

DEVELOPMENTS @ World Neighbours Canada Society

SPRING 2007

An ambulance World Neighbours didn't buy

World Neighbours Canada donors can be very proud of the new ambulance that was recently delivered to Manthali, Nepal. It's a shiny Toyota 4x4 that allows the quick transfer of seriously ill or injured villagers to the hospital in the town where our Nepalese partner Tamakoshi Service Society (TSS) has its headquarters. Until last month, people from distant villages were carried by family and friends, who often walked for days to bring the patient to the hospital.

Our pride comes not because we contributed any money to its purchase but rather it comes out of knowing our part in making such a purchase possible.

The ambulance was paid for by the Nepalese people themselves through their own effort and thrift. The purchaser is the Manthali Credit Unions who took the profit from their operations and returned it to the community.

World Neighbours Canada's role has been to participate in TSS's water projects. The connection with an ambulance may seem remote but there is a direct relationship. The water projects that WNCS has been funding for over a decade are but one step in a well-thought out development process. In order to qualify for TSS assistance in establishing a water system, the villagers must meet a number of criteria. They must form a water system maintenance committee, tax each other to establish a maintenance fund, agree to the number and location of the pipe stands and contribute all the labour and local materials for collecting the water at the source and trenching the water line to the village stand pipes. Once the water system is functioning, the next step is to form a savings and loan committee – often among the women – that uses the water system account as its capital. The water system frees up hours daily for the women who traditionally carry water from distant sources for their families. They now have time to engage in small agricultural enterprises with seed capital from their local credit union.

This process has been very successful. In 1998-99 there were just over 2,000 credit union members with total assets of CAD\$16,600. Last year they had over 6,000 members with assets of CAD\$1,474,000 in legally registered credit unions.

World Neighbours Canada's original investment in plastic pipe, bags of cement and metal fittings still lies buried beneath the soil in 121 villages, quietly delivering daily dividends of clean water, liberated



March 31 was a big day for the Manthali Cooperative with the arrival of their new four-wheel drive ambulance to service the surrounding villages and transfer critical patients to Kathmandu for specialized treatment.

female labour and public health to the villages. That would be payment enough for our efforts but the benefits continue to compound. The traditional money lenders in the Manthali Valley with their usurious rates have been challenged as the people

take control of their own development by pooling first their labour and now their capital in a development process that benefits both the individual families, the separate villages and the valley as a whole.

Feel proud for the people of Manthali.

More positive news as Nepal moves towards peaceful civil society

The following email was received from Suresh Shrestha who heads the Kathmandu, Nepal office of Tamakoshi Service Society (TSS) on Sunday, April 1, 2007:

"After the Maoists induction into the interim parliament, they have also been involved in the interim government. A 22-member interim government has been formed yesterday. The Maoists got five ministers. Their portfolios are Ministry for Information & Communication, Ministry for Women, Children & Social Welfare, Ministry for Local Development, Ministry for Forest and Soil Conservation, Ministry for Physical Planning and Works. A new Ministry for Peace & Reconstruction has been created this time. The eight political parties have decided to hold a constituent assembly poll on June 20, 2007. They also decided to amend the interim constitution to remove the king by a two-thirds vote by parliament if the king is found conspiring against the Constituent Assembly polls. India, USA and European Commission have welcomed the formation of interim government."

If you would like to receive periodic reports from our programs and program countries, please respond to our request for email addresses on the reverse side.

Help WNCS communicate while saving money and trees

Please take a moment to drop us an email so we can record your address for our new donor database. Send an email to mbn@oliverchronicle.com or note it on your return card when you send in your donation.

We will continue to send out our twice yearly appeal letters by snail mail but will replace our special mailings about gatherings, events, invitations and news updates with emails for those who provide their addresses, thus saving postage and paper. Be assured we will never sell or provide your address to any other organization.



Victorino continues to work his magic

Great work is being done by farm families in six villages in the mountains east of Danli, Honduras (near the border with Nicaragua). The project is called "La Esperanza" after one of the participating villages, and commenced in July 2006. The campesinos have been motivated by Victorina Rivera, an inspiring leader who arose from the successful El Socorro program and has gone on to be a sought-after program coordinator in the country. Victorina reports an astonishing 344 out of 369 families signing on to be involved in the training. Progress has been made in working with women's

health committees, an organic coffee cooperative, a poultry cooperative and the local village committees called Patronados. World Neighbours Canada Society volunteers have completed two applications to the Canadian International Development Agency for 3:1 matching grants. WNCS hopes to have an answer from CIDA in a few months so the program can be ramped up with the inclusion of part-time extensionists and specialist training in health, agriculture and governance.

A second application, on behalf of Tamakoshi Service Society (TSS) in Nepal, has also been made to CIDA for a three year program to develop 9 village water systems and to assist in the installation of water-trap toilets in 2,700 homes. This program will be similar to past partnerships with TSS but will incorporate recent expe-

rience in which we began assisting villages that already have a water system to install hygienic toilets in their homes.

WNCS is committed to helping our partners in Honduras and Nepal whether we obtain matching funds from CIDA or not. Matching dollars or stand-alone dollars, we are dependent on the regular and generous support of our donor base to continue this important work.

WORLD NEIGHBOURS CANADA SOCIETY

World Neighbours Canada supports local organizations that share some basic principles:

- * build on traditional knowledge and values to help people to analyze and solve their own problems.
- * encourage and train local leaders and organizations.
- * rooted in the tradition of neighbour helping neighbour.



The public health group in El Esperanza