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Temporary Learning Centers

By Paul Bird, Secretary, NLF Canada



*B.P. Aadarsh Primary School,
Thumpakhar-2, Sindhupalchok*

The 7.8 earthquake that hit Central Nepal had a devastating effect on the lives and fortunes of thousands of Nepali. Over 9000 people lost their lives and countless thousands have had their lives and livelihoods disrupted. The response from the international community was immediate and \$4.6 billion has now been allocated to provide emergency aid



*Sri Singh Devi Primary School,
Bhumlutar, Kavre*

for reconstruction. At the time of going to press, a year after the event, very little of the resources allocated have been dispersed. Hundreds of schools and libraries have been destroyed or rendered unusable. Our focus, and that of other agencies, has been to provide temporary shelter so that schools and libraries can carry on their functions and provide a small degree of normality to otherwise shattered lives.

We funded 'temporary learning centres' in a number of villages that can be used as classrooms and libraries where buildings have been destroyed. We hope that this stop gap measure will be quickly superseded by a measured and effective response from the authorities to disperse funding to provide for permanent seismically engineered structures.

This continuing project is made possible by the generous support from Steve Thorson, Becky Thorson, Non Resident Nepalis and ex-students of the schools as well as other individual donors.

Women's Computer Literacy Training in Gaighat

A twelve month computer literacy program for women in Gaighat conducted in four phases during 2015 has been completed.

Two levels of training were offered, a basic 45 day course and a 90 day advanced course. Using 25 used computers lessons were provided to 360 women in four shifts per day. Fifty graduates of the basic course were selected for a 3 month advanced course.



Twenty of the graduates of the advanced course were selected as trainers to take the training to other centers.

The courses were initiated to address the learning needs of village women who were unable to travel to larger centers due to cultural, work and family commitments.

An e-Pustakalaya server was installed in the library and its use promoted as part of the training program. Funding for this program included donations from the Canadian based Trans Himalayan Aid Society.

Nepal Library Foundation After Ten Years

By Naresh Koirala, Chair, NLF Canada

Nepal Library Foundation, Canada celebrated its tenth anniversary in March 2015. Our founding mission statement was to 'support library development in Nepal and the establishment of a national library system'.

Our work on the ground started in 2007 when we donated over 7000 books and seven computers to The Society for Kathmandu Valley Public Libraries. To date NLF Canada has raised over \$150,000.

This has directly supported the establishment of over 40 libraries in Nepal. It has supplied 150 computers and tens of thousands of books to libraries across the nation, from Humla in the North to Simara in the South; from Danghighat in the East to Tikaphur in the West. It also provided startup and support funding of over \$50,000 to Open Learning Exchange, Nepal (OLE) to help establish Nepal's first digital library and knowledge repository, the e-Pustakalaya.



Children in the NLF sponsored Sangam Library

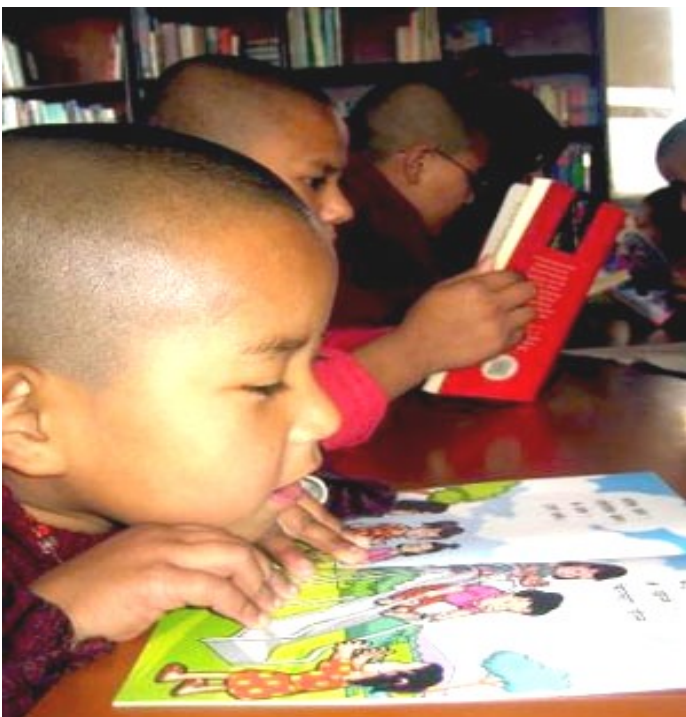
The NLF has developed into an effective support agency for schools, colleges and communities who want to establish or upgrade libraries. It has developed and implemented a government recognized training program for library management and, in conjunction with OLE, a course in network deployment of the local server based e-Pustakalaya to substantially reduce installation costs of the resource.

It has introduced reading clubs, established education and information centers in earthquake affected areas and developed computer training programs specifically for women in rural areas.

Our work has been possible only because of the generous financial support we have received from Non-Resident Nepalis and friends of Nepal worldwide. Enthusiastic, committed volunteers are at the core of our success. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to them. There is a lot more to do and we look forward to the continued support of our donors and volunteers.

