

Number 2, January 1992

UMMN News

United Mission to Nepal

Feature:

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Rural Development Department
Presents Strategic Plan

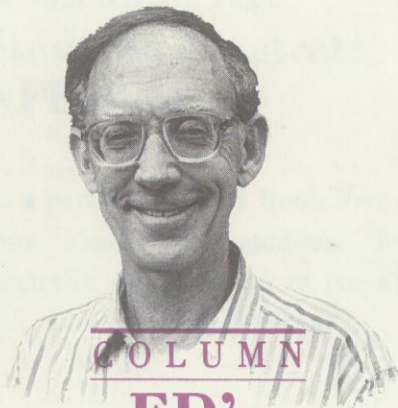
TB-YEAR IN GORKHA

Sociological Problems Complicate
Treatment of Tuberculosis

NEW SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

Saves Nepali Students
From Going Abroad





**COLUMN
ED's
COLUMN**

Development and/or Transformation?

For the past four decades, enormous effort has been expended in the so-called developing world to improve the quality of life. Vast human and material resources from overseas have joined with local initiatives to help families and communities move beyond poverty to a better future.

Gains have been made, especially in certain areas and sectors. But overall the results have been disappointing. In some Asian and African nations, including Nepal, the per capita income has decreased over the last decade.

Following World War II there were massive relief programmes. Soon it was realized that more than short term charity was needed if the newly independent countries in Asia and Africa were to achieve economic development. Attempts to apply modern technology and management to problems such as agricultural production and control of diseases yielded significant, sometimes spectacular results.

After some years it became apparent that the results of economic development benefitted some more than others and for most probably made little difference. There was still the problem of how humans related to each other with fairness and justice. Political attempts to achieve such equity have not been very successful.

Now researchers are beginning to realize that economic and political changes, while

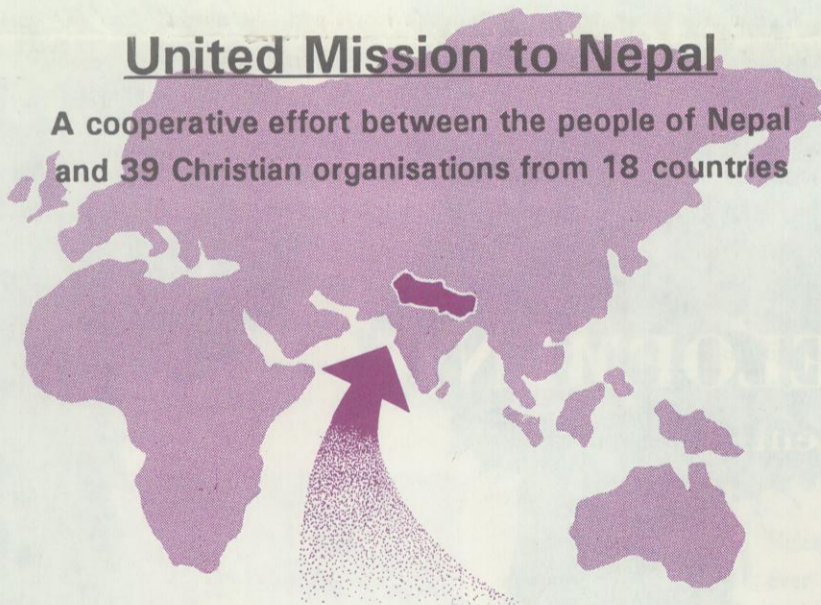
necessary, are not sufficient for true development. Development that lasts and truly makes a difference involves changes of attitudes and values. Values are based on the assessment by individuals, families, and communities as to what is most important, what is of ultimate value. In other words, religious values.

So it is not surprising that development theorists such as Robert Chambero and David Korten are suggesting that instead of speaking of "development," we use the term "transformation". Dor Bahadur Bista's controversial book on Nepal's struggle for modernization, Fatalism and Development, draws a connection between basic world view and religious values and development.

The challenge is not to lose sight of the ultimate goal of development which is the transformation of the human community into what its Creator intended. This means that our thinking and efforts must include not only economic and social development, but also the human relationship to God. This requires great humility and openness. But to do any less would be to settle for mere development instead of true transformation.

United Mission to Nepal

A cooperative effort between the people of Nepal and 39 Christian organisations from 18 countries



**Edgar Metzler
Executive Director**

HEALTH SERVICES

Cares for the sick and promotes health through hospitals, community health and education programmes



EDUCATION SERVICES

Assists in the development of education at different levels through formal and non-formal methods/training

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Facilitates private sector industrial development, appropriate technology dissemination and technical training



RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Assists rural communities in their efforts to improve their quality of life through awareness building, non-formal education/training and technical support

Expatriate volunteer professionals from many countries, working together with 2,000 Nepalis in more than 35 UMN-related projects

UMNews

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Photos: Olof Konneback, except pg 9: Paul Doherty and pg 10 (right): Tom Moncrieff

TB - a Sociological Problem

Tuberculosis is a major health problem in Nepal - and will remain so for a long time.

"We have the technological solutions, but for sociological reasons they are very difficult to implement", says Ian Smith, director of the TB Control Support Programme in Gorkha district.



Ian and his team visited 1,500 households and found 20 new TB cases, which is more than double expected statistically.

"We have found more TB in Gurung communities than in other ethnic groups. The Gurungs are very social. People meet in large groups for festivals and religious ceremonies, often for several days and with many people sleeping together. It is not surprising if infection is widely spread at these gatherings."

Other reasons affecting the TB situation are big families in poorly ventilated houses, poor nutrition and migration to more infected areas in India in search of work.

