

## PARTNER PLAN

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Greetings from Nepal

In Dhading District, the boys and girls are back in class despite many having lost their stationery, books and uniforms during the earthquake. In some areas child-friendly space are bursting with over a hundred children. Games are being played and songs sung and all the children gather together in lines to sing the Nepali National Anthem, hands on hearts.

The affected people continue to rebuild their homes with new and salvaged material from their former homes. But the long term challenge is to build back better and stronger, with concrete pillars which can withstand another major earthquake. The risk is that by the time the blueprints are ready, families will have settled for the old ways of construction and be too weary or preoccupied with other jobs to build a second time.

The Government, UMN and other INGOs have distributed seeds and farming tools for planting. The emotions are never far from the surface when families recall what they lost during the earthquake. Sometime you find woman who lost family members with tears pouring down their face. It seems to be the women who are doing the heavy lifting literally carry huge baskets of silage - food for the animals - and water for their families. Happy children in school, has demonstrated how a return to normality can begin to vanquish bad memories of shaking houses and the rumble of local landslides. With the monsoons due soon, it will take a lot of Nepali determination to get through the next three months especially those living in tents.

The recovery phase has begun and there is hope that the world pledges will deliver most of what Nepal needs. There is an opportunity to strengthen so much, not just the physical buildings, but the institutions of government nationally and locally, and reinforce social cohesion and the Nepali national spirit. UMN participated in an exhibition and interaction programme organised by AIN (Association of International NGOs in Nepal). The main purpose of the programme was to showcase the contribution and work of INGOs in relief and recovery and to discuss the results, challenges and lesson learned from the first three months of the relief and recovery.

The New Draft of Nepal Constitution was circulated to the Nepali people. The people gave feedback or suggestion to the Constituent Assembly. There were several contentious issues which Dr. Bal Krishna Sharma highlighted in his paper about religious freedom. Nepali Christians and church leaders gave their suggestions. It was noted that some statement allows the freedom of religious practice, but because of the agitation in the parliament some statements were interpreted as to mean no one is allowed to change from one religion to another and it applies that a person can reject his religion and become atheist. Dr Bal Krishna was amazed to hear such an interpretation that a person has the freedom to change from his religion to atheism and not from his religion to any other religion. Such interpretation completely violates basic human rights.

It is encouraging to see how the capacity of UMN partners has improved in serving people living with HIV and their family members through the love of Christ. 635 community's members including the youth received training on HIV and AIDS, information on heart disease, cancer and drug

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addiction. 64 PLHIV received nutrition supplies contributed by churches in Butwal and the project, 24 PLHIV were referred for CD4 test and 50 PLHIV for Antiretroviral therapy. 89 youth from schools and Churches participated in HIV, ASRH and Nutritional training. ANUGRAHA Church in Itahari completed Christian Family Life Education classes using their own their resources. Churches in Butwal contributed NR 18458 for nutrition support to PLHIV. 25 children affected by AIDS received educational support and uniforms and 3 PLHIV started income generating activities. The cases of opportunistic infection had reduced drastically because of adherence to treatment, access to counselling services and nutrition support.

The future plan is to visit UMN partners to review the previous work and orient them if the approved plans for the current Fiscal year related to Disaster Risk Reduction and HIV. The discussion on Church involvement in the main relief and rehabilitation work is ongoing.

The Integral Mission Curriculum for the Bible Schools was developed by their own staff and technically supported by UMN. It was launched recently though some Bible Colleges have started teaching.

UMN has recruited a Nepali as Programme Manager for HIV and AIDS and I will continue building her capacity in planning and implementation of programmes.

I get in touch with my family through phone and skype and God has protected each one of us. Francis is enjoying his summer holidays while Grace enrolled for summer classes. Grace was excited to have passed her driving test. I thank God for my wife Agnes for her continued support to our children ensuring that they are safe and supported in their education.



This is one of the Bible study group

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Reviewing Disaster risk reduction plans with UMN partner (HIMS) in Dhading District



Ganesh with his family has been ensuring children living with HIV are supported

Please pray for:

- My mother who has not been feeling well in Kenya
- My family - Francis, Grace and Agnes
- UMN partners plans for this year on reconstruction
- My protection as I travel to the field
- Nepal as they finalise the constitution draft to ensure religious freedom will be upheld in the new constitution

It is my prayer that God will shower His blessings to you all

Thank you for your prayers and support

Joel. Agnes, Grace and Francis