

# today**in**nepal

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together**for**nepal

Sharing and celebrating 65 years of service to Nepal

  
INTERNATIONAL  
NEPAL  
FELLOWSHIP



# EDITORIAL

## 65 YEARS OF FAITHFULNESS

God has been incredibly gracious in allowing INF to see so much fruitfulness over the last 65 years. He has used ordinary people to achieve the extraordinary and in this issue of Today in Nepal we reflect on that faithfulness, while looking forward eager to follow His leading.

Nepal has changed significantly since INF first began working with leprosy patients in Pokhara but INF has remained committed to serving those most in need. Today INF is working in some of the most remote communities in the country. Read about our community development work in Mugu on page 6.

## INNOVATION AND RESILIENCE

An increase in natural disasters has seen INF set up new programmes to help communities cope in times of crisis and to become resilient for the future. INF has recently established the SHELTER project in Lamjung, the district next to Gorkha – the epicentre of the 2015 earthquake. The project is focused on resilience, training and building earthquake resistant homes [page 3].

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Prayer and financial partnership around the world has been the backbone of INF’s work over the past 65 years. Supporters of INF continue to show their love for the people of Nepal by raising funds for a new water bore at Green Pastures, buying bicycles for staff in Kapilvastu or participating in cycling and trekking fund–raisers in the Himalayas. Get inspired by reading about what’s happening around the world on page 8.

Thank you for your faithfulness in partnering with us.

*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

An INF client Basanti Kori, who shared her inspirational story of empowerment with INF conference attendees in Pokhara.

PHOTO: PRATIMA KAFLE

# Great is **HIS** faithfulness

## 65 years of INF

**Over the past 65 years God has demonstrated his faithfulness through INF and its people in extraordinary ways. At times, INF's founders were unsure what God was calling them to but they were determined to follow faithfully.**

**This edition of Today in Nepal explores what that faithfulness looked like and, despite huge uncertainty in Nepal's future, how INF is determined to continue following God's leading in faithfulness.**

**Alex Barwick shares insights from INF's leadership team.**

It was in 1952, after sixteen years of waiting and praying on the Indian border that a small group of medical missionaries and Nepali Christians travelled by foot and by truck to Pokhara where they set up a clinic and soon after 'The Shining Hospital'. The Hindu Kingdom of Nepal had long been closed to the outside world but now, with permission from the Nepali Government, the Nepal Evangelistic Band [NEB], as INF was then known, could continue its work on Nepali soil.

The early work of INF was focused on eradicating leprosy and rehabilitating those affected by the disease. Green Pastures Hospital opened its doors in 1957 specifically to care for those Nepalis no one else would treat.

"Initially the work was focused on health, as there were no other institutions providing health services across the entire west of Nepal in the 1950s," says Prem Subedi, INF Nepal's Executive Director.

Over the decades this work has continued, expanded and evolved to meet the changing needs of Nepalis. Green Pastures has since extended its specialist medical care into the fields of disability, obstetric fistula, spinal cord injury, skin diseases and ear problems.

Simultaneously, the growth of medical outreach; community based rehabilitation; and community health and development work particularly towards the west of Nepal has been significant.

"Our community development work began focusing on alleviating poverty and community organising," says Prem. "Today INF is working in the most remote and difficult areas of Nepal, serving those most in need."

INF's International Director, Alastair Seaman, believes INF's work empowering grassroots communities is indicative of the organisation's commitment to building local capacity and ensuring the work has an enduring impact.

"We've strengthened health services across the country, helped launch the physiotherapy profession in Nepal and provided world class training to more than 90 doctors at INF's specialist ear centre," says Alastair.

However, Alastair says the biggest and most exciting change, is INF's transition to a Nepali-led organisation under the guidance of capable and committed Nepali Christians.

"At the same time that it's become harder to place western volunteers in Nepal, we've been blessed with a rise in the availability of capable, young Christian Nepali professionals in all areas," says Alastair. "It's particularly exciting that after 63 years we were finally able to appoint a visionary Nepali Christian doctor as our Medical Director."

As INF has reflected God's faithfulness over the years, so too has the Nepali church. "It's been a joy to see the Nepali church grow alongside INF, often gently encouraged by our staff," says Alastair.

Over INF's 65 years Nepal has changed significantly. Prem points to the rapid and dramatic political, technological, religious and socio-economic changes of recent decades. "One thing that has remained unchanged however is serving people in need and sharing the love of God by treating body, soul and spirit," he says.

Alastair agrees. “What stays constant is the way that God’s purposes are served not simply by an organisation, but by individuals within that organisation who are willing to live lives of love, compassion and service.”

INF marked its 65<sup>th</sup> year with a special three day celebration in Pokhara in November bringing together friends from INF organisations in Australia, Nepal, UK, New Zealand and North America as well as other long-term friends and partners from around the world.

“It was a great time of teaching, sharing stories of God’s faithfulness and sharing our vision for the next chapter of INF,” says Alastair.

That vision for the future is one of innovation, creativity and an ability to respond to the changing needs of the poor and disadvantaged; to live and work as a distinctively Christian organisation; to incorporate disaster response and resilience philosophies throughout INF’s community work; and becoming increasingly locally sustainable.