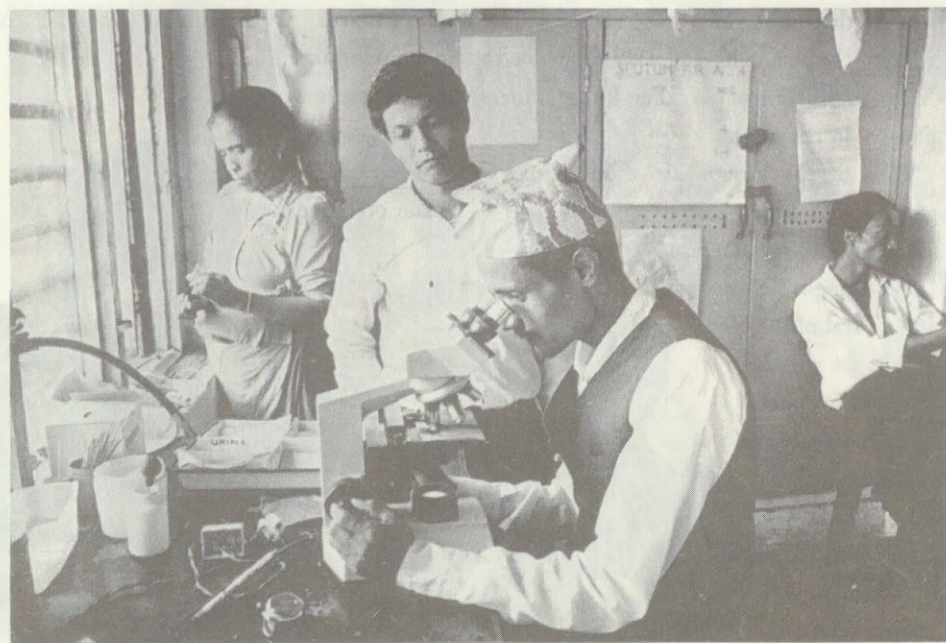
The TB Control Support Programme (TCSP) was established in 1989. It works in close connection with the District Public Health office. The aim is to strengthen and support existing TB control activities in the district. It is a six-year undertaking and may be launched in other districts, if successful.

As a joint effort between the TB programme and Amp Pipal Hospital, 1991 was proclaimed a special "TB year".

"We have tried to raise general awareness by teaching hospital staff at all levels", says Ruth Berry, Education Supervisor at the hospital. "A new combined drug regimen has also been introduced, which shortens the treatment period to eight months."

As one of the first from UMN, Ian Smith recently spent six weeks in the scarcely populated, far-north region of Gorkha. To reach the remotest villages he had to walk nine days.

"The purpose of this trip, apart from providing treatment, was to establish the level of TB transmission and develop a strategy for primary health care in mountain areas."



One problem is that people in general are not aware of their symptoms. Coughing is considered part of normal life and can therefore not be used as a diagnosis of TB.

Another complication the TB-workers in Gorkha face, is that people come very late to the hospital. They try their traditional healers first, which generally is not helpful for TB.

Also, the treatment is complicated for many of the patients, and even if the medicine is free, it is expensive for follow-up. Not more than 50 % complete the full course of treatment, and among those with more than six hours walk to the hospital, the completion rate is less than 30 %.

Nepali Mothers Unsafe

Following the TB year, "Safe Motherhood" will be the 1992 theme in Amp Pipal Hospital and Community Health Programme.

With a maternal mortality rate of 850 per 100,000, Nepal has - even for South Asia - an extremely high number of mothers dying in connection with childbirth.

"We hope this figure can be reduced by a combination of improved family planning, hygiene, nutrition and education", says Dr. Gary Parkes.



“WE WANTED TO COME OUT OF THE FENCE...?”

UMN took over the forestry research center in Nisikot from USAID in June 1990 - on the condition that it could be turned into a wider and much more community-oriented programme.

"We wanted to come out of the fence, to make sure we did something that was useful to the people in the area", says Duman Thapa, project director of what now is called Nepal Resource Management Project (NRMP).

The Tamang villages on top of the hillside were identified as the most needy communities. They were encouraged to form Forestry User Groups and to set up a community nursery in each village.

"In order to build up the community spirit, we are making it very clear that it is their nursery, not the project's", explains Duman. "They have to take the responsibility themselves, and, unlike many other projects, no-one will be paid anything."

So far, User Groups are functioning in 6 villages. According to new government rules,

there is a possibility for these groups to become the legal authority over the forest land in their area. This way, in one of the villages, the people have already been able to "claim back" control over their forest. Others plan to do the same.

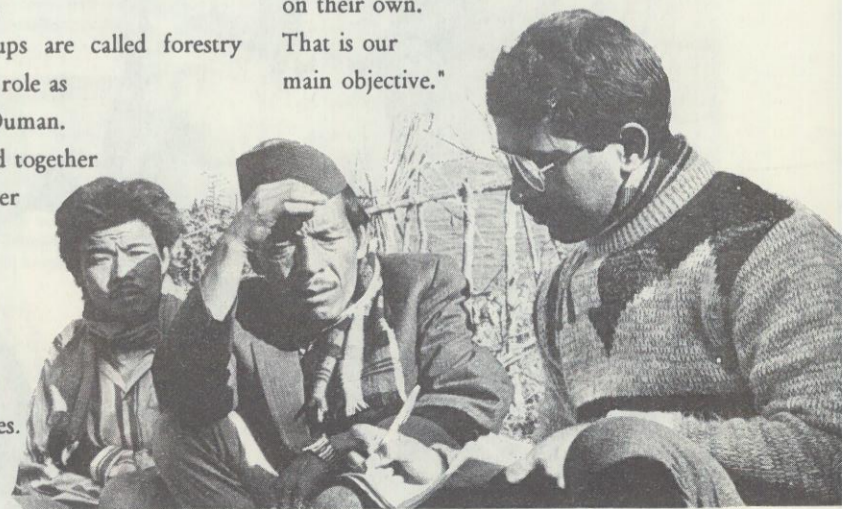
"Even if the groups are called forestry groups, we see their role as much wider", says Duman.

"Everything is linked together and several of the user groups are already involved in water systems, non-formal education and other village development activities.

"When the project time

is finished after five years, the user groups should have become local NGOs (Non-Government Organisations), capable of continuing the development work on their own.

That is our main objective."





WATER SYSTEM BRINGS VILLAGES TOGETHER

It used to be a lot of rivalry between the two neighbouring villages. Now they are working together on a common water system, managed by a joint committee of the forest user groups from each village.

It is the day of the first symbolic spadework. The old lama, or village priest, is ready to perform the inauguration rites. The technical conditions have been finally checked by a water technician, brought in from another UMN project.



