

UMN News

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VALUES
ACTION



Fullness of life for all, in a transformed Nepali society

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Dear friends

In my first year as UMN director, I've now had the privilege of visiting all seven of our cluster offices and both mission hospitals. It has been a joy to have so many opportunities to see UMN's values in action, worked out by committed staff under challenging circumstances.

I've seen love and service outworked as we strive to reach the poorest people – especially the castes and ethnic groups excluded by so many others. I've seen creativity as our staff and partners come up with new ways to address major problems. (Perhaps my favourite example is from Sunsari, where our peacebuilding team has found innovative ways to reduce cross-border crime – not the type of problem that you usually see development agencies working to solve!)

As for integrity, we recently received this praise from a government health worker in Rupandehi: "UMN's work is very transparent and UMN's partner staff show integrity in their work. One of the best examples is how UMN involves us in their project planning meeting, share information with us about their entire budget, and carry out social audits every year [in which we explain the project budgets to the communities we work in]. This is unique in their work. We at government offices also need to follow such good practices."

Overall, what sets UMN apart is our values, and the people who see us at work notice this. We will continue to prioritise values in our work, challenging and encouraging each other to work in a way consistent with our Biblical calling.

Blessings,


JOEL HAFVENSTEIN
Executive Director

PS: Please do take a moment to let us know what UMNews means to you, as our Communications Team requests on page 13. We want to have a better sense of what is working well and how we can make it even better!

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VALUES

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VALUING OUR WORK

Warren Buffet, Chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, said it best: “In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don’t have the first one, the other two will kill you.”

If I could teach only one value to live by, it would be this: Success will come and go, but integrity is forever. Working in an organisation which promotes the understanding, practice and the culture of integrity is a matter of pride for me. Profit in money and power is temporary, but profit in a network of people who trust us as an organisation of integrity is forever. The value of the trust is far beyond anything that can be measured.

We live in a world where integrity isn’t talked about nearly enough, and “the end justifies the means” has become an acceptable school of thought for far



too many. Having integrity as an organisation’s value does not mean a thing if you do not practise it in every element of your work. Ethical principles like integrity cannot be dictated and I am happy that UMN leadership and staff promote integrity and we claim this as a foundational value of our work. People who have been a part of UMN - be it staff, partners, consultants, vendors, interns, visitors or local networks - see this in our behaviour, systems and practices.

Jesus is the role model and a supreme example of integrity, about whom Pontius Pilate said, “I am innocent of the blood of this just person.”

RAJENDRA POUDEL
Integral Mission Advisor





STORIES ON INTEGRITY

STORY ONE: Once he purchased a kitchen item from a local shop and handed over a thousand rupee note. The cashier gave back the change, but mistakenly he returned more than he should have. This guy immediately returned the excess amount to the shopkeeper.

STORY TWO: He went to collect an invoice from an auto-workshop for the repair of the office motor bike. They asked him if he wanted a bigger amount on the bill for his personal commission. He rejected this offer and introduced himself as a UMN staff member. An invoice with the actual amount was issued by the workshop.

STORY THREE: She believes in honest reporting. She never allows false and exaggerated reports sent out to donors. She is happy to share the weakness of projects and honours God through her work.

What have we found common in the above scenarios? Integrity! These are some sample stories behind the nominations for UMN's annual Values Award function. There are many more stories of our staff who have demonstrated integrity in their work throughout the year.

Integrity - this is one of the six core values of UMN. It is all about keeping moral and ethical conviction at all times without worrying if you are being watched or if anybody's going to ask you if you did it right.

We often associate integrity with money, and confine it within the walls of financial management and financial matters only. Although very important, integrity is not just about having fair and transparent systems in managing financial resources, but also about being morally and ethically correct in everything we do. Watching ourselves and being honest and answerable to ourselves at all times. Asking yourself, "Is this right?", when confronted with a moral choice.

In addition to this, we put a lot of effort and resources into building the capacity of our local partner organisations in many areas, including accountability and transparency. We work alongside them to build them and make sure they have a strong understanding of integrity and what it actually means when it comes to dealing with staff and local authorities, decision-making, standing strong in our policies etc. And we feel happy and proud to say that they have actually set a standard for other local NGOs, which has been mentioned time and again by the district authorities. The transparency and accountability practice is followed not because we want to set a standard, but it is our duty towards our beneficiaries and the right holders. As it is rightly said, "success will come and go but integrity is forever."