“We’ll be pursuing our vision of clinical centres of excellence and training that provide Christ-centred care for people with disabilities and stigmatising illnesses,” says Alastair. “I’m excited by plans to help Nepali church leaders develop a biblical understanding of disability so that churches can be more welcoming to people with disabilities and more supportive of people with disabilities in their communities.”

Prem also highlights INF’s focus on growing relationships and work with churches and other Christian organisations.

Endurance and prayer have seen God’s faithfulness at work over the years in Nepal, using ordinary men and women to achieve the extraordinary.

“In the history of world mission, many have laboured long and hard without seeing significant fruit in their lifetime,” says Alastair. “God has been incredibly gracious in allowing INF to see so much fruitfulness over the last 65 years.”

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – Please join us in praying that as we build for the future, we’d do so on the solid foundation of trust in God and sensitivity to His leading.



Chris Drew and Nalome Rongong compete the conference  
PHOTO: ANIL RAI



Delegates gather at the Together for Nepal Conference  
PHOTO: KSHITIJ TIWARI

# Finding **SHELTER**

Bishnu Giri reports

**A third of all homes in Dordi Rural Municipality were destroyed in the devastating earthquake of 2015. Dordi is in Lamjung District, which sits alongside Gorkha District, the epicentre of the quake. Rebuilding houses has been slow and problematic due to a lack of available resources and new government regulations. INF has started a new project in the area, SHELTER, focused on resilience, training and building earthquake resistant homes.**

Numerous families have half built homes in Dordi having discovered they are ineligible for the second round of government grant money. Their initial construction doesn't meet the required regulations mostly as a result of inadequate building supplies and unqualified local builders.

INF's SHELTER project stands for 'Safer Housing Exercise in Lamjung through Training and Empowering for Resilience'. It's focused on providing housing for the most vulnerable in the community and properly training labourers who can continue the work well into the future.

A team of 10 INF staff, including five engineers and three community mobilisers, are rolling out the first stage of SHELTER, building 27 model earthquake resistant houses. Trained masons and builders are working under the careful guidance of specialised

engineers. Various stages of construction are open to the community to provide practical demonstrations for community members to watch, interact and learn basic concepts around earthquake resistant building construction.

Elements of the training include site selection, reinforcement requirements, appropriate openings, and safe wall and roof construction. Where possible, the new builds will incorporate materials salvaged from damaged houses while other resources will be purchased locally whenever possible.

SHELTER aims to assist communities to become more resilient, to improve their capacity and knowledge for the benefit of the entire community.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – If you would like to give to support the work of SHELTER visit <<https://www.inf.org/donate/>>**



A damaged house near SHELTER project office in Dordi Lamjung  
PHOTO: BISHNU GIRI

# A LIFE SWEEP AWAY

Sanjita Parajuli, INF Disaster Response and Resilience Department intern, reports

Balak Ram was woken in bed by rising flood waters at 3am. He soon realised the entire room was filled with water and he would have to act quickly. Experience told him the rising waters were incredibly dangerous, so he woke his family and moved everyone to higher ground.

Balak Ram supports the eight members of his family entirely through farming. He has just enough land to grow crops for the family's own needs with a little left over to sell.

That morning the monsoonal rains devastated his family's livelihood. Balak Ram lost his entire home and with it, all the grain and food he had stored including wheat, lentils, rice; as well as the crops in the fields. Even his goat and ox were swept away in the torrent of water.

"All of my dreams were swept away by the river, it has not only left me numb and in tears but my whole community is mourning. We are all soaked wet, not just by the floodwater but by the tears of pain and emptiness", said Balak Ram.


"Our situation is made worse by the fact we are unable to start rebuilding, we have nothing left to build with

and cannot cultivate our land. We are left in a hopeless situation."

Balak Ram and his family live in Raptisonari Rural Municipality, part of the Banke District where INF has been working with communities for many years. As a result, INF was able to respond quickly.

INF Banke in coordination with INF's Disaster Response and Resilience Department [DRRD] began working in close partnership with the Government of Nepal and other local organisations providing food relief packages for 625 households, hygiene kits for 1300 households, 57 family shelter kits, medicine, health promotion materials as well as providing emergency health care through health camps to treat and advise those suffering from dysentery, typhoid, skin diseases and fever. Several months on in October, INF began the Recovery Programme in Raptisonari supporting hundreds of households including Balak Ram and his family with training, shelter and livelihood material worth more than USD130,000.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE**  
Please consider partnering in INF's disaster relief and rehabilitation work by donating here <https://www.inf.org/donate/>



Farmer Balak Ram Tharu watched his livelihood being swept away in the floods of August 2017. It was painfully familiar, bringing back memories of a similarly destructive flood he lived through in 1983. The flooding last year brought devastation across Nepal, India and Bangladesh. INF's team in Banke worked closely with the Nepali Government to deliver much needed food relief, emergency shelter, and the tools and materials needed to rebuild people's livelihoods.

Balak Ram Tharu and his wife  
PHOTO: JYOTI CHHETRI

# A flood of disaster resilience



Flood water flowing through a school in Fattepur Rapti Sonari Rural Municipality  
PHOTO: INF BANKE TEAM

For a relatively small country, Nepal has a surprisingly diverse landscape. From the desolate, rocky fields along the Tibetan border to its majestic, snow capped Himalayan ranges and beautiful lakes; its rhododendron forests to its jungle lands on the Terai, Nepal is a showcase of natural diversity.