There are just a few questions that need to be discussed a little more: "Where to put the taps? How to share the workload?"

The morning meeting of the joint committee is held on the hillside where the reservoir tank will be placed, between the school and the community nursery. The discussion goes on for a while, but the questions have been introduced earlier and an acceptable consensus is soon reached.

It is also clarified that, according to project policy, everyone has to contribute 150 rupees to the Maintenance Fund. The money is put in a bank account in order to ensure the sustainability of the water system.

Every day, the women from Toplang and Chisapani are spending hours and hours carrying water from the source up the hill - for drinking and washing, for watering the animals and recently also for the nursery. No wonder, it is with great expectations they watch the lama being brought to the right spot and asked to start the construction by three strikes with the mattock. ▶

Top left: The Community Nursery in Toplang is set up and managed by the Forestry User Group

Bottom left: NRMP's Bishnu Tripathi discussing future plans with village representatives

Top: Toplang boy showing the proposed location for a water tap

Middle: The village lama performing inauguration rites before the start of the water system construction

Bottom: The Chisapani-Toplang forestry user groups meeting on a deforested hillside, scheduled to be green again within 5 years



THE STARTING POINT

Resource Conservation Evening Classes

The teenage girls huddle around the four kerosine lamps on the floor. All eyes are focused on the literacy game-board in the middle. The marker has stopped on a square with a text. Slowly one of the girls tries to read the few words...

After a full day's work, these 15 young women have gathered to learn to read and write. For nine months, they have met every night (except Saturdays) for what is called Resource Conservation Education, a non-formal evening class with a special focus on forestry and environmental problems.

The group is led by a former Gurkha soldier who learned to read and write in the army. After a 15-day training course, he is facilitating the class in his own home, as a service to his village, without any payment. Tonight though, he is supported by Chandra Aryel from the project office. He comes twice a month and gives advice on new methods as the class moves ahead.

"Are you tired?", asks Chandra. "You have carried sand the whole day for the water system..."

"No, no, go on!" the girls answer in chorus.

Most of the young people in Toplang can't even write their name. They have had a government school for 3-4 years, but due to poor teaching, and even lack of teacher most of the year, no-one has been able to pass grade 1 yet.

Resource Conservation classes are running in 6 villages in the project area. More will come as this is seen as an important starting point for individual, as well as community development.

An important part of the education is to prepare the group for co-operative prospects in the future. These girls are already generating an income to their group - by growing peas together.

"LIGHT HAS BEEN BROUGHT INTO MY VILLAGE"

Binita Lama, evening class participant, Toplang:

A year ago, I couldn't even write my name. I am very happy that 'light' has been brought into my village.

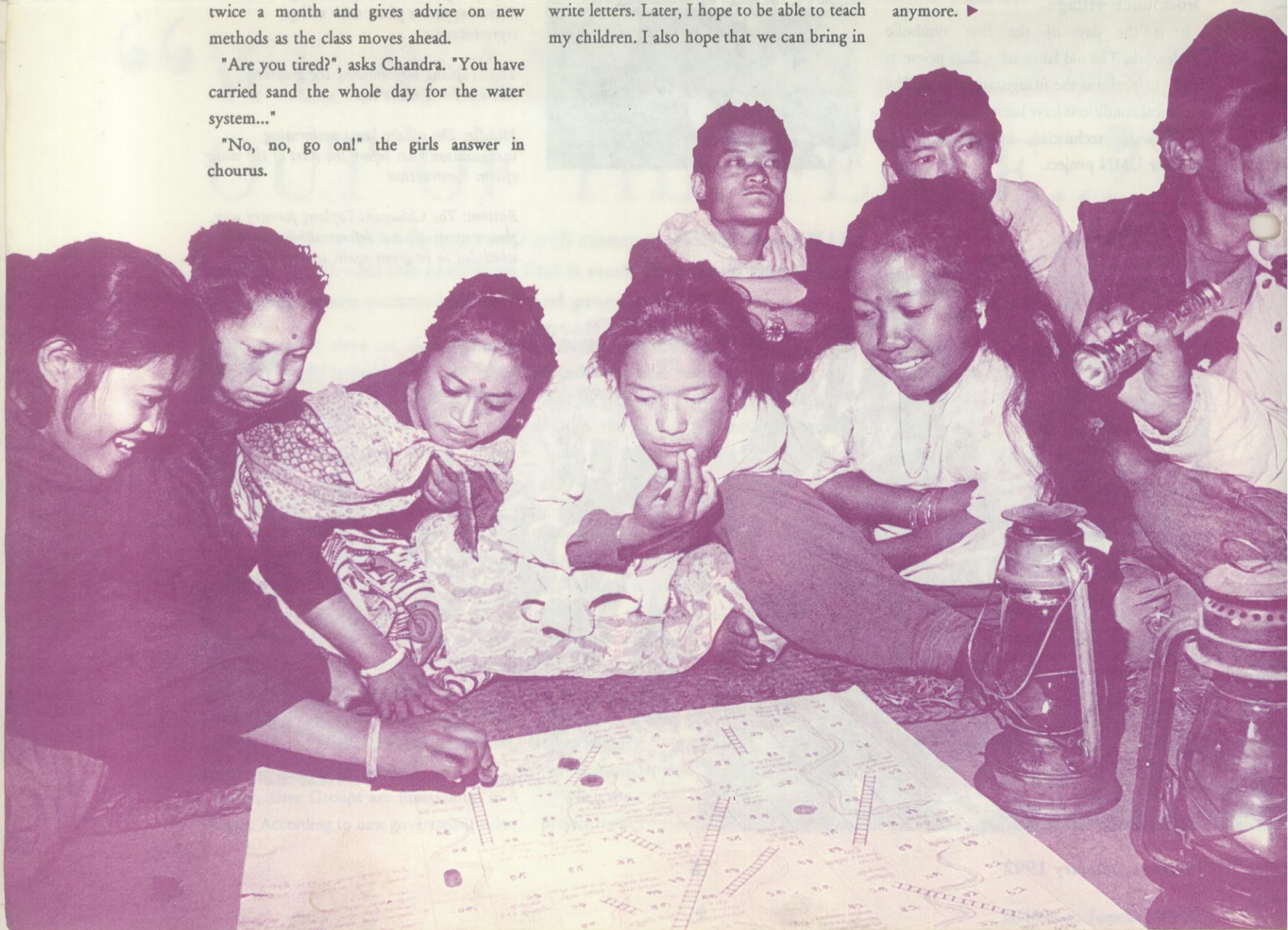
I think it will be useful for me to be able to write letters. Later, I hope to be able to teach my children. I also hope that we can bring in



some kind of job from the outside that will give some income to our village.