ARUN BELBASE

Team leader, Good Governance Team





Working hand-in-hand

Building the capacity and strengthening the systems of our local partner organisations are important components of UMN's work approach. Whilst there are challenges to overcome, it is rewarding for us to see our partners grow and in fact be an example to other Civil Society Organisations in their area.

BAJHANG

Dalit Help Society (DHS)
Partnership with UMN - 2009

DHS takes fair steps in recruitment and selection of staff. Their General Assembly is always done on time and they try to be as transparent as possible in their financial transactions and reporting.

DOTI

Rural Development Centre (RDC)
Partnership with UMN - 2008

RDC has a strong financial management system. They do timely audits, which they believe in strongly and the results are good. They are transparent in their work and the community people have high respect for them.

RUKUM

Nepal Public Awakening Forum (N-PAF)
Partnership with UMN - 2007

The local government offices give good feedback for N-PAF. They practise direct cheque payment, which helps in transparent financial dealing. N-PAF has a good record of sound reporting and communications. They also revise their policies in line with government policies.

SUNSARI

Nepal Chelibeti Disabled Women Society (NCDWS)
Partnership with UMN - 2005

This is a unique organisation which works for and is run by people living with disability. After its partnership with UMN, they were able to tap good resources from local government sectors. NCDWS is very particular about submitting their reports on time and in using the office resources appropriately. The staff of NCDWS have an honest approach and commitment towards their work.

DHADING

Small Farmers Agriculture Cooperative Federation (SFCF)
Partnership with UMN - 2006

SFCF pays very close attention to project goals and in meeting its objectives. They review and update their policies occasionally and carry out internal audits on time. SFCF takes feedback given seriously and takes steps in making changes.



RUPANDEHI

Lumbini Christian Society (LCS)
Partnership with UMN - 2007

LCS demonstrates high-quality performance in organisational, financial and programme management. They are conscious about being cost effective and are good stewards of resources. LCS conducts social, internal and external audits yearly. At the end of workshops and programmes they present an expenses summary outlining all costs involved in the event.



MUGU

Buddha Higher Secondary School (BHSS)
Partnership with UMN - 2011

When UMN partnered with this government school six years ago, we helped them achieve more timely, accurate and transparent reporting and provided relevant training. Following the social, internal and external audit training by UMN, the school chairperson Purna Bahadur Rokaya introduced it to other feeder schools. Today BHSS and three other schools are the only government schools in the district to conduct social audits. Purna also received the National Education Award last year for integrity and excellent school management.



Leading with INTEGRITY

“The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles” – this is how Oxford dictionary describes integrity. Integrity is more than the above-perhaps we should think of honest, truthful and authentic too. It is being whole and undivided, being unified and sound in creation and internal consistency. Integrity starts with self-inner-being. If we do with self (spirit), it will be easier with others. It is very essential. Abraham Lincoln said: “I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have.”

Being in leadership and maintaining self-integrity is a challenge. Judging others is easy but looking inward is more difficult. Am I maintaining and walking in integrity? As a believer, I find integrity comes more naturally if there is fear of and reverence to God in my daily walk with Him.

Nepal ranks 131 in the corruption perception index as per transparency.org’s recent announcement. Nepal is not alone; integrity is eroding almost all over the world. Most people feel integrity is connected to finances, which is true but it is more than that. No aspect of life is out of reach in the matter of integrity. How we treat time, how we speak and what we say, our approach to our work and responsibility, not promising rashly, keeping our promise to ourselves and others, etc.

While working in Doti, I sensed financial irregularity in one of the staff. He travelled by bus to Kathmandu from Doti, but dishonestly claimed an airfare. I had to bring this to the attention of the management and sadly his contract was terminated. And in another incident in Rupandehi, I had to speak up about the misuse of project funds by someone through his position as board chairperson. We discovered the problem and investigated thoroughly and resolved the problem. Here we discovered another aspect of integrity - misuse of power and position for selfish purposes.

In Psalm 25:21, the Bible says, “May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.” Also in Proverbs 28:6, it says, “Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.”

Integrity is one of UMN’s top values. People involved in our mission work directly or indirectly will notice something different, unique and clean about us as UMNers. That way we can actually be an example and set the bench mark.

BISHAL BABU SHRESTHA
Team leader, Rupandehi Cluster

GOOD WORK BRAJESH!

