



Sailung TriNetra Newsletter No 1 Jan-March 2007

Welcome to the first ever Sailung TriNetra newsletter. The purpose of these quarterly newsletters is to keep everyone up to date with what's going on with Sailung TriNetra, what we have been up to and anything else interesting we can think to let you know about!

So what's been going on?

I've been back in the UK, generally harassing everyone I know for donations to the project - so if you haven't yet given a donation or signed up for a monthly commitment then follow the links to the donation page now!

Mid Feb we had some brilliant news - Community Action Nepal (CAN) agreed to allow Sailung TriNetra to use their financial channels in the UK. Basically this means that all of the money which is donated in the UK is tax deductible. Don't worry; even though it goes into their bank account it is ring-fenced for us, and twice a year they send it over to Nepal for us.

I got back to Nepal at the beginning of February to a very cold snap. It even snowed in the valley, the first time in over 60 years. There's been protests in the Terai (the area in the south-west), and they have cut off supplies from India. So there's no gas (which means no hot water), very limited petrol (cars etc have been queuing for hours to get petrol), and reduced hours of electricity. Oh, and the water is in short supply!!! Strikes are a regular event as well.

But despite all of this, we have been busy getting on with things.

News from Toast Bakery - Nir has been putting the finishing cosmetic touches to the Bakery. It looks great, and everyone has worked really hard. The first of our trainees was moved on and found employment in another restaurant in Kathmandu, which is one of the objectives of Sailung TriNetra, so this is good news. At the moment, we also have a guy, from Tibet who is learning how to make bread and cakes, so he can open a restaurant back in his home village. On another note, the bakery was broken into and a fair amount of cash was stolen. Unfortunately thieves here are indiscriminate and don't give a second thought for the bakery being a not-for-profit business. But we move on!

On the Salme Khola Schools project front - things have been progressing, and we have a detailed plan in place for the coming year (well at least we have a plan - where or not it will be implemented as such is another matter!).

We have begun to implement the first phase of our project - The establishment of five Early Childhood Development Centres. These centres will accommodate approximately 130 children aged between three and five. They will provide a foundation for school in a child-friendly environment. We had originally envisaged three centres but when we got back to the villages we quickly realized that the terrain and the distance between the villages would make it impossible for the young ones. Hence we have now planned for 5 centres in each of the villages we are working with. The other advantage of this

arrangement is that each of the communities themselves can get involved and support their own centre.

The villagers have come together and appointed a key stakeholder (the person who will be responsible for the centre in each community); they in turn have set up a building committee. In consultation with Sailung TriNetra, the villagers have agreed upon a site for the centre, its size and configuration. As their 'contribution' they will prepare the site for building, clear it and then collect the raw materials such as wood and stone. Later in the year, they will build each centre.



Talking with the locals about the ECD Centres



The future site of one of the ECD Centres - where the wheat is at the moment!

I have also been meeting with various government bodies (the Department of Education and the Curriculum Development Unit) university representatives (the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development - CERID) and other INGO/NGO's such as Save the Children and World Vision to gather information and take advice on the best way to proceed. In light of these findings, we will be predominately working with two NGO's - Early Childhood Education Centre and Seto Gurans Early Childhood Services in the coming months. CAN have also been extremely helpful.

So, as you can see, things have been eventful and now we really need to raise some cash for all of this!! So if you can do any fundraising it would be greatly appreciated.

And finally, there are a few people I'd like to thank for all of their efforts so far. Caroline for her 'constructive criticism' of the website, and everything else. Thanks also to Julie and Rachel, for their eagle eyes on proofing the various drafts of the website; Linda for all her efforts on the design elements, including the logo - thanks for putting up with my endless changes! Everything looks great by the way! Dan for looking over the newsletter and saving me from any embarrassing spelling mistakes! And last but not least, to my father, for his unreserved support and encouragement.

In Nepal, gratitude must go to CERID (Mr Kishor Shrestha) for putting me on the right path. Thanks must also go to Mr Som Thapa, who has given his time freely and without question. He has also patiently translated for me. And of course, to Nir for making things happen in Nepal which, believe me, is a major triumph in itself. Love to the children - Dewba, Pushpa, Himraj, Nirmila and Dilma.

And finally, to everyone else who has given me counsel and support over a few bottles of wine and to those who have financially committed to the project - A very big thank you!

If anyone has anything they would like to add into the next installment, just drop me an email (Claire@sailungtrinetra.org). Or else you will get just my ramblings!

One last thing - We need to raise money for this project, so please give generously!

Cheers

Claire