But Nepal's unique landscape is also one of its greatest weaknesses. Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world when it comes to climate change. It is prone to natural disasters such as flooding, landslides, earthquakes, soil erosion and drought and is currently ranked 13th in terms of climate change vulnerability.\* Natural disasters are a major barrier to Nepal's infrastructure development and, as was evidenced in the flooding that devastated mid western Nepal last August, disasters are wreaking havoc. The media reported that in Nepal half a million people were affected by floods and landslides in 2017 and that more than 125 people had died from the monsoonal rains.

Thousands of people were displaced and some are still missing. Family homes and farmland were lost in the powerful floodwaters but so too was community infrastructure. Electricity, water supplies, communication and transportation were either disrupted or destroyed. All this, amidst the ongoing infrastructure rebuild following the 2015 earthquake.

In the wake of natural disasters people are also faced with serious health concerns. A lack of clean drinking water and inadequate sanitation can lead to outbreaks of epidemics such as fever, typhoid, skin diseases, dysentery and diarrhoea. Social taboos and injustice

in Nepal have also resulted in reports of the vulnerable being taken advantage of. Stories of harassment, violence, rape and blackmailing have circulated, though few official complaints have been registered. Disaster not only takes away peoples' property but often their dignity and health, both mental and physical.

Disaster management, along with other forms of community management and development is fraught with problems in Nepal. While the Government has recognised a need to improve relief services and set up systems to reduce the effects of disasters, progress is often hampered by the chaos of unplanned urbanisation; low literacy rates; ongoing deforestation; inadequate physical infrastructure; and a lack of appropriate technologies.

INF is leading the way in building disaster preparedness and awareness since it began its Disaster Response and Resilience Department [DRRD] in 2015. The Department is developing strong relationships with government agencies in INF's working areas and networking among vulnerable communities to ensure people are better-prepared and able to access assistance quickly when disaster strikes.


**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – Please pray that local authorities and organisations such as INF may continue to work effectively together during natural disasters. Pray that the churches of Nepal are also able to continue assisting in providing relief and rehabilitation.

*\*[Source: 2012 Climate Change Risk Atlas]*



DRRD team members in rescue of the villagers affected from the flood in Rapti river  
PHOTO: INF BANKE TEAM

# Change in the Himalayas



In the Himalayas, physical remoteness, poor soils, and old traditions can represent barriers to progress for local communities. INF's International Director, Alastair Seaman unpacks INF's approach to working with locals to improve living standards and opportunities.

Shadows lengthen and the air chills as the village elders file towards the meeting space – a small plateau of flat grass beside a little lake high in the Himalayas. I'm in the Mugu district of Western Nepal, one of the most beautiful – and poorest – places on earth.

According to the 2016 Nepal Population Report, life expectancy here is 59. One in 12 children will die before they reach the age of five. The challenges of living here are huge. Poor soils and steep slopes mean that there is never enough food to go round. Most men migrate to India for six months each year to find casual work so that they can buy enough food for their families to survive. Local belief systems are highly fatalistic, stunting vision and any sense of agency, while strong caste divisions limit the community's ability to act effectively together. We're a long way from anywhere. Its 10 hours walk and 22 hours painfully slow driving on treacherous roads to get to the nearest regional centre.

There are no quick fixes – but there is hope.

INF has been living and working alongside these people for the last three years using an approach that we have honed over 20 years of working in similar communities. At the heart of this approach is an emphasis on building strong personal relationships.

We don't come with a pre-formed view of what the community's problems are – or of how to solve them. Instead we come as learners. We seek to build relationship and earn trust. We support villagers to develop their own plans that focus on harnessing local assets and advocating for better services from government. It's a painfully slow and undramatic process.

As the meeting begins, the men are eager to tell me of all that's been accomplished in the three years since our staff came to live here. Every house now has its own toilet and people no longer defecate at the edge of the village. They have a new community water system that brings clean water to the village so that women no longer have to make the long journey down to the river and back each day. They've started a cooperative and have planted a community apple orchard that should start to generate a community income from next year.

And then a woman speaks. This in itself signifies a profound change in what is a strongly paternalistic culture. She describes how they came to realise the critical importance of girl's education and the damage caused by the widespread practice of marrying daughters early. Recognising this, the village had just come to a collective decision that none of its girls should be allowed to marry until they had completed their secondary schooling. This initiative was entirely home-grown. It cost no money and yet it will have a transformative long-term impact on the lives of these girls.

With the vision, confidence, and skills that have been sown here, there's no reason why the resourceful highlanders of Mugu can't continue to make their own way to a better future for their children.

**This is an edited excerpt from a recently published essay in online Scottish magazine Cable. To read the full version head to <https://www.cablemagazine.scot/>**

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – Help get the word out about what INF is doing in some of the most remote communities in the world, share the full article with friends or anyone interested in Nepal.



# Critical Vacancies

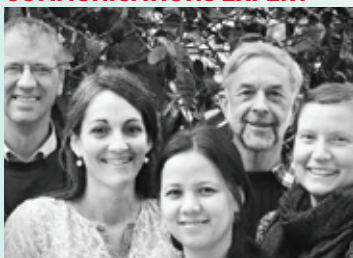
Is God calling you to Nepal? INF uses a special combination of expatriate and Nepali expertise to apply international level practice in a way that is relevant to the local context, always with the aim of increasing capacity in Nepal. Here are a number of current key expatriate needs in the organisation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

## COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT



Are you excited about communicating the impact of INF's work to an international audience? We are looking for people to help with editing and developing effective communications strategies.