Brajesh Yadav from Sunsari had a keen interest to oversee how projects are implemented in communities. He was one of the participants of Participatory Planning Process (PPP) training run by UMN. He then facilitated the planning process in his community and helped the people to develop proposals based on their needs which were approved by the VDC council. He even showed interest to be involved in the User's Committee (UC) so he could contribute more.

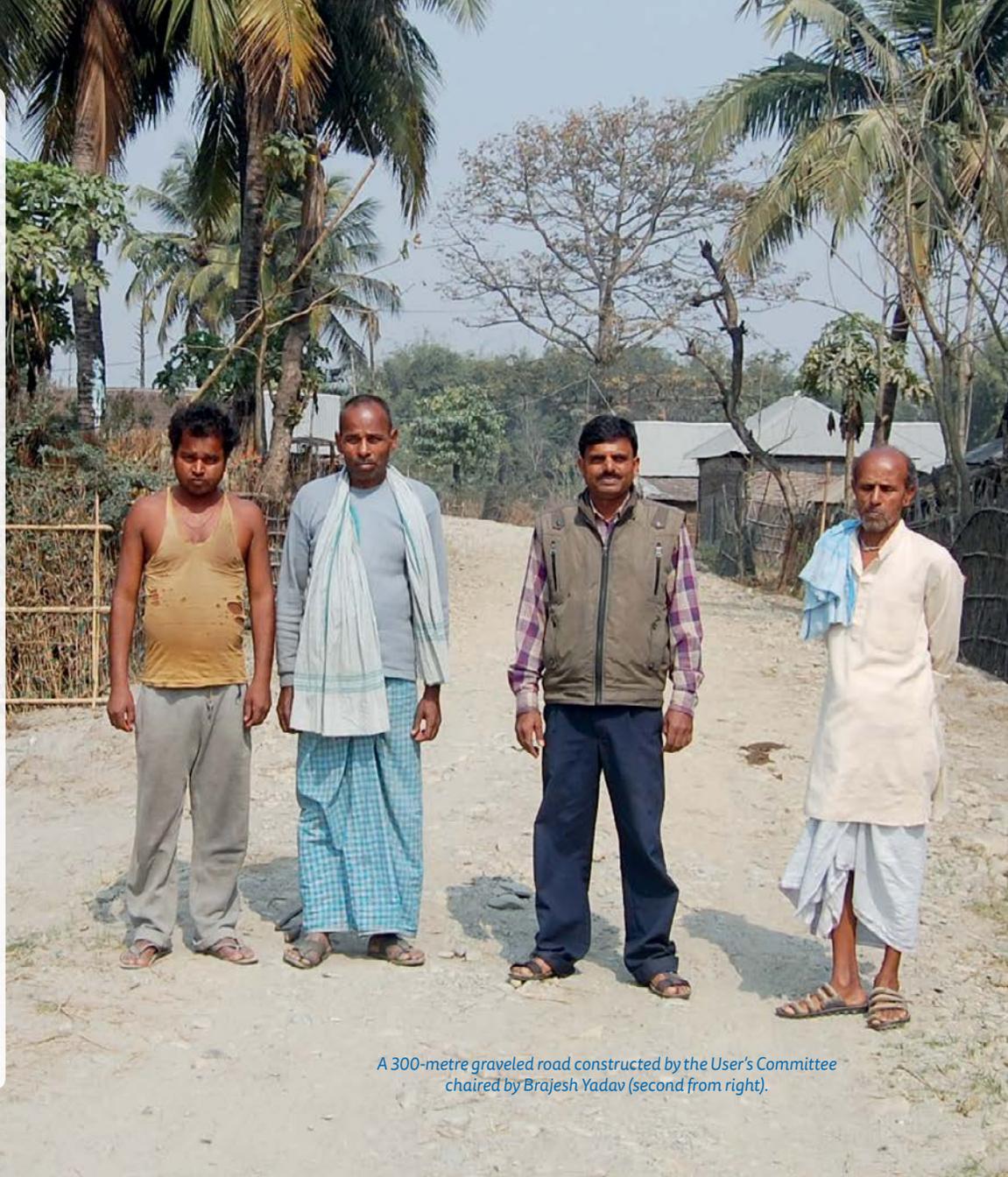
Later, Brajesh was selected to become the president of the Road UC. The 300-metre long road was to be graveled jointly by the VDC fund and people's participation fund. The VDC allocated NRP 364,000 (USD 3,526) and NRP 122,000 (USD 1182) had to be collected from people's participation.

