



BAJHANG

We praise God that the new team has settled in well in this new cluster. The team organised a successful orientation programme to familiarise the community with UMN's plans and purpose for working in Bajhang. Our relationships with government officials, political parties and the local community are growing. We appreciate your prayers for this ongoing process. Please pray with us for the upcoming orientation programme of possible partners and for the partner selection process that will follow - that the Lord would provide wisdom, courage and guidance to walk justly before Him.

DHADING

Pray for the expansion of work in the northern part of the district – several days' walk from the office. Three partners are now implementing programmes with their target communities. Low caste Dalit women are greeting visitors with new-found confidence and growing vegetables that are improving their families' health.

DOTI

We give thanks for a successful poverty and needs assessment survey carried out with our potential partners. Now we begin the hard work of partner selection and supporting chosen partners as they develop action plans to meet the need identified. One potential partner organisation, Center for Equal Access Development, is eager to work in the area of disaster management.

MUGU

The implementation of community programmes is beginning with several partners and we will select some new partners by the end of July. Pray for the process and full participation of local leaders.

RUKUM

A vegetable seed production programme is about to begin in cooperation with the local government agricultural office. Local farmers' groups will be mobilised into a co-operative to ensure that the seed produced is of high quality and can therefore be 'certified'. One partner is also beginning a

programme with conflict affected widows. Pray for God's wisdom in supporting partners in these new and exciting endeavours.

RUPANDEHI

The cold winter spell is coming to an end and as temperatures begin to rise, diseases such as diarrhea, cholera and malaria become rampant. Pray for God's protection and for increased knowledge among the locals as to how to practically guard against infection.

After several months of coaching our local partners, many now feel equipped to develop and implement programmes to help poor and marginalised people in their communities. Please pray for the required funding needed to kick-start and run these programmes.

About a year ago, riots between local ethnic groups in the plains left many people dead and homeless. Feeling called to intervene, members of the Lumbini Christian Society (LCS), a UMN faith based partner, initiated mediation and conflict resolution between the warring groups. Let us continue to uphold LCS in prayer for their ongoing facilitation of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Research has shown that students learn faster and better in their mother tongue. In Rupandehi, students are compelled to study in Nepali, but it is not their mother tongue. Therefore, many students lose motivation to stay in school. Janakalyan Higher Secondary School, a UMN partner, is developing a multilingual education programme in their ethnic language. Pray for the successful implementation of this programme and for future replication in other schools.

SUNSARI

Disasterous floods during the 2008 monsoon season left thousands homeless and destitute. Rebuilding is slow work. Continue to pray for our partners as they aid flood affected communities.



Nepalgunj support office

Continue to pray for the Nepalgunj support team as they provide technical and logistical support to the four mid-western clusters. The team especially needs God's wisdom as they support the cluster staff in developing realistic plans and budgets for the 2009/2010 fiscal year.

A Franciscan Benediction

*May God bless you with discomfort
At easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships
So that you may live deep within your heart.*

*May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,
So that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.*

*May God bless you with tears
To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and
To turn their pain into joy.*

*And may God bless you with enough foolishness
To believe that you can make a difference in the world,
So that you can do what others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.*

CLUSTERS

Let Us Pray

As we actively recruit for expatriate and Nepali positions in our corporate and programme work, pray that God leads the right people to apply. Also pray that we develop good social inclusive policies and practices that are sensitive to the changing political climate.

Due to increasing power shortages throughout the country, and without proper back-up systems yet in place, work in our cluster offices has been severely affected. Please pray for God's guidance as we explore different ways to address this need.

Continue to pray for the expatriate families who joined us in September. There are many adjustments to make for both parents and children. Pray particularly for good health. Another group of new expatriates, including two children, will begin language and orientation in February. Pray for their adjustment to Nepal and that they enjoy learning and using Nepali language.

Please continue to pray for our ongoing search for the next executive director for UMN. We will be interviewing from March 9th to 11th in Kathmandu. Pray that we appoint the person of God's choosing. Also pray for the executive director's team as there will be many staffing changes. Pray that the team members will adjust well together.

Pray for Alan Penn, Funding Management Coordinator, as he works fundraising for our programmes. Pray that despite the global economic crisis, UMN secures the resources needed to fulfill our objectives this year.

Dhana Lama will be completing her orientation and taking up responsibilities as Assistant Director Kathmandu from March 1st. Pray for Dhana as she takes on new tasks that include line managing Dhading, Sunsari and Rupandehi clusters.

February is the Programme Team learning review when all teams finalise plans for 2009/10. Pray for discussions with partners in preparation for this and also for the work after the meetings.

Pray for Programme Director Shaha Bahadur Gurung as he spends time in UK beginning his PhD studies.

Praise You, Lord

We are thankful to God for the expatriates who are completing their language and orientation and soon to begin work. Micah and Charlotte Shrishti will move to Sunsari where they will work as Enterprise Development and Conflict Transformation Advisors, respectively. Ben Thurley, Advocacy Advisor and Mike Young, Climate Change Advisor, will be based in Kathmandu.

We give thanks for the very positive evaluation we received from the Government of Nepal halfway through our 2003-2010 working agreement with the Social Welfare Council.

We also received positive feedback from our partners in Sunsari and Mugu in their three year partnership evaluation reports.

We have begun transitioning all of our offices from Microsoft Windows to Open Source operating systems. It is a big transition, but so far, so good!



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UMN PRAYER

United Mission to Nepal

Dear Friends

Happy New Year!

Christmas Day was a public holiday for the first time in Nepal last December. It was a great opportunity for the Christian community to invite politicians and other leaders to their celebrations. We pray that in April Easter celebrations of the resurrection of Jesus's will also be a time to share with many in Nepal.

Most of Nepal is struggling to cope with the lack of electricity. There are currently 16 hours of load shedding (power cuts) per day and this may increase over the next three months. This affects life and work throughout Nepal.

As always we are grateful to all of you who pray with us and seek God's guidance for UMN and His blessing on the people of Nepal.

To God be the glory!