## 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.

## 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 needs help to strengthen and develop its Nepali HR team and recruit the expatriate expertise that it needs to realise its exciting vision.

## 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.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – If you're a Christian interested in working in an exciting, international, cross-cultural mission, email [recruitment@inf.org](mailto: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](mailto:id@inf.org), skype: [alastair.seaman](https://www.skype.com/en/contacts/alastair.seaman)

# What's Happening,

Be encouraged to

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE**

## Canada

### WELL WATERED

INF Canada has recently raised funds to enable the construction of a 100,000 litre water reservoir system and tank including a new water bore at the Green Pastures complex. The water will primarily be used by INF's Initiative for Financial Sustainability to maintain their expanded farmland but will be beneficial for all operations on site.

### 10,000 STEPS

During September and October of 2017 the HealthBridge Foundation of Canada's Steps for Change initiative encouraged volunteers to walk, run or roll in solidarity with women and children in Nepal who need better access to health and nutrition.

Participants took 10,000 steps a day for four weeks while experiencing a virtual journey with women in Nepal to understand the daily obstacles they face. INF is one of Healthbridge's local partners in Nepal.



Naomi Reed

## Australia

### MAKING TRACKS

Forging ahead with fundraising efforts from both government and individual donors INF Australia has recently supported community work in Jumla with AU\$300,000 – thank you to INFA and AusAid for this generous support. INFA has also supported health work in Kapilvastu through the purchase of 12 new bicycles to assist field based support staff travel to visit clients, attend meetings and run workshops. The hours it saves to ride rather than walk are priceless – well worth the AU\$1,200 invested to buy 12 new bicycles.

### VISION FOR NEPAL

Two different vision trips visited Nepal from Australia during October and November last year, we will hear more of their adventures in our next issue of TiN. One group, at print, had raised more than AU\$10,000 for Green Pastures Hospital – what a great effort.

### INF AMBASSADOR

Author and former INF worker, Naomi Reed, has become an INF Ambassador and will be sharing about the impact of INF's work over the coming year. Naomi spoke at INF Australia's AGM and at INF's recent conference in Nepal. She spent time visiting INF's work in Jumla and Nepalgunj and shared about her experience on INF's facebook page:  
[www.inf.org/facebook](http://www.inf.org/facebook)

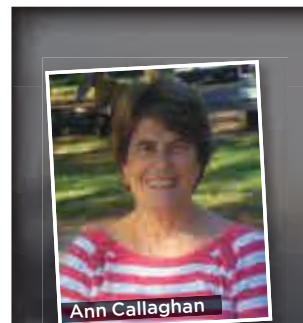
If you would like Naomi to come and speak at your church or conference, please contact [ausooffice@au.inf.org](mailto:ausooffice@au.inf.org)



Kapilvastu staff showing off their



A vision trip from Australia in R



Ann Callaghan

# around the world...

## UK

### PEDAL EMPOWERED

Are you a keen cyclist with a heart for adventure? If so, then INF UK has the cycle trip for you! Cycle Nepal in 2018 alongside EMMS International and help fund medical work in Nepal. For more information visit <https://inf.org.uk/newsitems/cycle-nepal/>

### IN THE CLASSROOM

INF UK is offering FREE resources to teachers about Nepal. Suitable for Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4; PSHE, SATs, GCSE [or all primary and secondary levels], as well as school assemblies. Check out the resources at <http://inf.org.uk/teachers-resources/> and be sure to send feedback on how your lessons go.



their pedal power



aptipari village, Banke

## GONE TO GLORY

It is with sadness and thanksgiving that we share that Ann Callaghan [Aus] and Sarah Meanley [UK] both passed away recently. Ann used her nursing skills to serve the people of Nepal, while Sarah pioneered the work of prosthetics in Nepal. Please give thanks for their lives and pray for their families and friends.



Sarah Meanley

## New Zealand

### SMOKELESS STOVES

INF has developed a new Adopt-A-Project fundraising initiative; one of these is for smokeless stoves. To get involved visit [www.inf.org/INF-new-zealand/](http://www.inf.org/INF-new-zealand/)

New Zealand Director, Sean Marston, has been travelling around parts of the country to speak with people about INF and encourage them to be advocates for INF's work. If you're in New Zealand and keen to chat about how to get involved with INF contact Sean [[director@nz.inf.org](mailto:director@nz.inf.org)].



Libby and Matthias at PSC

### SCHOOL'S BACK!

Matthias and his wife [both from Germany] were travelling through Nepal and heard about the need for teachers at the Pokhara Study Centre [PSC]. Matthias is helping out for a few months and Libby, the new Principal, arrived in Nepal last September and after re-orientation will begin work in January. Libby has many years experience of work in Nepal and has previously served as both secondary music teacher and Principal at KISC.

## PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE –

If you've got an idea for a fantastic fundraiser or a way to share the story of what God is doing in Nepal contact your local INF office, they can help make it happen [see back page.]

# A complicated bundle of joy

Inge Baumann-May reports

Pregnancy and childbirth is mostly a time of joy and excited expectation but for many women in Nepal this time is overshadowed by a realistic fear of pregnancy and childbirth complications including death. A woman in Nepal is 42 times more likely to die in childbirth than a woman in Australia. In disadvantaged areas where INF is working, the lack of properly equipped birthing centres, absence of sufficiently trained and supported staff, as well as traditional beliefs and practises result in low attendance for antenatal care, fewer institutional deliveries and inadequate post-natal care. This combination leads to poor maternal and child health outcomes.