Brajesh took the lead and divided roles and responsibilities among all members. Committee members were involved with commitment to accomplish this project. It was a success! And it was done well!

VDC clerk Dev Narayan Lahutiya admires the work of this committee and says, "This is the most exemplary work that has ever been completed by the VDC fund."

This praiseworthy project led by Brajesh has challenged those who misuse the government and community funds and complete the project just for the sake of completing."

Brajesh and his team have set an example in their community and have proved that, with honesty and sheer determination, change is possible.



A 300-metre graveled road constructed by the User's Committee chaired by Brajesh Yadav (second from right).



The internship programme in UMN is a valuable platform for Christian youth who have a heart to serve the poor through their work and lives and above all fulfill God's mission.

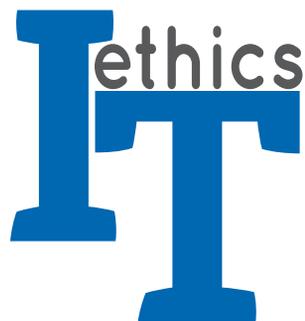
Having spent a year in UMN as an intern in Doti (far west Nepal), I feel blessed to have had an amazing opportunity to work in some remote communities of Nepal. My work with the Sustainable Livelihoods Team gave me a first hand experience of visiting and talking with the community people and understanding the livelihoods work and challenges. I have also been helped by the numerous workshops and training that we were given throughout the year by the staff of UMN.

My journey with UMN has not ended but has in fact started and has taken a new shape. I praise God that UMN has offered me a job to work as a Programme Officer in the Livelihoods Team in Doti soon. Yes, it has been a fruitful journey and God has been faithful throughout.

I have observed that UMN being a value-based organisation believes in building a strong work culture that is value driven.

I am excited to start my career with this fantastic organisation and I pray that I will be able to work with integrity (one of UMN's values) and real commitment in serving the poor and the needy people in Doti.

SIPPORA MAHATO
Intern 2017



In the eight years that I have been with UMN I have seen this organisation live out and practise its values.

I work in the Information Technology and Services Team (ITS) as a team leader, and there are a lot of ethical issues that crop up while dealing with procurements, information management, data security, ownership and privacy issues. Here things are highly sensitive and we must be very strong both technically and ethically. I also take a strong stand

against misuse of IT resources, software piracy and unethical activities in the workplace such as hacking, cracking and theft of information. I can very proudly say that UMN does not use pirated software. My team and I work on providing a reliable IT service to UMN with the right policies, also considering what is right and of value.

I see this huge responsibility as a privilege and I believe in delivering top service which is transparent and based on ethical policies. This is "values in action" for me.

SHRAWAN SHRESTHA
ITS Manager

Thankful and INSPIRED

As the newly appointed Nepal-responsible at the Normission headquarters in Norway, I recently got to travel to Nepal to learn more about UMN and the projects we support. My trip included a four-day stay in Bajhang, visiting a project, which works in combating Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP). Two feelings stayed with me- inspiration and gratitude.

UMN's HTP project seeks to address root causes that negatively influence gender roles in Bajhang, far-west Nepal. The gender differences are destructive to women, and hinder the development of harmonious and equitable families. Among the project's core focuses is the cultural concept of chhaupadi. The concept suggests that women are unclean during menstruation. Consequently, they should be kept apart from the community- at best in a designated room in the house, at worst in a separate shed in the village outskirts.

One should think that seeing this would stir other feelings than gratitude and inspiration. No doubt it did. It was upsetting to see the dark chhaup-sheds, and to hear that women are not allowed in the village, or to touch animals or water-taps during their period. But still, it was proportionally more inspirational to meet community leaders, and groups of men and women, who work for change. "Change starts in your own heart," the leader of one of the local partner organisations said to a men's group. "It starts internally in each of us, and then grows from the bottom-up."

Another major focus of the HTP project is alcohol. When a local group of community leaders takes the initiative to regulate the hours during which people may sell and drink alcohol, it teaches you two things Firstly- alcohol is a serious problem, but secondly, change is possible- perhaps even imminent!



Excessive consumption of alcohol is destructive and a root cause of so many other destructive patterns in society. Gender-based violence is one, gambling is another. But how do we attempt to bring about change?

The answer is we don't! Change must come from within the community itself. To achieve lasting and meaningful change, people themselves must want a new situation, not be handed one from well-meaning outsiders.

