

**World Neighbours Canada Society  
Voluntary Sector Fund S064793**

**Ramechhap Drinking Water, Sanitation  
and Smokeless Stoves Project**

**Project Completion Report 2013**

**1. Update on Project progress**

**i. Set results in context.**

The political situation in Nepal fluctuates from day to day, week to week. Since the removal of the Monarchy in 2008, there have been democratic elections in which the 'Maoists' received the most votes, but not a majority. The leader of the Maoists became the Prime Minister in charge of a coalition government, and the President was a non Maoist. The parliament was made up of 21 different parties and over 600 seats. One of the first orders of business was to write a new constitution, and after 5 years, this is still not completed. There is now a second election scheduled for the fall of 2013, and a caretaker government has been set up for the next 6 months as parties campaign. The interim head of state is a retired Chief Justice, and he has 7 'ministers' in a cabinet, all retired bureaucrats.

For the general population, ongoing problems of labour strikes and shortages, as well as political disharmony, are annoying and frustrating.

Despite the political instability, TSS has been able to continue its work without any negative impact.

**ii. Overall project performance assessment.**

Given the macro problems affecting Nepal over the past three years, the fact that we exceeded the expected results we predicted in two of the three parts of the project, is remarkable and speaks well of both our partner TSS, and of the drive and energy of the villagers who do the actual work to make these projects come to life.

The Project Completion Reports (attached) document all of the details of the communities where gravity fed water systems, hygienic toilets and smokeless stoves have been constructed. What the reports do not adequately show is the pride of the local people in their accomplishments. The fact that they have actually planned and constructed a water system for their village, and now operate and maintain it, is a huge boost to their collective self esteems. The fact that every family in a village has

a proper toilet that does not smell and does not attract flies, is a source of pride and, because they built it themselves, of accomplishment. The glow on a woman's face as she shows off her new stove, as she lists off the advantages to herself and her family of not breathing in wood smoke, and tells you of the money and time this stove saves her, tells you the idea is a good one.

The stated goal of TSS is to help every one of the 42,000 householders in Ramechhap build their own hygienic toilet. As this toilet program progresses, and the villagers see the advantages of better health and hygiene, we are confident that they will achieve that goal and we are happy to help them do so.

I am able to give a personal assessment again this year, on this project, as I was able to visit Ramechhap in April of 2013. I was able to see water projects completed, and to see the file folder of applications for the following years. I was able to see the proliferation of hygienic toilets in remote and tiny villages as well as in larger centres. I was able to see and smell the lack of smoke in the houses. And I was able to see the smiles and pride, and the gratitude, in the faces of the people in the many villages I was able to visit.

I am not at all surprised that over 6000 hygienic toilets and 5 water systems could have been constructed in the past 3 years. The villagers are ready to work, ready to improve their villages and their lives, and just need a bit of knowledge and help to do so. The WNC philosophy of empowerment works very well with TSS's goals of village development and the results are good.

iii. **Feedback from project beneficiaries.**

The main project beneficiaries are the villagers of Ramechhap who now have water to their villages, a hygienic toilet in their back yard and in some cases, a more efficient stove in their house. During my visit, it was obvious that they were very happy with all three things. Householders were happy to show off their new toilets. They were always clean and, due to the design, never smelly.

The water standpipes are centres of social activity for the women and children and even though some of the saved carrying time may now be spent in talking at the 'water fountain', it is obvious that the change has been positive. In talking with the User Groups, the feedback was all positive. I pressed the women constantly on what they did with the extra time, now that they did not have to pack water for at least 4 hours a day. The answer I got over and over was that they spent most of it in producing a vegetable garden, thus saving them the expense of purchasing vegetables at the market. Other women spent time carrying more water, resulting in better hygiene and better health. But in all cases, the work of carrying water was replaced by the work of doing something else. Usually less physically demanding work, but not less time working.

TSS is a beneficiary as well. The funding we provide enables them to continue their work, and being able to 'access' a village with the promise of a gravity fed water system allows them to then start working with that same village on other development issues. TSS works to improve health and hygiene, to improve agricultural methods, to improve gender equity, to improve education and to improve access to micro credit.

- iv. **Information on observations from your organization and the developing country partner organization.** Tamakoshi Sewa Samiti (TSS) and World Neighbours Canada have a collaboration that spans 23 years. We have seen TSS grow from a small NGO in a rented office to become a respected and significant integrated village development organization in Ramechhap and indeed, in Nepal. They have a reputation for honesty, integrity and fairness that served them well in dealings with the Maoists and serves them well today in dealing with the new democracy. Throughout the various political upheavals of the past decades, TSS has been able to work with no significant interruptions.

WN Canada board member Dale Dodge visited Ramechhap in April 2013 and spent 6 days with Suresh Shreshtha, program coordinator. During this time, he was also able to meet and talk to other TSS program staff and was able to travel to 7 of the villages supported with the current VSF project funds. Mr Shreshtha and all of the TSS staff were very open and receptive to all questions and suggestions.

- v. **Information on the collaboration between the various organizations involved in the implementation of the project.**

TSS has good relations with local governments in Ramechhap. This includes both District Development Councils (DDC) and Village Development Councils (VDC). All of the projects that TSS proposes in the Ramechhap region are first taken to the DDC and VDC for their support and approval. In the case of the water system at Tekanpur, the DDC coordinated funding from TSS and Swiss NGOs with DDC road work, and then TSS and the User Groups planned and installed the system to the village. This particular water system had a water source 10 km from the village. The entire pipe line was buried 1 metre in the ground by the villagers, and the village has 13 stand pipes.

## **2. Adjustments.**

There are no significant adjustments to report.

### 3. Lessons learned and success stories.

- The lesson I learned, personally, is the same one I learn every time I visit a third world country. We, people, are all basically the same the world over. We all want to be secure, to have adequate food, and to enable our children to have a better life than we had. And if we can be happy while this happens, then that is a bonus. Nepalis are no different. They do not want charity, but they do want progress and are quite willing to work hard to get it.
- Success stories. Every village with a new water system is a success story, but the village of Sokornu was notable. The first thing you notice as you crest the ridge before descending into Sokornu is the Himalayan mountain range gleaming in the sun. The location is spectacular. Once welcomed and feted by the villagers, and seated across from the water user committee, you notice that 5 of the 9 committee members are women. And after a Q&A session and a tour of the system, you sit down to a delicious lunch – prepared by one of the husbands! You can feel, see and taste a change in the air.

Another success story takes place in the small village of Betali. After a grueling 2 hour walk ‘straight uphill,’ we arrived at one of the most enthusiastic welcomes we experienced – at least a dozen strings of flowers around our necks – and the whole village smiling at us. We were told that they had even cancelled school so the children could participate in the celebration. The women in this village would spend up to 8 hours a day in the dry season, packing water, so a water system here was a huge benefit. We did the standard meeting and greeting of the User Committee and elders, the standard Q&A session, and the required inspection of the system. During the inspection, I said to the Chairman of the User Committee that I could see retiring in this village. He immediately pointed out 3 small tiers of farm land that he would personally give to me if I came, and by the end of the day, he had thrown in a water buffalo for my wife.

- Also learned again - our modus operandi at WNC is successful. The empowerment of the people comes not from giving money to the people; it comes from the power of analysis and decision making by the people.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Dodge,  
Director, WNC