

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31st January 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

There have not been too many changes in recent days. We hear of delays in the completion of the drinking water project from the Melamchi River and the second ring road around Kathmandu, and increased corruption at the local level from the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) investigations, which mentions that the people are made to pay additional charges at the local level. Impunity reigns and prices soar. The rest is all well and happening.

Work with the Land:



The slab casting for the plinth level has been accomplished for which human resource was mobilized at the local level. Raw materials necessary for continuing work on the building e.g. bricks and framework for doors and windows, have arrived on time. The doors and windows frames have been set up and the building of the walls has begun. The municipality has been duly notified at each level of the work for which approval needs to also be received from the local

authorities. These have also been done on a timely basis. Next week we will get a

certificate of approval as a whole from the Municipality. An engineer sent by Santa ji for a physical check in at the site – Siwakoti ji, has completed the physical check. 40/50 members of the local community and passers by, come to visit the site and gain information from our supervisor Lamsal ji on what is being built, by whom, and for what purpose.

We have learnt that our landowner, Mr. Gyawali has sold off the land adjoining our plot to some tourism related person, but we do not yet know how much he sold it off for so we could have an idea of the appreciation of land value. This will be interesting piece of information for NA! Lamsal ji is physically present at the site on a daily basis and therefore necessary supervision and interaction at the local level is ongoing without any hindrances.



Fundraising for PBM&LC:

On 1st January, Dr. Chhatra Amatya, the Chair of NA Board gifted the PBM&LC Rs. 100,000. Marta Drury sent her pledge of US \$ 500 for the PBM&LC. Canadian dollars 5210 came from Lynne Brennan and Elizabeth Wickwire who do an annual sale for NA. I made some effort at fundraising with school & college friends I got to meet this month hopefully there will be some favourable outcomes! Kiran Singh also gifted the PBM&LC, her pledge of Rs. 100,000 this month.



(L-R) Madeline, Lynne & Rita

Interestingly, during a visit to Ottawa and Toronto in relation to my Board meeting with the Global Fund of Community Foundations, I had the opportunity to present the PBM&LC brochure to the MATCH International Women's Fund and the Community Foundations of Canada, towards the end of this month. I hope to follow-up with emails and hopefully some fundraising opportunities will arise. Likewise, I met with Lynne Brennen & Elizabeth and others like Madeline, Ann & Professor Angela Miles who have been long time supporters of NA.

Nepal Expert Group Meeting:

This month the expert group did not meet officially. As and when needed Ganga went and met with our architect Prabal S. Thapa and other related persons. Sadly for us this month one of our expert group members Madhab Mathema withdrew from the expert group saying he was unable to do so owing to personal reasons and being busy with the building of his home and travels. We respected Madhab ji's wishes and said bye with a huge "thank you"!

Others:

My 10 days travel to Canada allowed me to connect with possible new sources of funding for the PBM&LC. But it also made it difficult to be on top of all the work going on here. It is good to know that work at the site in Nabalpur is going on well and the work has made good progress.

Bank Information:

PS: for everyone's convenience, please find NA's bank account here below 😊: But if you wish to make a gift directly please inform us in advance so we have records for follow-ups with the bank.

Bank's Name: Siddhartha Bank
Address: Satdobato, Lalitpur, Nepal
Account Name: Nagarik Aawaz
Account No: 01815090950
Swift Code: SIDDNPKA

***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Madeline & RSB*

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 28th February 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

The month kicked off with a rise in the price of petroleum products. Demonstration & vandalism by the opposition party students asking for action against violence, corruption, and inflation followed. This month on the 14th of March, women activist's also celebrated the global campaign "One Billion Rising" - demonstrations/marches/flash dances for violence against women were held.

Significantly the government called off the chiefs of the two commissions: Truth & Reconciliation Commission & the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons, after some 3 years of their establishment (9 years after the Comprehensive Peace Accord was signed) since February 2015. Although the Commissions have not been effective in delivering justice so far, this move creates further uncertainty – leaves in the lurch the 63,000 & 3000 complaints respectively filed in the two commissions. It has been easy to conclude that politicization of the commissions and power sharing struggles are to blame!

Sadly for Nepal on the 27th a helicopter crash in the far eastern hills of Nepal killed 7 people including the Tourism Minister. It is speculated that the disaster occurred owing to bad weather.

Work with the Land:



Work is moving well and hopefully we will finish the service block within the next couple of months. Finally, the municipality has passed the map for the service block – a necessary official step for us. The building of walls and laying the frames for the

ventilation are almost finished. The windows and doors are also being made. Work on the roof will begin in the next week. Plastering of the inner walls have also begun.

Detailed design for the bathrooms have also been sent by the architect to IFID and the casting of ceiling in the bathrooms area is completed.



Fundraising for PBM&LC:

We have not done well this month with local fundraising. We will have to make up during the coming months.

On the 6th Susan & I had a meeting with the Swiss ambassador Elisabeth von Capeller. She listened attentively and appreciated our work. She remarked that the work of NA is valuable in the current Nepal. However she shared that support to infrastructure may not be possible unless programmatic work is tied to it. If we are asked to submit a proposal we will request for the programme aspects of the PBM&LC with support for the building of our communal interactive space from our master plan. We are crossing our fingers. But anyway this will be a time taking process even if it materializes that is for sure! We also heard back from the MATCH International Women's Fund and they too are not in a position to solicit a new proposal from us this year.

This month we received one generous pledge of US \$ 1000 from Melissa Grudin, who is a donor to the Global Fund for Women and a supporter of Tewa. We are very grateful that we could announce a donor to the PBM&LC this month!

Nepal Expert Group Meeting:



Emil instructing IFID & AM Construction Company Members

meeting clarified communications channel and coordination between all of us and ensured that we have a good way for moving forward.

On the 13th, we met with our architect, Emil (in absence of Prabal who was in formal 13 days of mourning for his uncle), with A. M. Constructions Company contractors Rajan ji and Astaman ji and also with the backstopping consultant Santa ji of IFID. This

On the 26th, we met as a full group including Prabal, Shankhar Raj Pathak, and Govinda from NA, to discuss on the work ahead and preparations for the April meeting. Once more this was a very helpful meeting in clarifying



detailed technical issues and in agreeing on what needed doing in preparations for the April PBM&LC meeting where we will also have the physical presence of the international expert group members.

Others:

The month ended with a shortage of cooking gas in the market sending us in a panic. In no way can we say we are a stable country some 12 years after the comprehensive peace accord was signed.

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Swift Code:	SIDDNPKA

Note: Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai & RSB

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31st March 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

C.K. Raut who led an independent separatist movement for Madhesh (the south Tarai belt of Nepal) for many past years, has now signed an eleven-point agreement with the government on the 8th of March. This is said to settle all existing differences through democratic means. Hopefully this will add to the building blocks of Nepal's ongoing peace process.

It has also been a horrifying revelation this month that according to research conducted by CREPHA in 2017, endorsed by UNFPA, Nepal is emerging as a country with a strong preference for male children who in some districts now outnumber girl children by 119 male children for every 100 girl children. In 2000 this ratio was 98 male children for every 100 births of girl children. It explains increasing cases of violence against girls/women and other related cases such as girls drop out from school, and early child marriage. Sadly the gender stereotypes are often reinvented by women e.g. research also shows that the most pressure for expectant mothers comes from their mother-in-laws. These will indirectly impact on NA's peace building work.

Work with the Land:

As you can see in the picture the structure is more or less complete. The roofing colour recommended by the architect was not available so with the advice of Prabal it will be changed. fitting in the windows and doors, plaster on



the inner walls, flooring, electrical fittings, the bathroom works and many other details remain.

There are five rooms and men's and women's toilets in this building. For now this will provide NA a base to carry out the peace building work in the district which will be initiated hopefully from next week. Although there were some



clarifications to make and it was time taking, this month NA also got its branch office registered in the district CDO office. This means we now officially have the green signal for carrying out our peace-building programme in the Nabalparasi district.

