of their work, the team face dangerous journeys through landslide affected areas.

In mountainous Mugu, INF will be working with a new partner organisation in 2017 to help the many still living in extreme poverty. “When I saw these changes in the lives of Dalit people, my heart was so satisfied that our efforts and resources had not gone in vain,” says Daljit Gharti.



KESHAV CHAUDHARY

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks for a new birthing centre which has seen a reduction in maternal and neonatal death rates.
- Pray for the safety of staff like Keshav who often travel alone to remote areas.
- Pray for the families who lost loved ones in last year's landslide in Rolpa, and for the success of a new women's empowerment project there.



DHIRENDRA RAI



JEEWAN GIRI

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks that malnutrition rates have declined significantly.
- Pray for God's will to be clear for staff, such as Tara Karki, who will be affected by the phasing out of the Surkheta community work.
- Pray for more buildings in Jumla district to be made accessible for people with disabilities.



RAM BDR SINJALI



DALJIT GHARTI



AVISHEK BK



JUWARI LAL

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks to God for opportunities to serve communities in remote parts of Nepal.
- Pray for safety of staff as they travel and for wisdom and guidance in the work they do.
- Pray for God's guiding and leading towards the communities who need help and for good working relationships with new local partners.

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” Romans 12:12-15

KASKI CLUSTER [KASKI, GORKHA, BAGLUNG]

Bishnu Giri is the manager of the team, with support from Gyanendra Prasad Tripathi in Baglung, and **Ram Prasad Khanal** in Gorkha.

INF staff in Kaski cluster continue their work with people living with disabilities, encouraging them to become active members of their communities.

INF’s work in HIV/AIDS however will be phased out this year with support from other agencies who can now provide those services.

Gorkha was seriously affected by the earthquakes of 2015. Individuals and communities are still trying to rebuild their lives.

“I am thankful for my dedicated staff members and their tireless efforts to make INF’s mission a reality,” says Bishnu Giri.

DISASTER RELIEF AND RESPONSE

Because of Nepal’s vulnerability to earthquakes, landslides and floods, there has always been a need to respond to disasters and emergencies as part of INF’s work.

Thomas Meier is INF’s Disaster Response and Resilience Manager, and leads the team which coordinates work in central and western Nepal. Their work includes preparing communities to reduce the impacts of disasters.

GRACE PROJECT

The Gorkha Rehabilitation and Community Empowerment [GRACE] project was established in response to the 2015 earthquakes, where hundreds of thousands of people lost their homes. A focus of this project is on people with disabilities affected by the earthquake.

Ram Prasad Khanal is leading this project, which includes rebuilding 108 houses and three schools. Physiotherapy, scholarships for disabled children to attend school, referrals for medical treatment and care, provision of mobility devices, and the formation of Self-Help Groups, are also part of the project.

“What a joy to see people with disabilities not confined within their homes!” says Ram Prasad Khanal.



BISHNU GIRI



RAM PRASAD KHANAL

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks for lives that are transformed with new hope.
- Please pray for the work engaging people with disabilities.
- Give thanks for the successful handover of the HIV/AIDS project.



THOMAS AND CHRISTINA MEIER WITH FAMILY

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks for a good relationship with local government officials to ensure people most in need get help quickly.
- Pray that the team is equipped to respond efficiently to local disasters.
- Pray for Thomas and the team to find a strategy that meets the needs of all parts of INF’s work.



GRACE TEAM

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- Give thanks for government approvals for all of GRACE’s construction projects.
- Pray that construction of new earthquake-resistant, disability-friendly houses will continue smoothly and be a great blessing to all who receive them.

bible spotlight

in His Image

“So, God created mankind in His own image.” Genesis 1:27

A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

While the bible teaches us to love the poor and marginalised, and to speak up for the oppressed, Nepali culture continues to see people living with disabilities as cursed by the gods and therefore lesser individuals.

People living with disabilities are not given equal respect and sadly the broader thinking of society has influenced even the Nepali church. As a result, very few churches have ministries focused on people with disabilities.

INF is working hard to break the stigma and encourage churches to adopt a more biblical perspective on disability. Both through its Community Health and Development work, and its Community Based Rehabilitation, INF’s work is centred on inclusion and unity. INF recently undertook a survey of churches in Gorkha and Pokhara. Nine out of every ten churches were not accessible to someone using a wheelchair. Most used inappropriate language for people living with disabilities.

