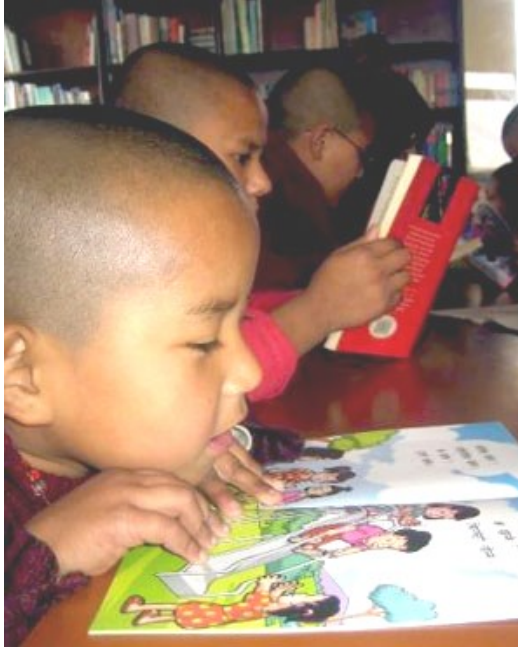


"A library is an arsenal of liberty" anon.

A Library Transforms Education at the Arya Tara School

By Paul Bird, Secretary, NLF Canada



.Photo courtesy of The Ani Foundation

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. NLF personnel installed the e-Pustakalaya digital library resource, developed by our partners the Open Learning Exchange Nepal (OLE). The OLE and NLF have collaborated on transferring the technical knowledge to do this as a cost saving measure. The NLF then carried out a training program with the school staff to demonstrate how to integrate its resources with teaching and learning so that teachers and students are able to get the best use out of the e-Pustakalaya content. 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

Biswamitra Library a Community Focal Point

Biswamitra Community Library is the first public library ever in the village of Dharachaur, Lalitpur District (pop. 9000). The NLF provided financial, training and managerial support.



Residents of all ages gather in Biswamitra Library

"The library has become a focal point of the community." Bhoj Kala Dahal, community leader

"We teenagers have found purpose in the readers' clubs and we make use of the reference materials in the library for our studies too. As well we organize events and competitions ." Ms. Dikshya Dahal and Ms. Nisha Acharya, Grade 10 students

"Reading and learning new things has given me confidence." Mrs Muna Acharya

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Kapil Dev Thapa Brings Advocacy for Education to NLF Nepal Board

We are pleased to announce the election of Kapil Dev Thapa to the board of directors of NLF Nepal. Kapil is the President of Topa Education Centers, which focuses on Japanese language training in Nepal. He is the Regional Chair, Asia Pacific Region, Philanthropy & Humanitarian Assistance Committee (2013-2015) of the NRNA and is a member the NRNA Public Library Task Force.

His ability to inspire fellow NRNs towards supporting the cause of library development has already resulted in the establishment of libraries in Lalitpur, Baglung and Damauli with plans for several more to be implemented in 2014.

He has committed NR 50,000 annually to support the NLF office in Kathmandu. Support of this kind is critical to the running of our Kathmandu office. We urge others to follow Kapil's example.

"I am a strong believer in education and believe the country would be in a much better shape if we could provide quality education to our young people. The NLF offers me an opportunity to expand my passion for education by being involved in library development, I could not miss it".

Kapil Dev Thapa



Ria's Reading Room Thrives



Learning made fun with computers in Sunderidanda

Rias Reading Room is a library in the village school in Sunderidanda, on Lake Begnas, in Kaski District, a popular tourist destination. Under the guidance of Wanda Vivequin (after whose mother the library is named) and Arjun Parajuli, the manager of the nearby Begnas Resort, the library has prospered.

In Nov 2014 a team from OLE Nepal installed an e-Pustakalaya server to connect to 10 XO laptops. They led a 4 day training workshop to introduce 8 teachers to the stored teaching resources and vast array of reading and media material.

The school enrollment continues to rise and parents and community leaders throw their support behind the school as it becomes a major resource for the community, expertly managed by librarian Hari Dev Neupane.

Computer Skills Boost for Women in Sangam

In 2013 the NLF assisted in carrying out a pilot project to bring computer training to 15 women in Sangam Community Library. A follow-up survey indicated that the participants had made good use of the skills acquired (e.g. in one case gaining online training to become an insurance agent and in another learning the skills necessary to start a mushroom growing business). TRAS (www.tras.ca), a Vancouver based NGO committed to supporting development in the Himalayan regions, then agreed to provide a C\$5,000 grant to support training for up to 260 more women in the Sangam area. The expanded training is currently under way. 60 of these women will receive advanced training and from this group 20 will be trained as trainers.

Apart from wealth-producing benefits, use of computers brings affordable means of communication to family members working away from home, increased access to reading material for pleasure and access to information about health, nutrition and agricultural practices. Giving women the skills necessary to access information easily is a key investment in maximizing the resources of public libraries. Since its inception the training program has created a huge demand for its continuation both locally and across the country. Please contact us (info@nepallibrary.org) if you would like to contribute to furthering this program.