Fundraising for PBM&LC:

Early in the month we had good news that Nagarik Aawaz's Local Capacities for Peace Program is being supported for another three years. The programme which had been running in Kanchanpur and Siraha previously with the funding support of Mesereor, is now also being extended to Nabalparasi which is where our PBM&LC site is located.

I met with Lilianne Ploumen (a member of parliament of the Dutch government) who happens to be an old friend since her time in working with Mama Cash, and I requested her if she could connect us with any possible funders for the PBM&LC. Margi Greenhut a longtime donor to Tewa also visited NA this month and said she will do her best to support the PBM&LC.

Fulfilling their pledge Luna/Dinesh Khadga (during a visit to Nepal) handed over Rs. 50,000 for the PBM&LC, as did Dr. Bina Pradhan (NA member/donor), with her cheque of Rs. 100,000. Thank you very much Bina, Luna & Dinesh – your gifts give us the motivation to go on with the PBM&LC work.

A most inspiring email came from Daniela Bachi who some years back had interned with NA. Here is what she wrote: ***"I've been a bit busy in the past two months working hard on a report about internally displaced people in Mexico. In spite of this, I've always kept in mind NA's Peace Building Center, and I finally managed to make some savings! I wanted to let you know that it would be a pleasure for me to make a donation of USD \$1,000 for the PBM&LC. As I mentioned to you when we***

met last year, it is a bit of a challenge to make transfers from Mexico to Nepal, but I think that depends on which bank. We could definitely find a way to do this."

Nepal Expert Group Meeting:



and some reflections and thoughts were shared by the core group members. Everyone was very happy that real peace-building work was beginning in the area and this would begin a relationship of trust and good will in the community. Dr. Chhatra Amatya, the Chair of NA also remarked that the community will now realize



that the PBM&LC is not just about infrastructure building but more about deep & engaging work making peace central in the local communities. All the core group members expressed happiness that the programme work was also now beginning

along side the construction work at the PBM&LC site and district. This will mean that NA will have full time resident staffs in the site/district and this will greatly help in building rapport and trust at the local level.

The core group members were also briefed on the financial aspects of the PBM&LC. Despite ongoing efforts at fundraising, it was noted that as the funds now stand, it is just enough to complete the service block. Hopefully we can manage the laying out of the plumbing and electrical lines, drainage, and leveling according to the master plan. But we may have to stop building work after April.

Others:



On the 25th a meeting was held to review and reflect on the programme that will soon be launched in Nabalparasi.

Although Govinda (the field officer for Nabalparasi) could not attend owing to his wife being unwell, NA's senior programme officers including Hari who

oversees this programme in all the 3 districts, participated. Hari briefed all on the approach of this programme and what it has demonstrated so far. Everyone contributed to see how the programme could be further strengthened for implementation in Nabalparasi from a point of gender and diversity and its approach, and agreed to have planning meeting when Govinda joins work.

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Note: Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai & RSB

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 30th April 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

Bara & Parsa districts in Nepal were rocked by a tornado that flattened farms, homes, and upturned even trucks and busses. It took 30 lives. Environmentalists say it is owing to climate change and may only be the first of many to come. Three earthquakes ranging between 5.2 to 4.3 on the Richter scale also hit Kathmandu on the morning of the 24th – one day before Nepal completed its 4th year after the devastating earthquake that hit Nepal in May 2015.

Nagarik Aawaz stood in a two-day vigil with the conflict affected people to provide pressure to the government to ensure that the Commissioners for the TRC & the Commission for the forced disappearance cases be named only after the Acts of both the Commissions are reviewed, revised and finalized. Earlier this was one of the main reasons why work did not move in the Commissions as planned.



Work with the Land:



Work at the site is ongoing. Early on we visited the site with the members of the expert group. Our engineers Prabal & Emil with architect Marleen Iterbeke also visited the site. They met with the site engineers of the AM Construction Co and other related and technical people on

Prabal (R) discusses with site engineers

site. Now the roof is being built, along with room, corridors, and toilet finishings. At the end of the field visit, we sat together for a debriefing among the expert group members Hope, Marleen, Prabal, Emil, NA Chair of the Board and NA team, as well as related persons working at/with the site. All of us came to the same conclusions that we needed to build in a more environmental way and identified the next best steps. Taking the opportunity of being in Nabalparasi, before we went to board our flight, we also paid a visit to the **Laher Srijana** workshop where some furniture and mats for the service block is also being made.



Fundraising for PBM&LC:

Early on in the month, Dr. Chattra Amatya the Chair of NA Board gifted NA Rs. 100,000 over and above her initial pledge of Rs. 25,000 which she had already gifted! Likewise, unexpectedly Susan announced that her friend Captain (flight) Ranjan Subedi pledged the PBM&LC Rs. 100,000 and her sister Subah Risal Pandey gifted us Rs.50,000 out of the 1 lak she pledged. Kiran Singh a new donor to NA who had already gifted 1 lak also casually announced that she will again try and gift the PBM&LC 1 lak this year.

NA also got an approval from the Global Fund for Community Foundation to use a remaining pot of grant of 4592 English Pounds for the PBM&LC. This will be very useful for us in continuing some of the much needed, vernacular structures we will have to build in the coming days.

I was lucky to have Katrin Wilde, Charlotte Bunch, & Rudo Chigudu in my home and all promised to support the PBM&LC by spreading the word around. Katrin has already send information on us to 4 of her contacts who are interested/doing peace work.

But sadly for us the Comic Relief/UK who had asked us to send a proposal said they were unable to fund us this year.

Expert Group Meeting:

The expert group members, Professor Han Verschure, Architect Marleen Iterbeke, and Gender & OD Expert Hope Chigudu came respectively from Belgium and Zimbabwe. Architect Goedele Desmet from Belgium could not come owing to an accident she encountered during skiing. But her firm had prepared a model of the master-plan for us



VP Purna Shova Chitrakar & Architect Marleen Iterbeke

and sent with Han & Marleen. We also received an apology from Engineer Shankar Raj Pathak who had a death in the extended family. The NA Core Group members participated fully during this meeting and Dr. Chhatra Amatya the Board Chair of NA also accompanied the team during the site visit. We at NA/PBM&LC are deeply appreciative of their time, travel and expert inputs.

The NA/PBM&LC team prepared months in advance for this meeting. The meeting began from the 8th April. It consisted of a day of briefing and questions for clarity; 2 days taken up by the site visit; several meeting of technical committees consisting of Prabal, Han, Marleen, and Emil and NA programme team with Hope; and a final day of debriefing and forward steps. Our architects here, and the NA team are completely in agreement with our visiting expert group members. Having Hope's inputs to the NA/PBM&LC programme and proposal writing aspects have been deeply appreciated. Later when the PBM&LC met after the expert group meetings we realized the value and benefit of a face-to-face meeting, and we hope this can take place at least annually throughout the initial building life of the PBM&LC.

A very good thing was that the PBM&LC programme team worked simultaneously during this visit, and is even as of now beginning work at the site. Programme Coordinator, Hari Dhami; District Programme Officer, Govinda Acharya; and Counselor Sudha Koirala are already at the site. We have recruited one site based

office help cum gardener Yam Kumari Kumal. Yam Kumari will begin work from the middle of May and will come into the Tewa Center to be trained before she begins work. The programme team will begin to put together necessary logistic support and begin to scout out youths to engage in the programme according to a time-tested criteria NA has used in the past.

Others:

The debriefing meeting at the end of the expert group and the Core Group meeting showed us that our time, resource and energy were well spent. We got more clarity and direction as to how to proceed with the PBM&LC both from the point of building necessary infrastructures as well as implementing the programme.



Overall we are worried regarding our fundraising aspects, but we also recognize that moving slowly in parallel with the field programme may even be a blessing in disguise.

At PBM&LC we are grateful to Han, Marleen & Hope; to Dr. Chhatra Amatya and the core group members; our architects Prabal & Emil and to the NA/PBM&LC team for all their work to make this one week meeting successful, happy and full of learning and ideas to take us forward.