Using a Library to Transform Education at the Arya Tara School

Arya Tara School is a school for young nuns managed and run by the Nun's Welfare Foundation of Nepal founded by Ms. Ani Choying Dolma. The free boarding school provides an education for young women from the poorest regions of Nepal. The school offers traditional Buddhist Dharma studies as well as secular education run on western educational principals. The school aims to graduate students with life skills and qualifications that will enable them to progress to higher education levels.



Prior to the NLF's involvement there was no systematic library service and the existing resource was underutilised. Ms Ani Dolma approached the NLF who arranged for a program of training and library development. In collaboration with our partners, Open Learning Exchange Nepal, a digital library resource (the e-Pustakalaya) was installed and training given in integrating its resources with teaching and learning. The NLF also helped the students and staff in a program to develop reading habits.

"The library has become an immediate success and is becoming an integral part of teaching and learning in the school.

I fully endorse the work of the Nepal Library Foundation and would encourage anyone interested in establishing a library in Nepal to make use of their services:"

Ms Ani Choying Dolma

The NRN 'Build a Library in Your Village' Campaign

The NLF was officially recognised by the Non Resident Nepali organisation (NRN) in 2007 as a partner in fulfilling one of the NRN's goals—that of promoting libraries and literacy. The NLF has positioned itself to provide cost effective project development and management services to schools and communities wishing to build and run libraries.

Taking up this challenge, NRN Europe Deputy Regional Coordinator Mr Som Nath Sapkota started the 'Build a Library in your Village' campaign to inspire Nepali living overseas to contribute to the funding of libraries in their home towns and villages.. A number of library projects have now been completed with the input of the NLF as a result of this initiative. Mr Sapkota raised funds to build a library at Janjagriti Higher Secondary School, Kandevas, Baglung District from which he graduated with his Senior Leaving Certificate. The library was inaugurated on 2 October 2015. He also coordinated fund raising

for the expansion and updating of libraries in the Shree Laxmi Higher Secondary School Chitwan which is now complete. Eighteen computers were installed and networked to an e-Pustakalaya server. NRN groups raised \$14,000 for the project.



Grade 8 and 9 students in the Shree Laxmi Secondary. School Library; future leaders of Nepal in the making

Jana Jagriti School Library, Kadebas, Baglung was expanded with a number of networked computers along with an e-Pustakalaya server. The budget of \$24,000 was raised with the help of NRN groups.

A key element in the upgrading of libraries has been the integration of libraries into the teaching and learning activities of schools. Nepali schools have traditionally relied on directive 'chalk and talk' teaching strategies. The e-Pustakalaya gives the opportunity to both engage students in the interactive learning activities which the e-Pustakalaya's developer Open Learning Exchange Nepal has developed for elementary grade core subject areas fully

aligned with the government curriculum learning outcomes. The NLF actively encourages creative and active use of the library resources it helps install and would like to hear from teachers how they are using libraries to engage their students in learning.

NLF Library Training Program

The Nepal Library Foundation recognised that there was a need for the provision of a training program to provide community and school libraries with staff knowledgeable in both the operation of libraries and the promotion of literacy and library use in the community.

A thirty five day program was established to cover the practical aspects of librarianship including classification and cataloguing. As well training is provided in the use and maintenance of the e-Pustakalaya digital library that the NLF provided development funds for. This resource is now seen as a must have addition to any library we support especially those without broadband access.

Participants are introduced to strategies to promote library use and development. This 'marketing' of library resources is especially important in a society where libraries have not existed and libraries are not part of teaching and learning in schools.

The program is now in its second year and eleven participants recently graduated from the course held in Kathmandu. The program has been given formal Vocational Training recognition by the Nepal Government Ministry of Education.

Individuals or organisations wishing to learn more about this program should contact Mr Bhola Sharma, General Secretary NLF.



Participants engaged in project work during the training

Police Officers Training Academy Library Upgraded with NLF Assistance

In April 2015 the NLF assisted the Middle Region Police Training Centre in the upgrading of an existing library including provision of library management training, installation and configuration of an e-Pustakalaya networked server, and provision of books and computers donated by Dr Vijay Jha and Mr Kapil Thapa.

A chance meeting of Mr Sapkota of NLF Nepal with Senior Superintendent Ramesh Kharel at the opening celebration of an NLF sponsored library led to the request for NLF's assistance in upgrading the Training Centre's library.

Fundraising for the project was coordinated by Mr Sapkota.

"The library has changed the culture of the academy"

Senior Supt. Ramesh Kharel

The library now has fifty networked computers linked to an e-Pustakalaya resource.

"The library has changed the culture of the academy." says Supt Kharel "Trainee officers are spending much of their leisure time in the library. This is quite heartening. They seem to be anxious to learn how policing is done in other parts of the world. There is constant demand for

police magazines and new books especially police investigative stories."

The NLF is well positioned to provide a cost effective service to institutions wishing to upgrade their library facilities. With ten years experience in library deployment, it is very gratifying to see how well the implementation model that has been developed over this time is capable of being adapted to diverse situations.

Senior Supt Kharel is to be congratulated for his vision. We are very glad to have been of help in implementing it.



Mr Sam Sapkota, NLF Nepal, Mr Naresh Koirala, NLF Canada and Supt Kharel in front of the Police Academy library

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\$10 will buy four elementary text books \$350 buys a computer, \$600 will install an e-library

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