Over its 65 years working in Nepal INF has evolved to meet the changing needs of Nepal's most disadvantaged. From leprosy and TB to rehabilitation and community development, INF observed the real need in maternal, newborn and child health. In 2014 work began in this area in Dang and has since grown to include projects in Kapilvastu and Banke, both on the terai.

INF's project teams consist of highly skilled, dedicated and passionate women [plus a few men], both staff and volunteers, based in the communities in which they serve. They work with the management committee of health posts to improve services, provide support supervision to staff and work closely with mothers groups and community members to raise awareness about Maternal, Newborn and Child Health [MNCH]. Their daily work is challenging as they are permanently confronted with traditional beliefs and practises that disadvantage and dis-empower women, and change at the community level is very slow.

However, it is encouraging to see how they thrive



Inge with client



INF staff giving nutrition counselling to mothers  
PHOTO: INF BANKE TEAM

in their roles as they patiently engage and stimulate discussions that will finally lead to long-term change. They are appreciated and valued by the community and have earned credibility mainly because they are living in and with the community. Women tell us: "No other project does this, but you INF people are here [in our villages] with us."

With INF Nepal currently developing a long-term MNCH strategy, we hope and pray that we can further develop this crucial work, so that more and more of Nepal's marginalised and disadvantaged women and families will be able to embrace pregnancy and childbirth as a time of joy and happiness. We hope that over the next 65 years we will continue to bring you stories of innovation and change as we see improvement in maternal and child health and identify and respond to new areas of need.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – We are thankful for the INF workers and volunteers who care deeply about each woman they meet and are passionate about improving health outcomes for all expecting mothers and their babies.



# Challenging the past

Sunita is 19-years-old and pregnant with her second child. She lost her first baby last year after she went into labour at home. She hadn't attended any antenatal classes and so laboured for two days, becoming severely dehydrated and close to death, before family members finally took her to hospital. Sunita's life was saved, but her baby boy was stillborn. Without much rest and time to recover she was soon pregnant again. Being the youngest daughter-in-law she is responsible for the entire house, she also works in the field and is the last to eat after a long day's work. When one of our INF volunteers heard about her pregnancy she visited Sunita, she found her tired and malnourished. Family members are often key decision makers in the health of young women and children in the family. Understanding this cultural context, the INF volunteer called a family meeting to discuss Sunita's situation and the importance of her attend an antenatal clinic, eating healthily and delivering in a health facility. The family was sceptical of the need for these preventative measures and held little trust in 'modern medicine'. Sunita's mother-in-law initially opposed the idea but eventually agreed to accompany

Sunita to regular local mothers group meetings, where maternal and child health topics are discussed.

Fortunately, thanks to the INF volunteer's care, the clear health messages and discussion in the mothers groups, and a visit to the local health facility Sunita's mother-in-law, the key health decision maker in that family, was convinced and allowed her daughter-in-law to regularly attend antenatal classes. Sunita and her family have also begun saving a little money each week so that they will be able to pay for transport to the health post when Sunita goes in labour. Her mother-in-law has been encouraging neighbours to attend the mother's groups meetings too, having enjoyed the discussions around health and the benefits to her extended family. Sunita is now well equipped and heading for a better outcome of this pregnancy.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – Please prayer for Sunita and her baby, that she would have an uncomplicated labour and that her baby would be healthy. We also pray that others in her community would see the benefits of visiting the local health post and joining a mother's group.



One of 132 mothers' groups that INF is working with in Raptipari, Banke district [INF staff in the foreground]  
PHOTO: INF BANKE TEAM



For more than two decades, INF's Camps have faithfully provided specialised health services to Nepalis living in some of the most remote areas of Nepal. **Ellen Findlay, Mike Smith and Eka Dev Devkota** reflect on 25 years of Medical Camp work.

## *Celebrating* **25** *of* **Medical**

The Camps have not only improved the health and livelihoods of thousands of people, they have also trained government health workers, strengthened primary health centres and health posts that assist with the Camps and provide follow up care. The training provided to local doctors and other medical staff has developed invaluable skills for the future health of the country.

The Camps developed out of work at the Western Regional Hospital involving Dr. Mike Smith and Sr. Ellen Findlay. INF Camps Coordinator Eka Dev Devkota has also been part of the team from its earliest days, faithfully organising the mind-boggling logistics of most camps. Mike and Ellen saw the need to reach people in the more remote, mountainous, areas of Nepal, so they began planning and ran the first Ear Camp in 1993 in Beni, in Western Nepal.

At the time, the Beni road was closed and porters carried the equipment in to the camp. Ellen recalls wondering whether anyone would come to the camp but they were inundated with patients. Initially there were concerns about funding, staff and equipment, given this type of work was a first for INF but God has faithfully provided the team with vision and supplies for each camp.

Camps were then, and continue to be, very hard work. The first camp in Beni meant hours driving in a Land Rover, followed by several hours of walking carrying a basket of equipment. These days most of the travel is in Land Rovers with one big lorry to carry the equipment. Back in 1993, staff often shared poor accommodation with the local rats, ate questionable food, and had limited toilet and washing facilities. Setting up and cleaning areas for out-patients and the theatre was often a challenge, with poor sanitation - or no water at all. The Camps were usually managed by one surgeon and several supporting staff.