Entrepreneurs, service workers and housewives are among those who benefit from computer training

Libraries a Necessity for Nepal's Development

By Ganesh Shah, President, NLF, Nepal.

The Nepal Library Foundation (Nepal) was established in 2011 as the Nepal based sister organisation of the original Vancouver based NLF (Canada), established in 2006, At that time there were no cohesive policies for library development as a national priority. Although in 2014 we see that some things have changed, the resources available for library development are still minimal in Nepal compared to those in developed countries.

The Internet has drastically changed the means of access to information but affordable broadband resources are simply not available to the vast majority of Nepal's population. Thus libraries are an absolute necessity for the majority of Nepalis as a means to access information, whether in traditional print form or digitally.

Historically in developed countries legislation was passed (in 1850 in the UK) that allowed tax revenue to be directed to library funding. Libraries were seen not as a luxury but as a necessity for improving literacy to meet the escalating demands of the Industrial Revolution.

National and local governments in Nepal are not recognising this connection between knowledge



Mr Ganesh Shah was recently appointed President of NLF Nepal. Ganesh is a mechanical engineer by training and has been active in national politics for many years and served as a cabinet minister. He is a strong advocate for the use of ICT in education. As well he is a leading exponent of the need to address the issues of climate change in Nepal.

and prosperity. They are not investing in even the basic resources for a national library infrastructure.

It is up to organisations like the NLF to change this situation and help initiate a cohesive national library movement. Only this can meet the growing and urgent demand for improved resources for literacy and information access that will fuel the nation's development.

The general public, the NGOs dedicated to library development and private bodies and foundations must work together to achieve this end.

In the meantime we will continue to focus on establishing well stocked and managed libraries throughout the country. We will continue our work in advising communities and providing training as well as nurturing the culture of reading both for knowledge and pleasure.

Libraries are essential in the process of allowing citizens to gain knowledge. In the era of expanding digital access to information they are needed more than ever before.

We welcome your support.

Life Changing Library In Simara Expands



Children hard at work on their studies in Simara

Electrical power arrived in the village of Simara, Sarlahi District, in November 2013. The Subudhi Mahananda Academic Library, established with NLF assistance in 2011, now has seven computers, hundreds of books and access to the e-Pustakalaya.

In 2014, the NLF, as a part of its on-going program to strengthen the library's capacity, provided books and helped initiate a community program of reading enhancement including door-to-door delivery of books. The Sarlahi Social Foundation, under the leadership of Dr. Vijaya Jha, provided the financial support.

"I passed the Nepal Civil Service examination with flying colors by reading books from the library." Mahadev Jha, a user of Subudhi Mahananda Academic Library, working hard to qualify for the National Civil Service

"The library has changed my life. The pain in my stomach was cured after I started reading and following the recommendations in the Nepali translated book Doctor Navayema¹." Bishu Jha, a middle-aged library user

1 Where There is No Doctor: Werner D, Thuman C, and Maxwell J. Hesperian Health Guides, California

Investment in Nepal's Digital Library Leader Pays Off

The leading digital library in Nepal, the e-Pustakalaya, is an ongoing project of our partner the Open Learning

Exchange Nepal (www.olenepal.org). It is accessed online (www.pustakalaya.org) or through a local network connected to an affordable local server. In a country where broadband internet access is both expensive and largely unavailable the latter provides a cost effective way of delivering information to rural communities. The NLF provided start-up and development funding for several years. This funding, amounting to over C\$50,000, has proved to be a sound investment returning a dividend of wide scale deployment in schools

and public libraries across Nepal. Major funding for the e-Pustakalaya is now provided by the UK based Maitri Foundation. It recently commissioned a report (<http://www.maitritrust.org>) on its support of education projects globally which singled out the work of OLE as exemplary.

OLE's Sofila Vaidya reports that installations were placed in 10 new districts over the last two years including 16 school installations in Gorkha and Chitwan districts in 2014 alone.



Teachers undergoing an orientation in the use of the e-Pustakalaya in a rural school in Nepal. The two means of display, the projected computer screen and the chalkboard, symbolize the interactive and the didactic models of teaching and learning. However, it is not enough to provide technology in schools without ongoing and carefully managed training to bring about the necessary shift towards more student-centered models of education.

The installation of the digital library in schools comes with an orientation program where teachers are thoroughly guided on how to integrate this powerful learning resource into their teaching practice. Sofila reports on receiving good feedback from the schools in terms of the progress they are making.

In order to reduce the costs of installation we have worked with OLE to develop a program and documentation to allow local library officials to get training in installation and configuration procedures as well as getting the best use from the resource. A mobile

phone app is now available to allow e-Pustakalaya users to download books and multimedia onto their phones and tablets directly from local servers.

www.nepallibrary.org



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