We are having class every evening after work, 6 days a week, but I don't get tired. It is very exciting.

Also, Nepali girls are very shy. If we can read and write, maybe we won't be so shy anymore. ▶



Karna Bahadur Tamang, User Group Chairman of Chisapani:

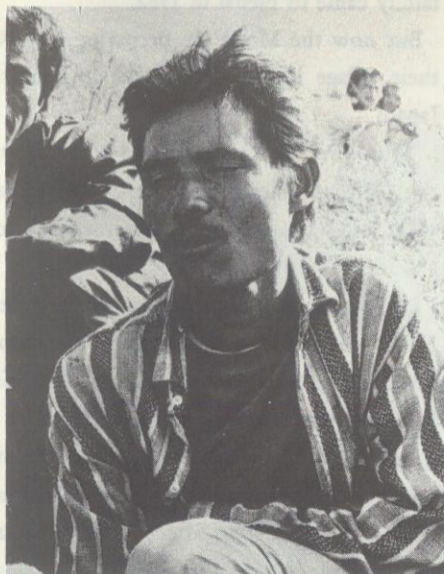


What I hope to see in my village is drinking water first of all, both for people and animals.

Secondly, a community nursery is needed, so we can plant our own trees. We need trees for fodder and fuel. It would also be nice if we could plant some fruit trees.

I have lived more than half of my life. so I could manage the same old way, but we are doing this for our children. They will benefit from it.

Ratna Bahadur Tamang, Toplang:

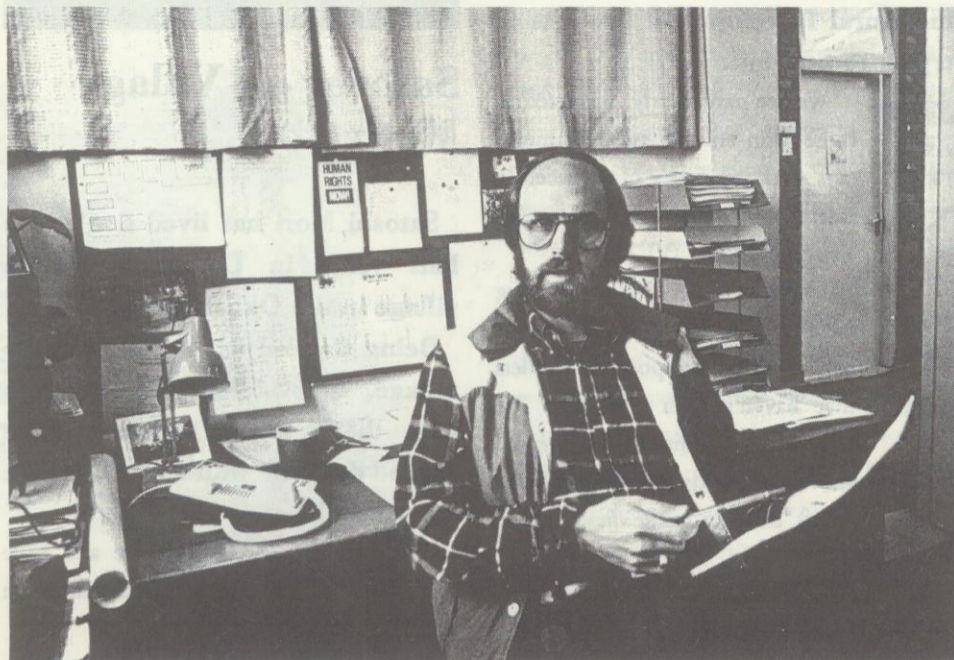


I would like to learn to read and write because when you are travelling, it's good to be able to read the signs. And if you have an important business or have to contact an office or so, it is better if you can write a letter yourself.

If you cannot read, you have a fear of the outside world. It is very easy to become cheated. And if you have to sign any paper, you don't know what you have signed. ●

Important to Keep Direct Links with the Villages

"The people themselves are Nepal's primary resource - available in every community! Our job is to help them develop their capacity", says Jim Alexander, Rural Development Secretary.



The Rural Development Department presented a four year Strategic Plan to the Board of Directors meeting in November 1991:

"We needed a paper that shows what we want to do - in order to strengthen our own collective approach and to enable others to benefit from what we have experienced", Jim explains.

Why is it so important to emphasize that poor village people have to take the initiatives and do all the work themselves?

"That is a reaction to a top-down philosophy that assumes that resources brought in from the top will eventually trickle down to the poor people in the villages. I don't believe in that. Experiences show that a large percentage of those resources will stay at the first layer of already rich people."

But UMN represents the rich part of the world. Shouldn't we generously share our material resources?

"It depends on your concept of development. I believe sustainable development can only be achieved if people are given time to adjust mentally, if there is inner, human development. That is not necessarily provided for when we only bring in our technology-based resources.

You want to support Nepali development organisations. How will that affect UMN's role in the future?

"It will expand UMN's influence. After all, we can only reach a limited number of communities directly. But, if we can inspire and nurture indigenous groups that have the same goals, then our effect could potentially multiply.

"It is important, though, that we continue to be at the grassroots level. UMN should not give up the direct links with the villages - or else we may end up only serving the interests of the development bureaucracies."

How do you know this Strategic Plan will really be implemented throughout the projects?

"The process has been very participatory. The final paper represents a consensus. We will make sure that all new people, expatriates as well as Nepalis, understand and subscribe to it. Also, it will be evaluated and revised once a year."