Ellen remembers Mike running between outpatients and the theatre, with no anaesthetist at hand, administering a cocktail of local anaesthetics that ensured pain free operations. Today, there are usually 24 people in each Camps team.

Mike recalls how very few roads accessed district centres in the early days and how it was unusual to find a doctor in the district hospital, with wards often deserted.

Today, almost every district centre in the country has some form of road access. In Jumla, the government

hospital has changed from a couple of small single story buildings to become an academy, with the imminent opening of a new 140-bed building. There are about 14 doctors, who conduct daily surgery including emergency, obstetrics and gynaecology, and orthopaedics. While this development is exceptional, all district hospitals INF staff have visited recently will have at least two or three doctors present, as well as many other health workers. The level of equipment is slowly improving and some of the previous health posts have become larger health centres, with vastly improved facilities.

Camps have not only been integral in bringing quality health care to remote places, they have also provided an opportunity for sharing the hope and truth of Jesus. INFers would offer a 'thought for the day' with visiting staff and any others who wanted to come. It was simple and informal but the Lord used our efforts and some came to be believers.

Over the past 25 years Camps have developed to include gynecological, general surgical, plastics and dental as well as the original ear camps. During this time Dr Shirley Heywood has been a faithful and committed driver of the gynaecological camps and Sandra



Ear centre at GPH in Pokhara  
PHOTO: NIRUPAMA POKHREL

Chinnery has been a dedicated and valuable nurse on the majority of camps over the past 18 years.

In fact there have been so many faithful and dedicated staff members over the years contributing to the success of INF's Medical Camps, thank you to all – we acknowledge and celebrate your contribution.

As of 2017, 93,338 people have been treated through 131 different camps. From the success of the Camps, INF opened its Ear Centre in Pokhara in 2015 and a Fistula Centre is currently under construction in Surkhet.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE – Praise God for his faithfulness in continuing the medical camps over the past 25 years and enabling more than 90,000 to receive treatment in places it would otherwise be unavailable.**

# yrs Camps



Dr Mike Smith & Eka Dev Devkota, final instructions to surgery patients at Awalching Ear Camp  
PHOTO: ROWAN BUTLER

# Partners

Since INF began as the NEB [Nepal Evangelistic Band], 65 years ago, prayer has been the foundation of our work.

Thank you for faithfully praying with us as we continue to move forward in our work, seeking to be innovative and advocate well for the people of Nepal as we adapt our work and programmes to ensure they experience life in all its fullness.

## NEPAL

It is difficult to visit Nepal and not fall in love with the country and its people. The breathe-taking mountains and the endearing welcome will quickly capture your heart.

Despite its beauty, Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. In the most remote areas, life can be a hand-to-mouth existence. Traditional farming methods are often unable to supply sufficient food for the year round. Many Nepalis, mostly men, leave their families to work in India or other parts of the world, in the hope of being able to send money home.

Whether it is through improved health care or development in remote areas, we are working in partnership with Nepalis to help bring about the change they long to see in their own communities.

## THE CHURCH

There can be a tendency within the church in Nepal to regard people with a disability as cursed by God. This can affect how people interact both with fellow Christians and those outside the church. INF staff are training churches about the importance of including people with disabilities and reaching out to them. Another way INF supports local churches is through its partnership with the Asal Chhimekee Network [ACN], which means 'Good Neighbours' in English. ACN is the social arm of the Pokhara Christian Community, a network of over 40 Churches. This partnership has included providing food and shelter for families in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes, helping communities following floods and landslides, and providing warm winter clothing and blankets. They have also been instrumental in building the new Ampipal Health Post, which was completed in January 2017.

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- give thanks for the many Nepali staff who do most of the work of INF
- pray for wisdom and integrity for the politicians who govern Nepal
- pray for continued growth and maturity in the Nepali church
- Pray for open minds and hearts to learn truth and be willing to change long held habits and belief

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- give thanks for the success of the 'In His Image' workshops held so far for church leaders and disability network leaders, focusing on the theology of disability
- give thanks for the commitment of ACN staff and the many church volunteers who give their time and energy to show love in practical ways to poor and marginalised people
- pray that the networks created would enable disabled people to seek justice for themselves and speak up for their rights
- pray that churches would be envisioned to see themselves as God's tool for transformation in their local areas



# in Prayer

Each edition of Today in Nepal includes prayer points for one aspect of our work, covering all areas over the three editions published each year. This edition's prayers feature INF around the world and Nepal generally; the country, church and its people.

## **INTEGRAL MISSION**

INF's leadership wants to enable each and every person involved in INF to be able to fulfil their calling to the best of their ability. For staff working in community development projects, often in remote areas where there is little opportunity for Christian fellowship, spiritual nourishment can be very difficult to find. Busy leaders also need opportunities for ongoing mentoring and time for refreshment.

**Amos Gurung** works as INF's Integral Mission Advisor, encouraging and equipping staff in their spiritual walk, and to strengthen links between INF and local churches. He provides pastoral care to those working in remote areas, and supports senior Christian staff through running retreats and workshops.