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Account No:	01815090950
Swift Code:	SIDDPNKA

***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai*

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31st May 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

On the 18th of this month Nepal celebrated Buddha's birthday. This has significance for all in Nepal, and especially for NA whose core work value is non-violence and love of humankind. Also, interestingly, a public opinion poll done by the weekly paper Nepali Times showed that 2 years after the federal states were formed and a year after the local governance offices took charge, Nepalis seem to have very little trust in political parties/leadership. This is obviously owing to the gap in what is being said and what is being delivered. Also, the budget for the new fiscal year was read out by the Finance minister on the 29th. The largest budget allocations are for education, infrastructure, home affairs, and health (all of which look better engendered than in the past years). The least priority is given for law/justice and women/children/senior citizens which also says a lot! Government salaries are up by 20% and for sure this is an indication of inflation impacting on all of us in an uncontrolled market situation as has been the case in the past years.

Towards the end of this month on the 27th, a Maoist splinter group led by Biplov, called for a strike which culminated in some violence (killing 3 persons and hurting several others in 2 bomb blasts in the capital city), and the disruption of life in many parts of Nepal where they have a hold.



On 15 – 16 May, Nagarik Aawaz held its strategic planning meeting in Pokhara where I too was invited, and the PBM&LC was one of the key discussions. Many good things emerged out of these discussions which will lend to the long-term use of the PBM&LC.

Work with the Land:

Construction work was found to be slow at the beginning of this month owing to many reasons, however a timeline to complete the building and everything related with it within 1.5 months has been set. We expect to inaugurate the building by the end of June.

This month early on, the NA Local Capacity for Peace Programme was registered (No. 910) at the District Administration Office, Kawasoti, Nawalpur. Now there is also an official agreement with the local Municipal Office, Madhya Bindu. Both these approvals were attained on the 2nd May 2019. During their recent visit, Hari, Govinda, Lamsal ji, and the newly recruited field counselor Sudha, besides fulfilling these official duties, also located and rented the additional peace center, refurbished and established Sudha's accommodation, and visited Ain Kumari Kumal so that she can begin to train at the earliest. At our request she is being trained with Tewa, Kathmandu, on housekeeping and gardening. Ain Kumari arrived 28th dead tired from the night bus ride and promptly fell asleep on the office sofa with the NA peace wall for a background. This will be a time of training and self-care for her!



Ain Kumari clearly needed rest after her night bus journey to arrive in Kathmandu!

The positions for the 8 youths who will be recruited for the peace center has been advertised through local FM radios, print media, Municipal Office, public spaces e.g. hotels and by word of mouth.

Our Building and programme at the PBM&LC has been an organic process. In our **Phase 0**, the master plan, topographical survey, construction of the service block which will serve as NA district office and one of the Nabalparasi peace centers and the introduction of the Community Peacebuilding Programme has been accomplished.

Following this in **Phase 1**, we will aim to complete zoning and bio fencing (as far as possible) of the land, planting of trees, **planning and execution of the memorial**

space, gardening of suitable and designated land, and also research our soil for the use of CSEB (compressed, stabilized earth blocks).



Note: The front side of the service block with an extended space for meeting outdoors (R) & the back side on top with a meeting space in the center of the building.

Alongside these, the Peace Center/s (now we have 2) will be established; HRD work will be initiated as per need; and the appropriate engagements with the local communities through regular peace forums, art/music and games e.g. table-tennis, volleyball & badminton will also be initiated.

Furthermore, in **Phase 2**, we feel we need to construct a Community Hall accommodating 50 persons, an outside kitchen, and some additional outdoor toilets. These will be done in the vernacular Tharu building style. Similarly, we hope to at least begin the dormitory block. This will enable NA to conduct small residential trainings and meetings at the PBM&LC itself. Discussions are underway with the architects as to how we can best do this. **Now, we have only about 30 laks rupees remaining.** We may be raising some more money locally, but unless we get substantive funds it will be difficult to get beyond these. However, by the end of 2020 we hope to accomplish at least this much so that the peace building work being initiated at the PBM&LC can be well grounded.

Fundraising for PBM&LC:

Katrin Wilde continues to connect us widely in the peace world, and Michael Cook on our behalf has been connecting with Ian Bird of the Community Foundations of Canada, who is trying to see how the PBM&LC can be connected for funding support from Canadian Foundations and Funds.

Lynne Brennen during her recent visit to Nepal this month, gifted us US \$ 300. This month looking at our meager fund-raising for which I feel responsible, I have also made a pledge to gift the PBMLC Rs. 100,000 within December 2019.

Expert Group Meeting:



This month the NA strategic Planning meeting where the PBM&LC was also discussed and thought through as NA's major initiative, allowed us to further think through and strategize both

as infrastructure and more importantly as NA's ground-breaking programme into the future. Following this meeting we had many discussions and meetings, within the core team of the PBM&LC, and also both with the architects and with IFID.

Others:

In our team we are convinced that if our (If) **cause is right the means will come.** So, we agreed we wouldn't worry about the PBM&LC funds running short. We want to believe that funds will arrive at the right but and that may not be when we think it

needs to be! Particularly since the recent NA strategic planning meeting, all at NA staff owned the idea that **organizations are living organisms**, as I made a realization experientially some 3 years back!

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***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai*

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 30th June 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

The budget was released and its attention on education and health from an equity perspective was lauded. But the raise in the salary of civil servants has been looked at with mixed feelings. This month I had to buy a bottle of honey. Its earlier price was Rs.700 and this month it was Rs.800. Consumers are feeling the pinch of a 20% to 25% price hike in an uncontrolled market environment.



On the 19th June the anti Guthi¹ Bill demonstration at Maitighar Mandala was as huge as the historical ones during the People's Movement 1 & 2 in 1990 & 2006 respectively.

Organized & led by the most affected Newar community and participated by all, the demonstration varied in in unique ways: 1)

demonstrators parted for ambulances; 2) they served drinking water to the security personnel on duty; 3) they distributed symbolic flowers to the security personnel; and finally 4) they cleaned the garbage generated therein.

On the 25th a strike was announced (learned that it was by the Biplov Maoist group) affecting daily lives and transportation.

Work with the Land:

Ain Kumari finished her training with the Tewa Center and has returned to the field office. Her main Supervisor, the executive housekeeper at Tewa – Ms. Aruna Rai, informed me that Ain did well and has learned all the necessary skills needed. Also, she now has a list of all the necessary cleaning materials she will need while she begins work in the newly built peace center in Nawalparasi.

¹ *Traditional Trusts that are responsible for the ongoing cultural, religious and social upkeep and management of temples, heritage sites, socio-cultural traditions in Kathmandu valley mostly and the whole of Nepal.*



Now finally all the detailed finishing work is expected to finish by the middle of July. An independent electric line dedicated to our space is also procured from the related local government agency. The two pictures you can see here are: one, of the corridor (now plastered, with electric lines, and support poles/beams) and two, the backside of the building from where the solar panels, the water tank is visible and the windows are all in place. Inside the building too the bathroom & other finishing is happening.



The field programme is more or less in place with the recruitments of the youths and the field staff. One of the field Peace Centers is beginning with the induction and orientation programme for the newly recruited eight youths who will be the key peace ambassadors in the chosen village development committees.

Fundraising for PBM&LC:

Karuna Kline, the Development Coordinator and Senior Researcher at the International Child Resource Institute in Berkeley, CA sent us an email on 1st June saying that “A donation total of \$5,000 USD will be transferred to you through ICRI Nepal and will be sent either today or beginning of next week”. This gift happened owing to Dhiraj Lamsal who heads ICRI Nepal Office & Susan Risal –



we are in gratitude to Karuna/ICRI and Dhiraj and Susan. True to her pledge, on the 15th June our ambassador extraordinaire at Tewa, Susanne Jalbert wrote to say she will be sending us US \$ 3000 for the PBM&LC. This month we also took time to brief visitors Mrs. Pratap Singh & Mrs. Nilam Bhatia on the PBM&LC and solicited their support.