Our Mission is to:

- * Raise the awareness of rural people that they can improve their own quality of life
- * Assist them in their efforts at doing so
- * Help Nepali groups who will do the same

(Rural Dev. Dep. Strategic Plan)

New RD-project Supports Leather-making Caste

How can low-caste leather makers find new markets for their products? That is what the latest of the Rural Development projects is trying to find out.

ग्रामीण छाला
विकास परियोजना



Village Leathergoods
Training Project

"We are particularly interested in those who still do rural tanning", says Anthony Titley of the recently started Village Leathergoods Training Project (VLTP).

"This traditional industry is dying out due to lack of demand, but we believe there are potential outlets that haven't been tried yet. We want to buy traditional leather and also show Sarkis (as this particular caste is called) how to make new articles themselves."

As a training project, VLTP is offering its services to any UMN project or other Non Government Organisation in Nepal.

Old Handicraft gives New Income

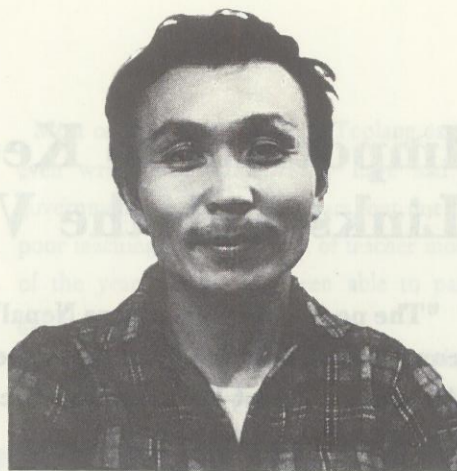
Reviving traditional, but forgotten, cloth-making skills, has given new income possibilities to non literate women in Ponkhu-Dhepulu, a 25-household community in a small pocket valley, five hours walk south of Okhaldhunga bazaar.

Making clothes, as a part of the subsistence farming economy, used to be a common practice in the area. But due to the import of ready-made clothes, these skills had almost been lost during the last 10-15 years.

Some women wanted to take up this traditional handicraft again. And with the help of the income-generating programme of UMN's Rural Development section in Okhaldhunga, three young ladies were sent to a ten-day motivational training on entrepreneurship and business creation, adjusted to a rural context.

One by one, the old, dusty and sometimes broken looms were brought out again. One of the older women, who still knew the technique, taught the younger women how to fix up the looms and start weaving.

Meanwhile, the income-generating programme explored possible markets for the



Satoshi - a Village Motivator

Satoshi Mori has lived five and a half years in Umbu, a remote village in the Okhaldhunga area.

Being the only expatriates in the village, Satoshi, his wife Masako and their three children have shared daily life with the villagers in an unusual way.

"We have enjoyed living here and have gradually felt more and more accepted in the village", says Satoshi.

As far as possible, the Moris have tried to live like their neighbours, which means, for example, that Masako has done most of the

housework herself, preparing food, carrying water etc."

Language was a problem in the beginning, specially for Masako, as most of the women only speak their tribal Rai language.

"But now she even teaches Sunday school in Rai", Satoshi laughs.

Satoshi Mori is a professional agriculturalist, but to avoid the expert role, he decided not to do any such work and to call himself a community development worker instead.

The strategy has been to work through existing village committees and to support them in taking on new obligations, as far as possible on their own initiative and with the full responsibility remaining in their hands. In this way, a Community Health Clinic, forestry user groups, literacy classes and animal breeding work has been set up.

Lately, a more direct approach to reach the poorest farmers with useful benefits has been tried. Families with less than a quarter of an hectare land have been encouraged to form a Small Farmers' Group. Through the group, each farmer is provided with two goats. According to a familiar local rental system, one half of the offspring goes back to the group and the other half stays with the farmer.

After becoming a Christian, Satoshi, a former computer engineer, felt called to work among farmers in Asia. After university study and field training in the Philippines, the family came to Nepal in 1982.

But now the Moris are preparing to leave their village life in Umbu and go back to Japan:

"Our work here is completed according to the plans. Besides, our parents are getting older and want us to stay home in Japan for a while."

Looking back at the last years' experiences, Satoshi underlines the need for a long motivation period before any financial resources are provided from outside.

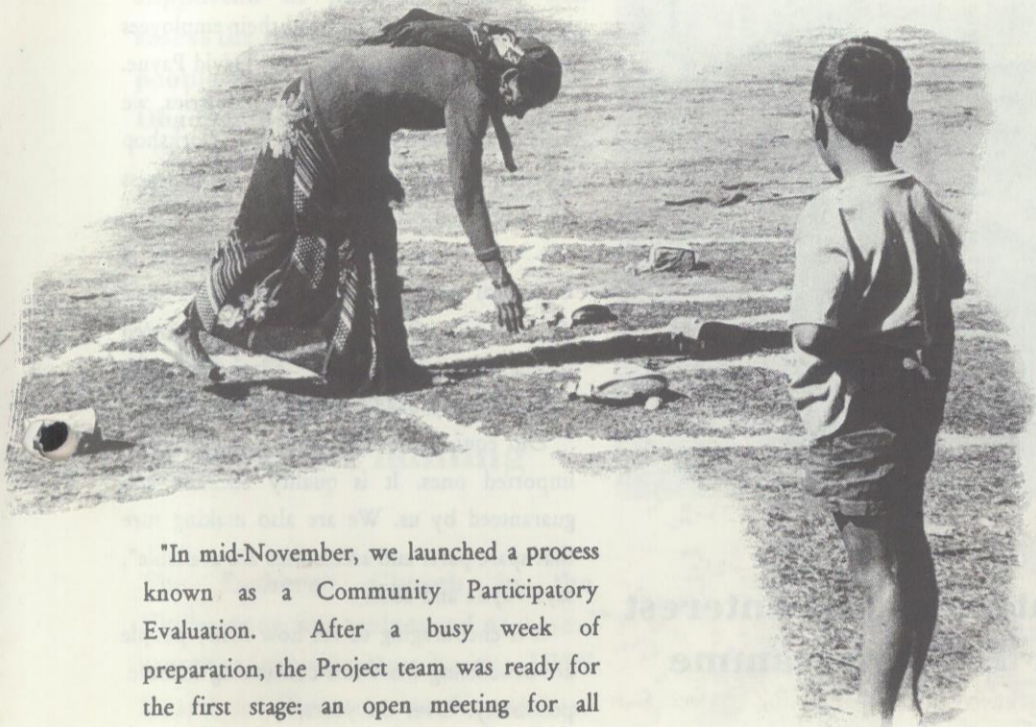
"I felt more comfortable in the beginning when I could work as a facilitator at the same level as my neighbours. Once we had provided the breeding animals, I felt a change in attitude. The expectations started to turn over to me, which, of course, is not helpful in the long run."