## **WORLDWIDE FAMILY**

INF is made up of people around the world, bringing their gifts and skills together to serve Nepali people. We currently have people serving with us in Nepal who come from Germany, Austria, New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong and the UK. There are INF offices in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK all of which employ full time staff to support the work of INF in Nepal.

## **A MESSAGE FROM ALASTAIR SEAMAN, INF'S INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR**

"I believe that prayer needs to be at the heart of all we do so that we can partner with God. Praying is not simply supporting the work - it is part of the work. By praying you are joining us in changing the spiritual environment and are helping to prepare the ground for our staff to go out and meet their daily challenges.

"If I had to ask you to focus on just one thing to pray for in 2018, it would be that all of our work would be Christ-centred. We need to truly understand what that means in practice in our projects, but we also need to apply this individually, in the way we work, and in the kind of people we are.

"Your prayer is important to bring fullness of life to Nepali people. Thank you for praying."

## **FOR YOUR PRAYERS:**

- give thanks for the deep faith of the INF leadership team in Nepal, and how God is already working in their lives
- pray for Amos's own spiritual life - that he would be filled with the Spirit so that he can effectively equip and inspire others

## **FOR YOUR PRAYERS:**

- give thanks for the diversity of talents, experience, and wisdom that different cultures bring to INF
- pray for insight, unity of vision, and excellent communication between all staff, despite the challenges of working across cultures; and for some across time zones
- pray that those who have left home countries would experience success in their work here and establish themselves well in their new communities
- pray that offices around the world would advocate well for the work of INF and be successful in sourcing new supporters and donors as well as reaching out to the Nepali diaspora in their local areas

# bible spotlight

## FAITH IN ACTION

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for  
and assurance about what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1

Hebrews chapter 11 explains faith in action. It is at INF's core – acting out our faith so that others will also know life in all its fullness.

We have hope that one day every tear will be wiped away and there will be no more pain, we have confidence in the power of Jesus to heal and save mind, body, soul, community and creation; and we are assured that one day none will be oppressed but all will be free.

The long list of 'ancients' offered in Hebrews 11 is quite the ragtag bunch. They made mistakes, did some quite frankly stupid things, but they continued to trust and hope even when they could not see what lay ahead.

In faith, Camp work began and flourished; expatriates moved their families and Nepali staff relocated to remote areas often without their families and communities were transformed; health posts were built and the sick were healed. In faith, nutrition centres opened and malnourished children began to thrive; disasters wreaked havoc and in faith; relief and reconstruction was made possible.

Our hope is that our staff, volunteers and you – our supporters, would continue this legacy of faith. Since INF's beginning as the NEB some 65 years ago we have been propelled forward by people of faith who did not always get to see the fulfilment of the vision they worked for but always maintained confidence in what they hoped for and assurance for what they could not see – a transformed and restored Nepali community where everyone enjoys life in all its fullness.

As we look back over 65 years of service in Nepal we can see and celebrate God's faithfulness in so many ways.

**PRAY | DONATE | JOIN US | SHARE** – Pray with us as we look toward many more years of service, that we would have confidence in our hope and assurance about what we do not see in the daily work of bringing health and community services to the people of Nepal.

PHOTO: PRATIMA KAFLE

# funstuff

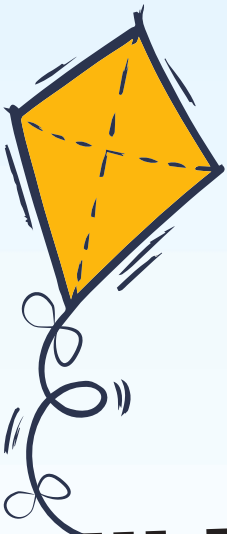
LET'S CELEBRATE!

If there is one thing that Nepalis know how to do well, it's celebrate. Their festivals are vibrant, full of good food, music and dancing. This issue of Today in Nepal we want to spread some festive fun and invite you to join with us as we celebrate 65 years of serving in Nepal.

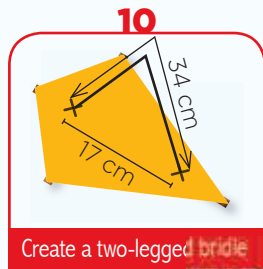
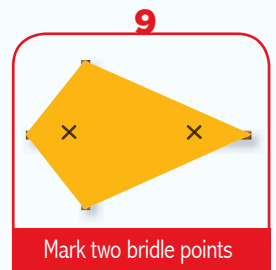
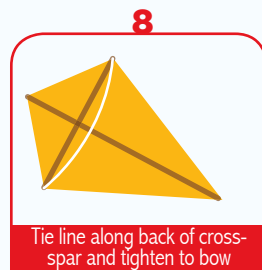
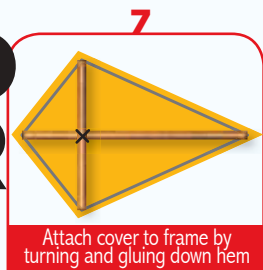
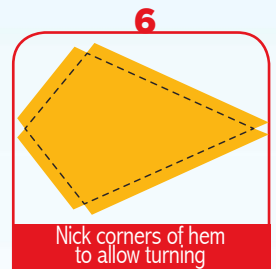
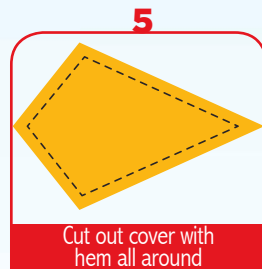
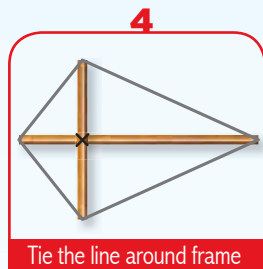
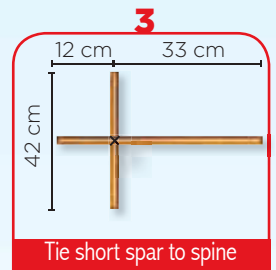
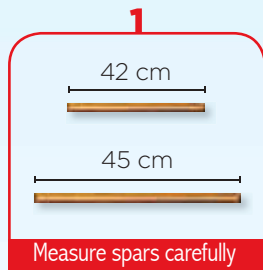
The most 'auspicious' and important festival is Dashain [Dosa] which is celebrated for fifteen days – that is quite a party!