Expert Group Meeting:

This was a slow month and we did not meet officially as Core or Expert Group.

Others:

This month Susan attended the workshop on Right to Protect and Gender, mainly dealing with conflict related sexual violence in the University of Leeds/UK. This provided her with opportunities to also promote the work of the PBM&LC and solicit support when she could. Likewise, representing the Global Fund for Community Foundations, I attended the Community Foundations of Canada annual conference entitled “AllIn”. I too used this opportunity to share about the PBM&LC and when possible solicit support.

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***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai, Rita Thapa, Manoj Pandey*

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31st July 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

The monsoon rains were late in coming – but when it came on the 11th of July, it was incessant causing flooding, flash floods, and landslides. Even the Kathmandu city itself had many pockets where the river overflowed into people's homes. Bridges were washed away, and roads were blocked by landslides and retaining walls collapsed. In some 31 districts farmlands and homes were inundated, 11,800 households reported displaced, and Nepal mobilized 90% of its security personnel. So far there are over 100 deaths, over 50 injured, and some missing reported. Among other negative outcomes, The price of vegetables and fruits have doubled since the floods.



On the 17th July, an yet to be identified gang of people vandalized 5 buddha statues (made of cement, limestone and sand) each weighing 120 kg, out of the 22 placed on the divider of a newly built 6 lane road just a few kilometers away from Lumbini – Buddha's birthplace. This is the first attack of this kind in Nepal and has caused much concern and worry. We can see why

the work NA does and the PBM&LC is most important and valuable here. This month there were also 2 days of strike called by the Biplov led faction of the Maoists. Some vandalism happened on both the days – mostly in the districts outside of Kathmandu.

Work with the Land:

We are informed by the contractors that the utility building has been completed. Govinda went back to the fields and reports that the electricity is connected, windows and doors fixed, bathroom fixtures done, and painting completed. Taking advantage of the season, our land was prepared, and Ain Kumari was happy to sow the seeds of black lentils that does not require too much tending or care. Some trees have been already collected. Govinda and team at Nabalparasi are scanning nurseries for other trees which we may wish to plant. They are planning to send us a list of available



trees and the costs, and we will consult with Botanist Dr. Tirtha Shrestha, to guide us as to what plants may best suit the climate.



Fundraising for PBM&LC:

Through connections made by Lynne Brennen, we invited Dr. Luna Khirfan from Canada, to visit the Tewa Center and learn about NA & Tewa's work during her recent visit to Nepal. She was appreciative and said would think about how she can be helpful and connect us with perspective supporters.

This month Susan & Ganga went and met with Khem Raj Upadhaya, the country director of BRAC/Nepal. Although they found him to be a helpful, open person, who appreciated NA's work and the PBM&LC initiative, he shared that BRAC was not in a position, to commit to funding. Karine Meaux emailed to say that the Fondation de

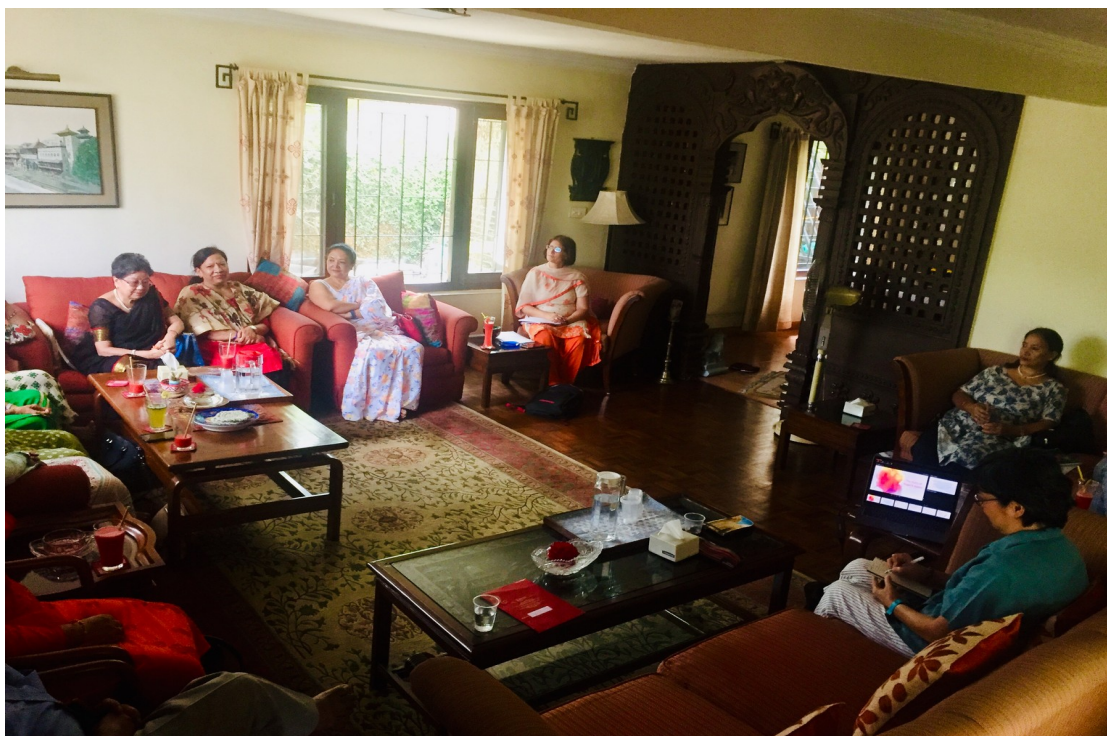
France is not able to support the PBM&LC, and wrote, “but I still have a look at any opportunity to support it.” Katrin Wilde has been helping promote and publicize our work – this month she shared our update with Patricia Cooper and Jane Barry who are both peace activists among others. In the same way Michael Cooke in Canada has sent us reassuring words of support inquiring how he can help.

Expert Group Meeting:

At the very beginning of the month the PBM&LC team: Susan, Ganga, and Rita had a meeting to assess the PBM&LC overall position. Luckily Govinda, our field programme person for the PBM&LC, was in town from the fields and he too could join us. Assessing and overviewing our given conditions, we agreed on the following:

- We would go ahead with the planting of trees on the borders of our land.
- We will visit the field during 25-26th (now cancelled) in order to inspect the finished building and estimate follow-up work; plant trees in the designated memorial garden; and have an orientation programme with the newly recruited local peace volunteers.
- We will retain the services of Lamsal ji although our major construction work may not resume soon after this building is completed.

Also, this month as per our consultations, Ganga had a meeting with our architect Prabal regarding upcoming work at the PBM&LC site and its close supervision and necessary technical advice. Prabal suggested that Emil, who works with him can give us that support. This will be very useful for us since we will not be renewing the contract with IFID, so a contract with Prabal has been signed that will enable us to have the necessary technical expert services from Emil on a part-time basis. Also, Prabal & Emil suggested that we begin to produce the CSEBs (compressed stabilized earth blocks) at the site with the help of the local community, in preparation for the



subsequent building work that we will be doing. We will investigate this when we visit the site in August.

On the 29th of this month we met with the NA Core Group backstopping the PBM&LC. We briefed and updated them on the progress of the PBM&LC, forward steps, and on our fundraising status. Susan informed all that NA has very positive feedback from two donors. When this is confirmed, the NA programme in Nawalparasi including others ongoing and new, will be sustained over 8/10 years. Then the entire NA team can be more proactive in fundraising for the building aspects of the PBM&LC. But all agreed that this lapse of time in receiving substantive funds may be a blessing in disguise as we familiarize NA's work in the local community and with related stakeholders. Some of the Core members may also join the postponed site visit, now scheduled for the 11 – 13th August.