INF’s Amos Gurung has developed an ‘In His Image Workshop’, which focuses on the theology of disability. It emphasises that all people are made in the image of God and are equal before Him. We are all members of one body, and some need special care. The workshops also include opportunities for participants to try using crutches and wheelchairs so that they can begin to understand the challenges faced by others.

“We have also formed the Nepal Christian Disability Network [NCDN] to advocate the Nepal Bible Society for more disability sensitive language to be used in the Bible and other materials,” says Amos. “My goal is to create disability-friendly communities and to help churches to be more aware of disability and their responsibility towards people with disabilities.”

PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE –

Please pray that the Christian community and the government would learn how to use more appropriate language when talking about people living with disabilities, and that practical steps would be taken by churches to include those whose needs are different. May God’s love for all people be evident among the Nepal Christian community.

Shanti Kumari Shah became blind at age two and her husband lost his vision four years ago. Her entire life has been filled with negative comments from other people. She has heard passersby question what she or her parent’s did wrong in a previous life that caused her blindness. At a Nepali church Shanti Jumari and her husband appreciated being part of a community that didn’t gossip about their disability. However they could still hear the word Andhaa [stig-

matized word for blind in Nepali] being used in the sermon and bible readings.

Sita Rana’s story is similar since she lost her eyesight at age 12. She was told by others in her community that her blindness was a result of sins in her previous life.

Shanti Kumari and Sita Rana both hope for a day when people stop using the word Andhaa altogether.



NEPALI VEGETABLE CURRY WITH LENTIL SOUP AND RICE

The words simply mean 'lentil, rice, vegetable curry', but dal bhat tarkari is a foundation of Nepali cuisine. Most Nepalis eat dal bhat tarkari twice a day; mid-morning and early evening.

DAL [LENTIL SOUP]

Ingredients:

Oil or ghee - 3 tbsp; Ground coriander - 2 tsp; Ground cumin - 2 tsp; Turmeric - 1 tsp; Onion, minced - 1; Chilli pepper, minced - 1; Tomatoes, chopped - 1 cup; Dal lentils - 1 cup; Water - 4 cups; Salt and pepper - to taste; Coriander, chopped - 1/2 bunch

Procedure:

Heat the oil or ghee in a saucepan and add the spices. Stir for about 30 seconds, lightly toasting. Stir in the onion, chilli pepper and sauté until the onions are cooked through.

Add the tomatoes and cook down for a minute or two. Then stir in the dal, water, and salt and pepper to season. Bring to a boil, then simmer for about 45 minutes.

BHAT [RICE]

Ingredients:

Basmati rice - 2 cups; Water - 4 cups

Procedure:

Place the rice in a bowl, rinse and drain well. Add the 4 cups of water and set aside to soak the rice for about 30 minutes.

Put the rice and water into a heavy-bottomed pot and bring to a boil. Cover tightly, reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let rest, covered, for another 10 minutes before serving.

TARKARI [VEGETABLE CURRY]

Ingredients:

Ground coriander - 1 tbsp; Ground cumin - 2 tsp; Turmeric - 1 tsp; Oil or ghee - 3 tbsp; Onion, finely chopped - 1; Garlic, finely chopped - 3 or 4 cloves; Fresh ginger, peeled and minced - 1-inch piece; Tomatoes, seeded and chopped - 2; Potatoes, cubed - 2; Cauliflower, cut into florets - 1 head; Water - 1 cup; Salt and pepper - to taste; Coriander, chopped - 1/2 bunch; Lemons or limes, cut into wedges - 2

Procedure:

Heat the oil or ghee in a wok or a heavy-bottomed pot. Add the coriander, cumin and turmeric and stir

for about 30 seconds to lightly toast. Then stir in the onion, garlic and ginger. Sauté until the onion is well cooked, 4 to 7 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and cook down for a minute or two. Next add in the potatoes and cauliflower and stir. Add the water and season.

Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer until the vegetables are cooked through and tender, about 10 to 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the chopped coriander.

TO SERVE

Dal bhat tarkari is typically served on a thali, a metal serving platter, with a bowl of dal, a scoop of rice and a serving of vegetable curry. Delicious served with pappadums, lime pickle, flash fried spinach and spicy tomato chutney [pickle].

Servings:

4 to 6





Life
in all
its
Fullness

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