However, when the Moris leave Umbu, several cooperative efforts will continue to serve the community. They exemplify the important, but less glorious, role of a motivator, who succeeded only when the villagers think they did everything themselves!

Villagers Involved in New Evaluation Approach

UMN is finishing the rural development work in Kunathari, Surkhet district, after eight years. But what has been the effect of the work?

Paul Doherty, Community Development Facilitator, reports on a new process where the villagers themselves are answering this question:



"In mid-November, we launched a process known as a Community Participatory Evaluation. After a busy week of preparation, the Project team was ready for the first stage: an open meeting for all Community members. We were delighted to welcome 206 participants from all parts of Kunathari and it was especially good to see that the group included a large number of women.

Each participant identified his/her ward of origin (village) by placing a white stone on the large map of the Village Development Area that were marked out on the grass.

After a brief introduction, they divided into small groups all over the open ground in front of the Project Office. Participating enthusiastically in discussions facilitated by our staff, the villagers identified those issues that they felt it necessary to evaluate.

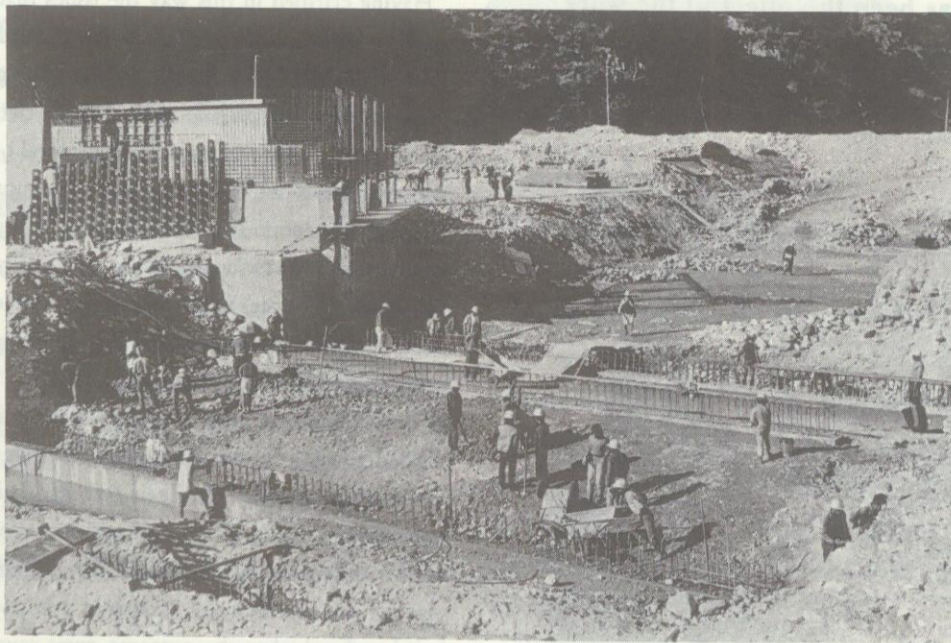
Having clarified in this way the issues that were to be assessed, the Project staff divided into four evaluation teams, each taking responsibility for certain issues. Over two weeks, they conducted and recorded a total of 246 interviews with 'focus groups' (groups sharing a common interest) and 'key informants' (individuals with especially relevant experience) in all nine wards of the area. Each team also conducted certain field trials to verify the information collected.

Now, here at the Project office in Birendranagar, the teams are busy compiling preliminary reports from their records. It is too early to say how far we have succeeded in this attempt to see our project through the eyes of the community. However, we have tried and, whether the outcome gives cause for rejoicing or repentance, we shall go on trying to hear the voice of those who are, perhaps, the true evaluation experts: the villagers themselves." ●



Half-time for Jhimruk

Almost half-way through the building period, the construction of Jhimruk power plant is progressing according to the plans.



The sluice-way has to be finished before the monsoon (desilting basin to the left)

More than a third of the 1200 meter headrace tunnel has been excavated. The inclined penstock tunnel is about forty percent completed and the power house is twenty percent completed.

Half of the seven hundred people work force is occupied at dam site, where the desilting basin is almost finished and the sluice way of 4000 cubic meters of concrete has to be finished before the next monsoon.

The main civil engineering contractor is UMN-related Himal Hydro and General Construction Company. Owner of the 12 MW power plant is another UMN company, Butwal Power Company, which will hand the project over to the Government after one year's operation in 1995. The total cost is estimated to be USD 20.2 million, of which the main part is being given by the Norwegian government.



International Interest in Tile Programme

Through the Roofing Tile Programme in Butwal, seventy-one small scale industries have now been established in different areas of Nepal. An improved equipment design is under development, which has already raised a lot of interest in other countries.

"Local tile production seems to have grown quicker in Nepal than in other countries. Many are looking to us for equipment", says David Payne at Development and Consulting Services (DCS) in Butwal, under which the Roofing Tile Programme is administrated.

Run by a staff of six Nepalis, the Roofing Tile Programme has strong links with international technology groups such as SKAT, ITDG and GTZ, and has contributed to a number of international seminars and publications. Nationals from Bhutan, the Philippines and Vietnam have been trained at courses in Butwal.

Started in 1984, the programme aims to encourage the use of a low cost alternate roofing material and promote local rural production of such tiles as an income generating activity. The light weight tiles are made from a careful mixture of sand, cement and natural fibre or graded aggregate. The cost is about one half of galvanized iron sheets (excluding timber roof structure).

"We conduct 11-day training courses for interested entrepreneurs and their employees at least four times a year", says David Payne. "After they have started their industries, we visit each entrepreneur at his workshop location at least twice to check the progress and advise on problems, if any."