Others:

An exciting piece of news for NA is that the NA story as told by Rita & Susan spanning some 20 years of peace building, is being written for us by Janet Wong who is volunteering her time – we are only offering her a modest honorarium as being respectful for her time and skills. This book has been a longtime dream for us and although attempted a couple of times earlier, we fell short of one or the other thing. NA had set aside some money for this activity, but it will not be enough. Also, this document will need to be professionally edited and printed. We expect the first draft to be ready by July 2020. While we will work at it with Janet, we are looking for:

1. additional money to the tune of 30,000 US dollars
 2. an editor who is well versed in feminist studies and peace building, and
 3. could we find a publisher!
- Any volunteers?
 - Donors?
 - Publishers - any of you know who we can approach?

Please do let us know – this will be very helpful! These are our worries, but for now we are very excited. We are already talking about a launch that can coincide with an opening or a suitable event at the PBM&LC!

Bank Information:

PS: for everyone's convenience, please find NA's bank account here below ☺: But if you wish to make a gift directly please inform us in advance so we have records for follow-ups with the bank.

Bank's Name:	Siddhartha Bank
Address:	Satdobato, Lalitpur, Nepal
Account Name:	Nagarik Aawaz
Account No:	01815090950
Swift Code:	SIDDPNPKA

***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Govinda Acharya, Rita Thapa, News on the Net*

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31st August 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:



Early in the month we had more rains that caused destruction and damage in other parts of the country e.g. Mugu district in the far west. Just this month experiential inflation in the cost of vegetables, fruits and food items has been between 20-30%. In a discussion programme organized by NA experts and activists engaged in the

area of Nepal's transitional justice and process, it was indicated that the prognosis did not look good. The State's lethargy in meeting people's expectations for intolerance of corruption, impunity and injustices, are on the contrary rising. There seems to be a growing sense of disillusionment and frustrations; emerging conflicts, and disenchantment with leadership. Not only these, but the eminent elections in 2 years time may be a time of turbulence and strife if we continue in the same way! The reflections, well-grounded - were sobering!

Work with the Land:

According to the field visit report of Ganga and Emil, our utility building is finished and ready for use. But according to Emil the finishing is not satisfactory in some areas and those that can still be remedied, Emil has instructed IFID & the site supervision person/s. Our helper Ain Kumari is reported to



be hard-working and multi-tasking to ensure the upkeep of the building and the surroundings. A barbed wire fence has been installed on the eastern boundary. The

newly planted trees have taken roots and the lentils sown in the front is growing green and lush like the paddy.

Programme Status in Nawalparasi:



For now, the team in Nawalparasi is complete. Along with Govinda at the lead, is counselor Sudha Koirala, and newly recruited Admin & Finance staff, Taruna Mahato. Following a systematized process, they have also recruited the 8 youth Peace Volunteers for the district. Of these, 5

come from the local indigenous communities and 3 come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Of the 8, 7 are youth women and 1 is a man. Currently they are being inducted into their roles and responsibilities. When they begin work, they will do so by first mapping their communities from a socio/political/economic perspective. Then the team will strategize as to how to make the best interventions and engage with the communities accordingly.

Fundraising for PBM&LC:



On the first of August, Irina and NK Shrestha arrived home with a cheque of 100,000 rupees for the PBM&LC. Although I had made an ask many months back, they took the opportunity of NK being on home leave from his UN posting in Afghanistan. Irina is a Tewa member and she with NK have been long time donors of Tewa. This was so mindful and generous of them! Also Marji Greenhut a longtime donor supporter of Tewa again, had a chance to know of our PBM&LC initiative during her recent visit to Nepal. She sent us a gift of US \$ 500 – Susan luckily discovered the email she sent after many days since it was lying in Susan's junk mailbox! From August I am contributing Rs.25,000 until

November to fulfill my pledge of 1 lak rupees for 2019! Fundraising continues to be weak and I take full responsibility.

Expert Group Meeting:

This month there did not seem to be a need for the PBM&LC NA Core Group or the expert group to meet formally, but we met several times according to what was needed. We met once with Emil to discuss and frame what now needs building and doing and how to go about it. As we come up with a clear action plan then we will



have to begin the building related work as well as research and reflect more on the programme aspects of this work. Also, we need to look into our finances and have a clear and a precise update of our financial aspects. At present NA is having its annual audit necessary for the upcoming AGM and the renewal of NA with the Social Welfare Council. We will be better prepared to meet after we have this information.

Others:

A really important event I has a chance to attend was the “Imperfect Solidarities Seminar Series” conducted by the Photo Circle. This time the topic was “**Memory, Memorials & Memorialization**”, most relevant to our work in Nawalparasi. During the day and a half that I attended, we had a chance to have a global overview as well as look into what has been done and is being done in Nepal. A Memory Work Guideline prepared by the Conflict Victims Committee in Bardia, which was also handed out to us will be very helpful for our work. Delving into Nawalparasi so far, our team has also learned that the estranged Maoist group led by Biplov and who is brewing trouble for the State, is recruiting cadres and fundraising in the district. We hear that Nawalparasi is one of their proposed centers. For sure our selection of a place for the PBM&LC seems to be more necessary than we thought.

Bank Information:

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Address:	Satdobato, Lalitpur, Nepal
Account Name:	Nagarik Aawaz
Account No:	01815090950
Swift Code:	SIDDPNPKA

Note: Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai, Nisha

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 30 September 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:



As always like in the past 5 years the OBR 2020 launch took place during the month-long Sangat feminist course being held at Tewa. 40 youth women activists from South Asia came together for this amazing course/event joined by leading feminists from the region and over 600 civil society members from Nepal! Among the

participants was a representative from Kashmir – she could only come because Sangat had luckily managed to send her tickets before the Kashmir clampdown. Unprecedented human rights violations are going on in Kashmir, but the world wouldn't even know unless you have a participant like Safeena, who was unable to even make contacts with her family during the month-long course being held at the Tewa Center. Also this month with the support of the UN Women, the Beyond Beijing Committee/Nepal is conducting a nationwide review of the B+25. Alongside, we have also introduced the draft of the historical Nepal Feminist Position Paper (FPP) which the intergenerational feminist forum has drafted. Just when the monsoon rains needed to be long over, we have had incessant rain for weeks! Just as the rice is ripening in the fields, this is worrying. We can expect famine and inflations all over again - not to say that the price off everything is up by 30% just this month!

Work with the Land:

This month a field visit made at the very beginning helped us gain clarity on the next steps after the completion of the service block (this picture is the farm directly behind our land). Susan, Ganga & I, then met with Prabal and Emil to agree on the design and the location of the outdoor kitchen and toilet being built in Sehari. As of 29th Emil is now in Sehari, to initiate work on the outdoor toilet and kitchen. He is initiating work with a team of local builders to



ensure good results in the best possible way. The ward office also brought us a 3-phase line and installed the electricity pole that was needed in our site.

Programme Update at the PBM&LC:



At the very beginning of the month Ganga, Emil & Rita made a field visit to the PBM&LC in Nawalparasi. Govinda & Sudha who also needed to head back to work after meetings in Kathmandu also joined us on the road trip. We completed multiple tasks e.g. the final supervision of the building and feedback for changes to Ravi (site supervisor of AM Construction Co.); overseeing of our land; visit to the peace centers; a day long workshop with the youths; and next steps regarding necessary building work at the site. The outcome of this visit are: build a bathroom & outdoor kitchen in vernacular style followed by a meeting hall with a capacity of up to 50/60 persons; detailed discussions for the best follow-ups regarding the youths capacity building & mobilization; and identifying local builders.

International Peace Day was celebrated by NA with the leadership of Govinda, with the youths and the Community in the PBM&LC, Sehari. The event titled “*Community Peace Building: Our Need & Goal*”, gathered over 55 community participants with three intergenerational key speakers with diverse experiences.



Please watch this video, where women participants performed a dance with messages of education and wellbeing of all - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciroUiPU_FQ. They concluded that although armed conflict has ended, there are many emerging conflicts that exist. A space for understanding each other such as this was said to be invaluable. They also felt the need to give this kind of interaction programme, continuity. During 28-30th the NA's *Local Capacities for Peace*

Programme now being conducted in Kanchanpur, Siraha, and Nawalpur came together for a Capacity Building of youths & staff/s in Nawalpur itself. All together 32 youths from the 3 districts and 8 local staff of NA gathered together. This was their grounding/sharing programme hosted by the Nawalpur team led by Govind.