Kites are flown during Dashain to remind the gods not to send any more rain after the monsoon season but here at INF we recognise that kite flying can just be a heap of fun so we thought we would teach you the basics of how to make your own so you can enjoy this festive tradition.

Why not fly a kite and give praise for 65 years of God's faithfulness, and if you are in a festive mood why not gather some people around for a 'thankful' party, you could make bunting with the kite paper scraps and just enjoy good food and fellowship.



## BUILD YOUR OWN KITE





Life  
in all  
its  
**Fullness**

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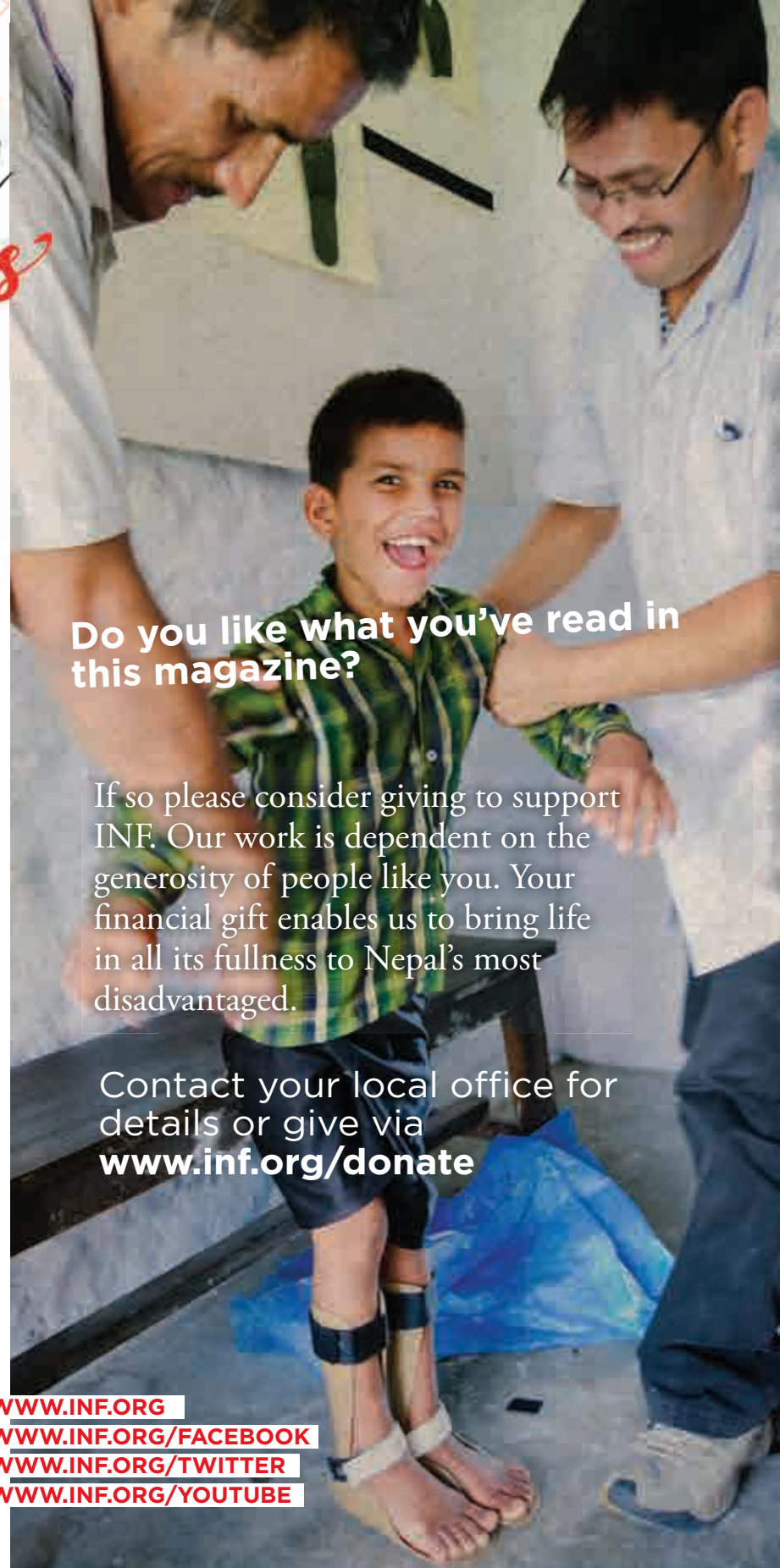
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