A typical small industry consists of a minimum team of 3 workers, who produce up to 150 tiles per day. The needed investment for the equipment is approximately 25,000 rupees.

"Our equipment costs about ten percent of imported ones. It is quality checked and guaranteed by us. We are also making sure that spare parts and accessories are available", says Payne and adds:

"It is encouraging to see how many people are benefitting from this continuing income possibility. Over the years, less than five entrepreneurs have had to wind up their business."



Christians Started New Development Organisation

A first step to establish Church-related social work has been taken by a group of Nepali Christians. A six-month feasibility study, supported in part by UMN, will assess the needs of 25,000 Tamang people in a remote area in North Dhading, north-west of Kathmandu.

The newly registered organisation is called Human Development Communication ▼

UMN Board of Directors Discussed Strategic Planning

The Lutheran Church in the Philippines was welcomed as a new member organisation by the UMN Board of Directors in November. Other matters discussed were the current process of strategic planning and relations to the Nepali Church.



The strategic planning has been commissioned by the Executive Committee to develop a plan of implementation and criteria for evaluating the progress on the Long Term Strategy Guidelines approved by the last Board meeting.

The Board members were divided into small groups to discuss what UMN's impact on the Nepali society should be; what shape UMN should take; how to reaffirm UMN's Christian identity; and how these key results could be measured. The results from the group discussions were forwarded to the UMN Administration as guidelines for the continued strategic planning process. ●

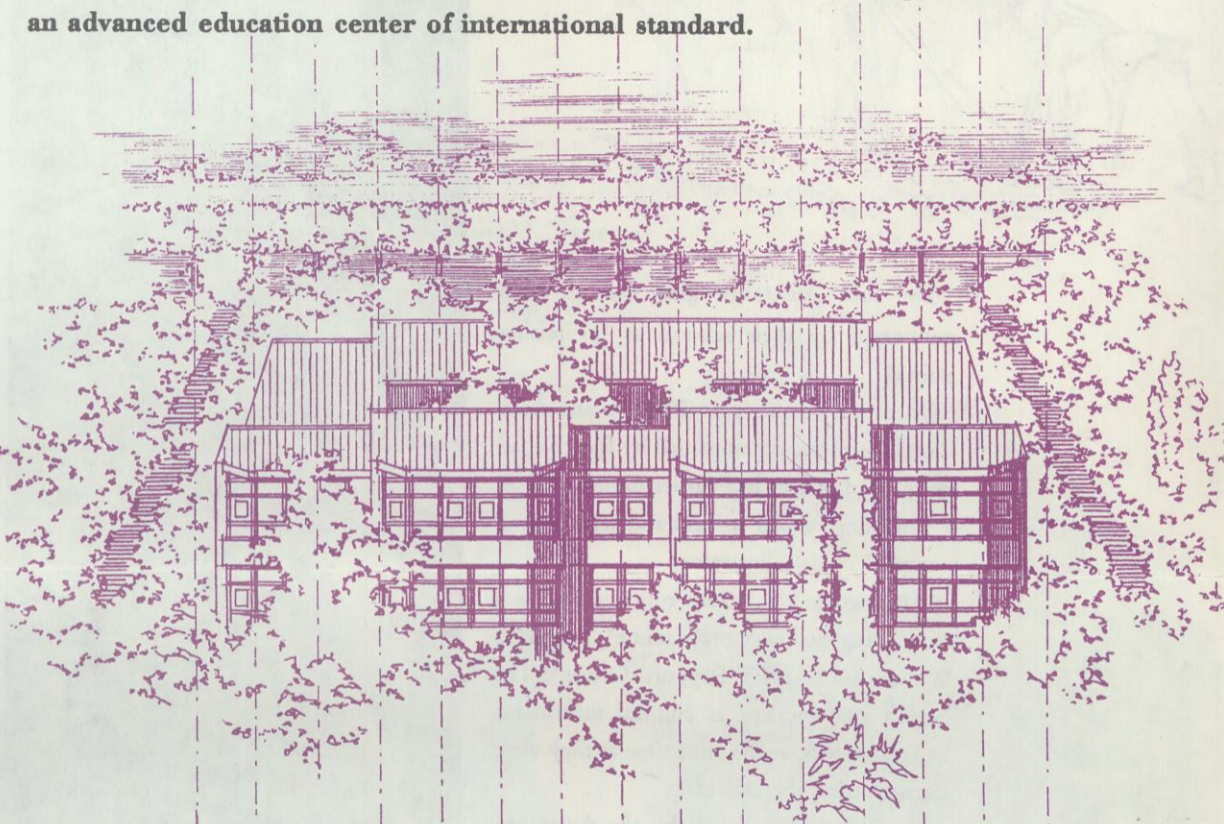
Service (HDCS) and is related to the Nepal Christian Fellowship (NCF).

The majority of the people in the area is reported to have become Christian since a practice of prayer for healing was introduced about ten years ago.

This is the first time UMN has been able to work directly with a Nepali Christian organization, a result of the new political climate, where the churches have been specifically asked by the Prime Minister to join in the efforts to move Nepal forward.

First Private University

With the help of UMN, Nepal's first private university will develop into an advanced education center of international standard.



Kathmandu University's main science building

"We think it's very important to encourage high-quality education, which will save the best students from going abroad for further study", says Mark Keller, UMN Education Secretary.

Independently from the national system, Kathmandu University is building its new campus in beautiful surroundings just outside Kathmandu. UMN's promised involvement include funding for the main science building, providing four expatriate science teachers and scholarship funds.

"We are presently seeking support for the science building, which can be constructed as soon as the money is secured", says Keller.

Started as Kathmandu Valley Campus a few years ago, Kathmandu University now has about 500 science students. When the expansion is finished, the number of students

will be around 2,000 and courses will also be given in computer science and possibly education and business administration.