Fundraising for PBM&LC:

This month we were very happy that our donor of many years, Pratima Thapa pledged to again gift us Rs. 200,000 for the PBM&LC. Our fundraising continues to be sparse and it is worrying although our efforts are ongoing.

Expert Group Meeting:

This month there was no need for an expert group meeting, but as we sort out our detailed financial position as it stands now, and as our vernacular building work moves forward, we will once more sit together to reflect and chart forward strategies. These will focus on necessary



building work, field level programme, memorial work, education & learning work. However, as work demanded we have had many meetings to consult and strategize.

Others:

End of this month NA also conducted 2 peace tables (with the support of the *Peace Women Around the Globe*) in Siraha and Itahari districts bringing together 60 conflict affected women from 8 adjoining districts. These tables were conducted with the purpose of making linkages with the local government. The learning for NA was that little transitional justice or reparation work has moved forward. Women shared that since the provinces have been formalized even the support they were getting earlier for education and health has stopped in these past almost 3 years. The Deputy Mayors who participated had little comprehension of the conflict women's needs (except one of them who was an ex-combatant) and said that they had little voice themselves. But they committed to look into the issues and available support. At least now direct linkages were well made.

Bank Information:

If you wish to make a gift please inform us in advance so we have records for follow-ups with the bank: **Name: Siddhartha Bank; Address: Satdobato, Lalitpur, Nepal; Account Name: Nagarik Aawaz; Account No: 01815090950, Swift Code: SIDDNPKA**

Note: Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai & Govinda

Also Attached: PBM&LC Revised Brochure

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31 October 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

At the beginning of this month, Nepalis celebrated their biggest festival – Dasain, which is basically the victory of good over evil depicted by the Goddess Durga slaying a demon, with heightened inflation. Following this, at the end of the month, the next most loved festival, Tihar or Deepavali - as is known in India, was celebrated with the worship of symbolic animals, birds, the Goddess of wealth - Laxmi, and the worship of brothers and sisters – no doubt inflation further soared! Xi Jinping's high-level visit to Nepal after more than 2 decades caused much flurry for the Nepali State. Nepal's geo-political location constantly begs for a balancing act.

Also, this month women activists were busy with the Beijing+25 review taken up by several organizations, in all the 7 provinces and finally culminating in national consultations. It was a very busy busy month!

Work with the Land:



Emil went to the fields early this month to initiate work on the outdoor bathroom & kitchen which was needed for the PBM&LC. Starting from scratch in identifying local builders & labourers, buying necessary raw materials, including bamboo now being soaked for curing, and organizing

many other things that were necessary, Emil began the work of the foundation for the bathrooms and the outdoor kitchen primarily with Lamsal ji's and Ain Kumari's support. The work is now stalled until the beginning of November so that the bamboo is well cured.

We now have an independent electric line and we no longer need to draw the line from the neighbor with a sub meter. The most wonderful thing about this is that the local government gave us the pole which would otherwise have cost us Rs. 50,000 and they gave it a month earlier than expected! This was owing to the strategic move of Govinda who lobbied and not only sent the official papers and request letter to the

VDC, but he also had the community people lobbying for the PBM&LC. The local community also informed our staff in Sehari that once a year for 3 days, the government allows anyone to take out pebbles from the river and if NA wished to do this, they needed to do it during those days. We will be taking 2 loads of pebbles for use in the PBM&LC – this too will be free of cost. Both these incidences speak of the increasing trust Govinda and his team are building in Sehari!



The trees we have planted in the land is doing well and the black lentil has also ripened and is harvested. Ain Kumari is suggesting we now sow mustard in our land and we have decided to do so! The AM Construction company will be paid off when IFID submits its reports, and both will be discontinued. We have now decided that we will work with local builders with necessary scrutiny and supervision from our field staff, Emil, and Prabal's firm as necessary. Accordingly, a new contract will be drawn up with Prabal Thapa & his architectural firm for further work.

Programme Update at the PBM&LC:



Significant this month was the PBM&LC team reflection & review day long workshop on the 18th. Field staff, NA staff & some board members were present. This space allowed all to be fully updated on the present status, and to provide inputs in 4 areas of PBM&LC: programme,

memorial, infrastructure and fundraising. Susan gave an overview of the present

Nepal context in terms of peace and conflict, and the relevance of the PBM&LC, Emil updated all on the infrastructure and the masterplan, and Govinda gave an update on the overall programme. Shikha the NA finance/Admin officer (pls see picture below) gave us a clear update on the current financial update. As we now stand, we have received Rs.

33 laks as loan of which 20 laks needs to be paid back. We have received almost 2 corer rupees or approximately US \$ 200,000 as donation/s out of which approximately only 20 laks is now remaining. A good US \$ 100,000 was used for the service block. It is now for us to see how we can continue our ongoing building work of the PBM&LC. All were convinced that we needed to build at least one of the residential buildings so that the space we already have, can facilitate the work PBM&LC is now doing.

The workshop was facilitated by Rita. All felt that this was a very timely workshop, and everyone was astonished how much programme work had been achieved in a very short period. Govinda and the Sehari team were certainly deserving of the accolades they received from the team for what they had achieved.



Fundraising for PBM&LC:

This month Pratima Thapa, NA & PBM&LC regular donor surprised us with a cheque for Rs. 200,000. Also, Rita Thapa fulfilled her Rs. 100,000 pledge for 2019. Susanne & Bill Jalbert also sent us a gift of US \$ 3000 equivalent to a little over Rs. 320,000. During the Dasain festival, we also received a Rs. 100,000 pledge from Kamini & Poshan KC.

Although in the past few months everyone has been too busy to simply focus and strategize on fund-raising (both local and international), during the workshop,

everyone felt the importance of doing this and hopefully we can focus on this after the holidays.

Expert Group Meeting:

Since a majority of the Core Group members were present in the PBM&LC workshop, the Core group Members convened after the workshop to come to some important conclusions. They felt that they would like to draw Rs. 50,00,000 (approximately US \$ 50,000) from the reserve fund of NA. They will recommend this to the next NA Board for approval. This is the only way for now which will enable the ongoing building work in vernacular style. The Core Group members also agreed that there would be no International Expert Group meeting in April 2020, but that such an Expert Group Meeting will be convened in April 2021 for which all Expert Group Members, especially international members will be informed well in advance.

Others:

NA was busy than ever with many peace building work on top of all their regular work. An annual peace kitchen of festive lunch serving yogurt & chicken was served on the occasion of Dasain (of course the Peace Kitchen of weekly hot meals go on now for over 14 years!). NA staff, volunteers, and Board prepared, cooked and served some 300 people who came in for this lunch.

Also, significant this month was the conducting of the Peace Tables – which is basically consulting with the conflict affected women in all the 7 Provinces of Nepal, supported by the 1000 Peace Women Around the Globe. This means that NA is always updated on the conditions of the conflict affected women, and grounds its work on that reality and context. **I am sharing with you an excerpt from what Ganga Sagar Rai, who participated in the Peace Tables sent me as he captured local voices of the affected women:**

“We used to listen to the radio under our blankets in our homes about the conflict as it escalated in Rolpa. We thought they must be monsters not people. Within two years the conflict reached our own homes. We were naïve as we walked from the town to our villages in the evening. The security used to ask us if we were not afraid of the rebels. Eventually the conflict landed on our doorsteps and we could not get out of our homes. Not even to go to the toilet, as we could hear flying bullets



outside. The morning light gave us the strength to go out. We lost our legs & arms while harvesting with babies crying for milk. Our husbands were brutally killed while they worked, even as they begged to spare their lives because their wives were expecting or had small children. We lost our daughters, husbands, sons, and fathers because of the conflict. 969 died and 33 people are still missing in Rolpa. Where could we go, this is our home/s.

Leaving everything behind, we came to the NA program to see Rolpa - the birthplace of conflict. We have gathered here from 3 districts of Rolpa, Dang, and Piyathan. We are here because we have not been able to forget our tragedies and pains. We don't know how we can forget. We are searching for justice to earn back our dignity. Those who died have died, but those who are left to live are left to suffer. We have still not been able to heal our wounds and it has been so hard to live with them. We received 10 laks (Rs.10,00,000) for the dead, but what is 10 laks when you have a whole life left to live. People who were our bread winners were killed, and we are left to provide for our families. We are tired and ill and can't work in the fields like before. Our children are left with no education. The Government provided free education up till high school but what to do after that. People who have money, send their children abroad for better education and trainings. But our children are left to do small jobs. They take loans to go abroad for work. They come back within two years with more loans. Our children need education, jobs to support our lives, and identity cards to return some of our dignity. This is both our anger and respect to shout out for your help.

More than 13 local representatives had come to join the event in Rolpa district and more than 19 came in Surkhet district. They promised to address the simple needs of the conflict victim women. Higher education for the children, jobs for the affected women and their children, and ensured that all would get official identification. The Mayor of Rolpa, came up with the idea of starting a medical insurance plan for the conflict victim families. One journalist commented that this consultation was the first of its kind he had seen happen in Rolpa.”

Bank Information:

If you wish to make a gift to help build the PBM&LC, please inform us in advance so we have records for follow-ups with the bank:

Name: Siddhartha Bank
Address: Satdobato, Lalitpur, Nepal
Account Name: Nagarik Aawaz
Account No: 01815090950
Swift Code: SIDDNPKA

***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai*

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 30th November 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

Nepal has strongly objected to a recently unveiled political map by the Indian government that has placed Nepali territory in the far western corner, Kalapani, inside Indian borders. Indian Home Ministry released the political map placing Nepali territory Kalapani inside Indian borders after creating Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as its union territories. India's takeover of Nepali land triggered protest demonstrations throughout the country. But so far there has not yet been a diplomatic conclusion to this.

After a meeting between the three political leaders, Maoist, UML, and the Congress, the new Chairs and members for the TRC & CIEDP (Commission on Investigation of Enforcement Disappeared Persons) Commissions have been announced after a 7-month long gap. But Conflict Victims Common Platform leaders and representatives raised the following issues: how can transitional justice be delivered when the Commission members are politically appointed?; some of the same members are reappointed when earlier they were removed owing to their "incompetency"; so it is indicative of suppression of justice. As the conflict victim leaders had earlier emphasized, the Commissions be formed after amending the Act governing the two Commissions.

Work with the Land:



This month, Susan, Ganga, with NA Finance/Admin Officer Shikha, and I made a visit to our PBM&LC site in Nawalpur during 20-21st of this month. Our unused fields are being farmed and we have harvested 75 kilos black lentils. Ain, Lamsal and Govinda said that the harvest is small because we tilled the land after years of being left untended. They have now planted mustard and red lentils and they expect 100 liters of mustard oil and 1 – 1.5 quintals of red lentils respectfully. After this, the fields will be readied for corn. The bamboos have now been curing in water for over a

month. The furniture that was ordered is now in the PBM&LC – they are all beautiful.

Ganga and I met with **Shirshak Baniya** (in absence of Emil) and discussed at length the best way to do these structures, before Shirshak left for the site on the 25th. Shirshak Baniya is a young architect from Hetauda, who enjoys working with the community for constructions of vernacular buildings. He has worked closely



in the Kopila valley school of Surkhet, and also, with Abhari. He reached the PBM&LC site on November 26. He is staying in our guest room at the service block and is our first resident there. He is learning about NA's field work and is also researching on the vernacular buildings surrounding Sehari and Nandapur. Likewise, he has met with the local construction workers and has found tiles for the roofing material. He will work with Prabal's advice and guidance.

Programme Update at the PBM&LC:

Through our visit to PBM&LC, we learnt first-hand that the 8 youths are blossoming with a sense of purpose, newly acquired self-confidence, and a commitment to peace building. As one of the youths, Darshan



remarked: “doctors may give us a new life but we can show everyone the way to live with purpose and joy”! He also said that he now has a new outlook on his role as a man – he is helping his mother in the kitchen and is learning to cook

curries. During our visit, Susan gave an orientation to the youths and the Nawalpur team, on Conflict & Peace – which the youths appreciated very much!

The youths are doing a ward level social mapping and interactions in all the 4 wards of their province where they are now involved. This is a large area, since the previous 9 wards of a VDC now make up 1 ward. NA in Sehari conducted interaction programme/s with the local communities of ward no. 2 3 4 & 6. These events also allowed NA and importantly the youths, to understand the emerging issues at the level of the communities, which are as follows:

- Increasing drug use among men & youths
- Domestic & women's violence at the household level
- Discriminations against girls in education and household work
- Child marriage & having babies early on the rise owing to which marriage & birth registration is increasingly difficult (owing to the official years for marriage)
- Increasing divorce & suicide
- Increasing out migration of youths (mostly men)
- Lack of income opportunities for youths other than agricultural work
- Big gap between the quality of education in government & private schools
- Untouchability continues to be practiced at the community level
- Negative feelings of revenge at the level of the community/ies is still prevalent
- There exists growing gender violence & decreasing social security for the elderly people.

In their at the Sehari Peace Center, they have plans to do trainings on appreciative inquiry, “do no harm”, and ongoing sports events. The youths are interested in working with the communities to plant trees; interact with the school children regarding peacebuilding work and build traditional rest places or “chautaris”.

Fundraising for PBM&LC:



Early this month we briefed our long-time ally/supporter **Mr. Bhupendra Amatya (he is also Dr. Chhatra Amatya's husband)** on the PBM&LC from a fundraising point of view. It was an intimate meeting with Susan, Ganga, and me doing the briefing. **After**

exactly a week they both called back and announced a gift of 25 lak rupees

(approx. US \$ 25,000) for the PBM&LC! The cheque of 5 laks was promptly deposited and the remaining 20 laks will be deposited within the next 6 months from now! This is a historical gift for me! In all my 25 years of active fundraising, this is the largest gift I have received from a Nepali couple. I also know that this will set a precedence for others who may reflect or wish to make such gifts! Interestingly this gift is worth

speaking about because it is not about “winners taking all” as Anand Giridharadas propounds, or the well-endowed philanthropic organizations who are not gifting as they need to that Francoise Girard speaks about in her evidence-based article. No! This gift and some other large sized gifts that the Amatya couple are making, is all their savings (Dr. Chhatra Amatya delivered over 10,000 babies in her postings all over rural Nepal) for advancing peace building work in Nepal! We shared this good

news with the NA Board & Core group members on the 19th afternoon. All who came were overjoyed! Shobha, Sandhya, Sukumaya, Aruna, Chhatra diju, Susan, Ganga, Rita, Shikha, and Hari had a precious deeply reflective session. All said this will inspire them to think about their own giving; it



had made them even more appreciative of the leadership they were under; and that this will help raise the bar for Nepalis who will gift to the PBM&LC in the future. Chhatra diju said that she and her husband were both lucky to be gifted the resources acquired by frugal living and Bhupendra Amatya’s smart investments; that they were blessed to have the heart to want to give; and finally that they felt lucky to find such a worthy cause and organization to gift it to! She thanked NA and all of us!

We also received with gratitude the money for the pledge of Rs. 100,000 made to us last month by Kamini & Poshan KC.

Expert Group Meeting:

Once again, the expert group has been meeting in teams as per the need. Ganga has been meeting with Prabal & Sirshak Bania (who will replace Emil in our work in the site while Emil is on medical leave. The NA Board/Core group members met without the technical experts to decide on moving 50 lak rupees from the NA reserve to the PBM&LC funds in order to smoothly move the PBM&LC work on the ground. The NA Board approved this proposal put forward by Susan.