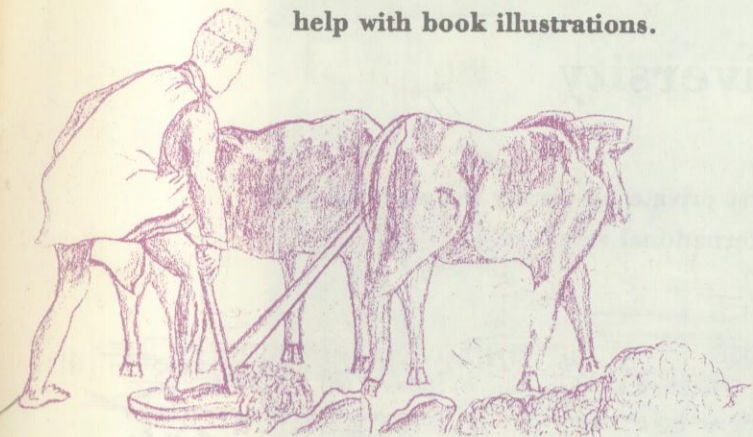
"The possibilities to form international linkages and to develop a curriculum that is responsive to the present needs of the society are other important reasons for UMN's commitment", Mark Keller adds.



The agreement, assuring UMN's support for Kathmandu University, was signed in August 1991

Australian Art Students Illustrate NFE-books

As a part of the NFE Book Project, four senior art students from Australia were invited to Nepal to help with book illustrations.

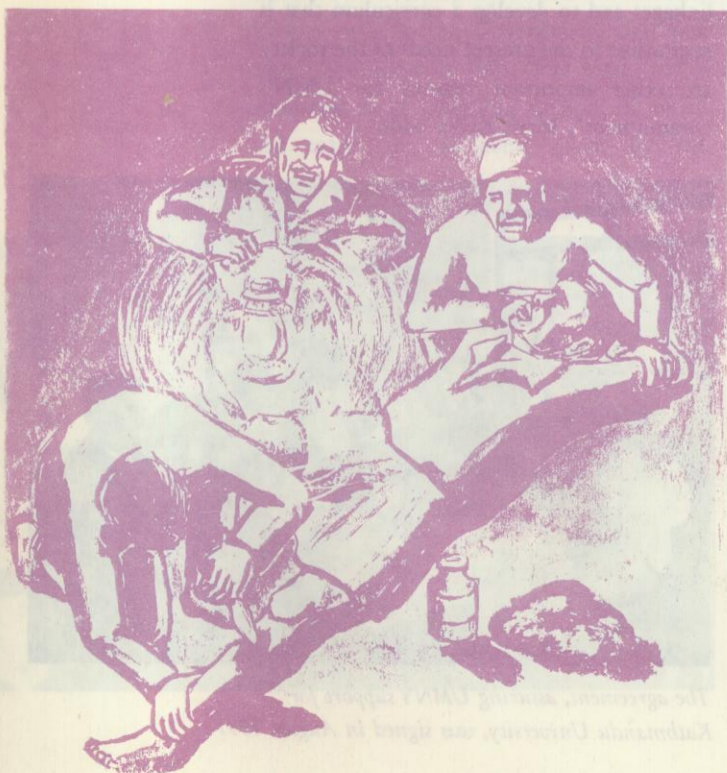


The four Australian girls had all been nominated by their schools as "promising artists".

On a two-week trip to Pokhara and Amp Pipal, they were accompanied by four Nepali girls, all of whom had earlier participated in a workshop, aimed to find and train young potential Nepali illustrators.

"The two weeks together functioned as a stimulating exchange programme", says Kath White of the NFE Support Office. "The Nepali girls worked as cultural informants and translators, at the same time as they were learner artists themselves."

The illustrations drawn by the Australian students will be used in a series of books for newly literate village people, each book containing a personal story by a Nepali person.



NOTICES

Sir Edmund Awarded Helen Didi

Dr. Helen Huston, who has worked with UMN in Amp Pipal since 1960, had to rush home to Canada in November to receive the Humanitarian Award of the Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation.



Helen Huston was the first to receive this award, which recognises "a Canadian, who through voluntary efforts, has improved the quality of life for the people in the Himalayas".

Back in Kathmandu, Helen shared her experiences at the first-ever UMN press conference, which resulted in reports in all the major news papers.

UMNer Died in Accident

Tom Moncrieff, who had been working with UMN since 1985, tragically died in a traffic accident while on furlough in Australia in October.

Among other things, Tom was in charge of the Roofing Tile Programme (see separate article) from 1986-1991.

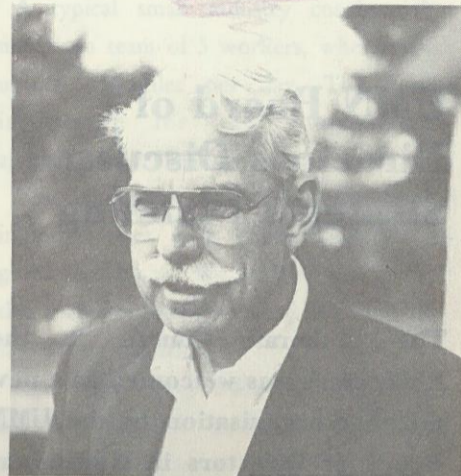
Please pray for his wife Elizabeth and their four children.

Male Hostel at Nursing Campus

The construction of a boarding facility for the male students at Lalitpur Nursing Campus commenced with a foundation-stone-laying ceremony on 10 December 1991.

The building will be 12 x 20 metres with two storeys and will contain sleeping space for at least 16 students and a common classroom.

QUESTIONS TO 3



Chester Raber

Management Consultant, who came to Nepal 3 weeks in November to help in facilitating the strategic planning process

What is your impression of UMN?

I think UMN has a remarkable opportunity to contribute to Nepal's future. The collaboration between 39 different agencies is a marvellous thing.

Unity is superior, but it is not as simple as it sounds. That is why we need to model organisational unity. With a new government openness the four UMN departments - or maybe all the 39 member organisations - could go their own way. That would be a disaster.

Any particular area that needs to be worked on?

In an organisation people need to belong, to be part of a team. I think UMN could develop a stronger sense of teamwork.

What is strategic planning?

There are three different levels of aidwork: 1. You give a person a fish - that's relief. 2. You teach him how to fish - that's management planning. 3. You help him clean up the stream to make sure the fish will be there in the future - that's strategic planning.