Others:

The National “Women’s Peace Tables” convened by NA, brought together 50 conflict affected women from the 7 provinces. The consultation held on the morning of the

19th, demonstrated clearly the value of NA's work in peace building. The absence of transitional justice so far has brought about frustrations and increased hardships for the conflict affected women and their families. They asked the government as to why they do not yet have an identity card; why their children have no support for higher education; and why no work is being done to ensure that they can live in dignity? They expressed that a onetime compensation does not help with needs of ongoing education, health, safe spaces for their families. Even the Home Ministry representative at the meeting said that the government has not even been able to provide them the space that NA had enabled.

Bank Information:

If you wish to make a gift to help build the PBM&LC, please inform us in advance so we have records for follow-ups with the bank:

Name: Siddhartha Bank
Address: Satdobato, Lalitpur, Nepal
Account Name: Nagarik Aawaz
Account No: 01815090950
Swift Code: SIDDNPKA

Note: Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai

To: All
From: Rita
Date: 31st December 2019
Subject: Peace Building Memorial & Learning Center (PBM&LC) Monthly Update

Nepal Context:

The PM has been facing with deteriorating renal health (he had a kidney transplant 12 years back). This month he had to undergo an appendicitis operation and continues to be in and out of the hospital for dialysis. In Municipality 5, of Dhanusha district, a bomb planted outside a police inspector's home killed him (42), and his son (17), instantly, and injured several others in his family and another police person who also succumbed to their injuries. Also, this month Nepal hosted the 13th South Asian Games (SAG) from 1st to 10 December 2019. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka participated besides Nepal. Thousands of athletes were present on the occasion with Bhutan fielding the lowest 116 and Sri Lanka fielding the most at 564 athletes. President of Nepal, Bidya Devi Bhandari inaugurated the SAG. During the 10-day event/s over 2000 athletes competed for 1119 medals (319 gold) in 26 different sports. Nepal received accolades for the successful hosting of the games and stood second to India in the medal tallies.

Work with the Land:



We have some exciting news as we continue our vernacular building work in Sehari. Early this month, Shirshak Bania – the site engineer suggested to us by Prabal/Emil began work on the vernacular outdoor kitchen and bathrooms in Sehari. He with a volunteer Dinesh, also studying architecture, have

been studying the local building, art & building materials for walls, roof, and other needs as we may have. Shirshak with the knowledge of experienced community persons, and the assistance of our field staff, has been seeing what is available to ensure time-tested enduring materials and also is experimenting as to how to keep costs to a minimum. For instance, four bundles of “khadiya” costs 300 rupees. These will be used to decorate the geometry of the outdoor kitchen, increasing its aesthetic quality. The picture below shows the khadiya being carried to the site by our women labourers. For the wattle and daube wall partition/s, Shirshak has decided to

use rebar mesh to create a structure for the cement mortar. The cement and sand has been mixed in a ratio of 1:4 and 1 coat is applied from one side of the surface. The following day after 24 hours of setting, a second coat will be applied for finishing up the wall. The traditionally used thatch roof material, called “khar” are organically grown and harvested. We have some at our site. What is available right now will be sufficient

for the roofing of the outdoor toilet and kitchen.

For additional roofing they have already purchased khar from a local neighbour.

Likewise, the bamboo poles are being drilled for the knot and bolts rather than nailing them, which runs the risk of splitting or damaging them in the long run. Care

is taken to ensure minimal cost while applying the most time-tested materials. Preparing the bamboos for use like soaking, drying, grinding, painting them with silicon where needed, and using suitable bamboos according to application is also ensured. At the site Shirshak with Dinesh is ensuring detail documentation of the building process and the materials used as well as the local Tharu village households and what may be of use e.g. wall paintings, designs of windows and roofs, and even utility items like handwoven mats, baskets, and their fishing tool which duly adapted may now serve as our lampshades. In the Sehari site work begins at 9am but the sun breaks out only around 1pm. Until then it is basically working in the damp and cold and ensuring how to protect newly painted construction materials from the damp.



Programme Update at the PBM&LC:

The programme team at the PBM&LC have been very busy! The regular meetings and capacity building of the 8 youth peace volunteers (YPV) has been ongoing. This month, the focus was on the

socio psychological counseling and on bullying, for the youths. The youths also worked with the staff to go to the communities in four VDCs and had a consultative meeting with the community as a whole to understand the existing and emerging issues of the VDC. In partnership with a local youth club, the NA team have conducted sports competition events, further helping in introducing NA and the youth peace volunteers. Over 200 persons have been directly engaged in these programme this month. An end of the year review and a welcoming 2020 programme was also conducted with the YPVs

Fundraising for PBM&LC:

Madeleine Gilchrist a noted Canadian pacifist activist with the Voice of Women, who has been a longtime donor and supporter of NA's work sent us Can. \$ 500. **Lynne Brennen & Elizabeth Wickwire** sent us the proceeds from the annual sale/s they have been doing in Lynne's home and Church adding a few



more donations amounting to a total of Can \$ 7,059. This has been a labour of love going on for over 10 years! Promptly after the November update **Melissa Grudin** (a Tewa volunteer & donor) wrote saying *"It is time for me to make the US \$ 1000 contribution I committed to. I hope to return before too long. Perhaps I can get to see the Peace House"*! We would love to take you there Melissa! Likewise, **Michael Cooke** wrote on the 15th: *"We (with Juliet Huntly) will send a donation of \$ US 2000 to your bank in the next two weeks. I'll confirm as soon as we've been able to arrange the transfer"*. These moneys are surely in our bank by now but NA is closed this week until the 1st so we cannot confirm. Furthermore, **Susanne Jalbert**, the Tewa Ambassador Extraordinaire with **Bill Jalbert** sent us US \$ 1000 for the PBM&LC! So all together we will have received approximately US \$ 10,000 this month! Besides, on the 18th, I cooked a PBM&LC fundraising lunch at home for college friends who could be prospective donors. Hopefully, they will support the work we are doing!

Expert Group Meeting:

This month there were several meetings which required technical and planning - thinking through. Some were held at Prabal's office others in Rita's home. Shirshak Bania, our site engineer will work for 15 days at the site engaging community level skilled and semi-skilled labourers. He will also ensure the documentation of necessary research and process of all that we do for which he may also use volunteer/s. We have instructed Shirshak to work steady even if slow at times, in order to ensure trust building and confidence among the workers and the community. He will work under Prabal's guidance and advise and when Emil returns, he will work



closely with Emil, and also very closely with the NA PBM&LC team in Kathmandu, with the full support of the field staff at Sehari, Nawalpur.

Prabal will provide us detailed drawings for the two residential buildings, of which we can at least attempt to do the ground floors as advised by Prabal. In January, even as we finish with the outdoor kitchen and toilets, we will initiate the work on the residential buildings.

Continuity of work at the site will be critical to retain workers as well as build confidence and trust – so we

will need to ensure funding in a way so that the construction work at the site does not need to be halted for a lack of funds!

Others:

Something of value and interest to us as we go about our peace building work at Sehari, Nawalpur are the findings of the emerging issues which were learnt during direct interactions with the local communities in the 4 Village Development Committees. Those that were common to all the VDCs are listed here below. They signify the value of the community-based peace building work NA will do in Sehari. The key findings resonating in all the 4 consultation meetings were as follows: increasing drug use among men & youths; increasing domestic as well as violence against women at the household level; discrimination against girls in education and

household work;
child marriage and
having babies early on
the rise owing to
which marriage and
birth registration and
necessary official
documents are
increasingly difficult
to acquire (owing to
the official years for
marriage); increasing
divorce and suicide
(mostly women);
increasing out



migration of youths (mostly men); lack of income opportunities for youths other than
agricultural work; and decreasing social security for the elderly.

The PBM&LC team joins me in wishing each of you
- our supporters, allies, & donors,
Season's Best Greetings
& a very Happy New Year - 2020!
We so hope you will be able to visit us
this new year to personally witness our progress!

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***Note:** Photo Courtesy: Ganga Sagar Rai, Shirshak Bania, Rita Thapa*