Meeting members of the community who recognise the need for change, and act on it to the benefit of their communities, was truly powerful and inspirational. An inspiration that leads to gratitude. Gratitude to the local partners, who are gifted and motivated agents of change. To UMN, for initiating the project, and for enabling the partners in their work. And to God, for already blessing the project with meaningful results, and for allowing us to contribute!

BJØRNAR LEMVIK

Mission and Development Advisor, Normission



OKHALDHUNGA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL 55TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Okhaldhunga Community Hospital celebrated its 55th Anniversary and a grand opening of their new facilities on 14 March.

Chief Guest Honourable Norwegian Ambassador to Nepal, Mr. Kjell Tormod Pettersen, and Members of the Parliament, Mr. Ram Hari Khatiwada (right) and Mr. Yagya Raj Sunuwar (left), jointly cut the ribbon of the 50 bed hospital.

Dr. Erik Bohler, medical coordinator of OCH gave a tour of the hospital to the General Secretary of Normisjon, Ms. Anne Birgitta Langmoen Kvelland, and the chief guest.



SUPPORTING SAFE MOTHERHOOD

The focus is once again on Maternal and Child Health! An area that needs much attention in most rural parts of Nepal.

A sixty-day Skilled Birth Attendant training for Auxiliary Nurse Midwives started on 27 March at Seti Zonal Hospital in Dhangadhi. Ten participants from two districts, Doti and Bajhang (far-west Nepal), are enrolled in the training. The training is being conducted with the financial support from UMN's Maternal and Child Health project and technical support from the National Health Training Centre. The project also works on strengthening the 24 hours birthing facilities in the birthing centres by providing equipment and training to health workers. UMN has started to implement the project through its local partners in 10 VDCs of Doti and Bajhang.



FAREWELL INTERNS!!

Middle of July we bid farewell to our interns of 2017 who have completed a productive year at UMN. We want to thank them for being a part of our work and pray for their future in the field they choose to pursue. Also in this time we will be welcoming a fresh batch of interns. UMN has been running an internship programme for Nepali Christian youth for the last 10 years.



Bear Reader,

Thank you for taking time to read this newsletter.

We send out 1,800 copies of *UMNews* by post and about 700 by email. Also, our record shows an average of 5,000 downloads of every issue from our website.

We love to share with you stories and information about our work in Nepal through this quarterly newsletter. Can we ask you to help us by letting us know your thoughts on *UMNews*?

What does *UMNews* mean to you?

Does it help you to stay connected with Nepal and UMN's work?

Do you want to continue to receive this every quarter? Do you want to receive more copies to share it with people in your circle?

How could *UMNews* be improved?

Is there anything else you'd like to see from UMN?

Please write to us at:

United Mission to Nepal
Communications Team
PO Box 126, Kathmandu, Nepal

Or at communications@umn.org.np

Do you want to be a Friend of UMN? (see insert with this issue). Show your support to our work of loving and sharing His compassion to the poorest communities in Nepal.



Working with UMN

Many years ago I was passing through the road near UMN headquarters and my eyes fell on the UMN logo on a sign board. I particularly liked the five people sitting around in a circle. A wishful thought came to my mind - if only I got an opportunity to work in this organisation.

A vacancy advertisement in a local newspaper led me to apply, and my journey with UMN started as Admin and Finance Coordinator in a Non-formal Education Project in Jajarkot district in 1995. Initially I had given myself five years to be in this project, but it has been 22 great years in this fantastic organisation.

I decided to continue with UMN rather than go after other high-paid jobs. UMN's culture, financial and HR policies and practices, multi-organisational and individual funding agencies, family environment, working flexibility, low investment with high impact, nationalisation approaches and most importantly the long-term commitment and contributions of missionaries for the integrated development of Nepal made me spend my life in UMN. Truly a unique

organisation, whose mission, vision, objective, values and strategies are well defined and transparent at all levels.

My roles in these 22 years were various and all of them equally interesting and challenging. In Jajarkot, my key responsibility was to look after the admin and finances of the project where the number of staff was more than 60. After that I got a chance to work in UMN Headquarters as an Internal Auditor (the first internal auditor of UMN). It was quite a task to look at the adherence of UMN financial and HR policies, evaluate its internal control systems and its effectiveness in 3 hospitals, more than 12 big projects. I then worked as a Finance Advisor for a long time, and now for the last 4 years as the Finance Team Leader. As I lead the Finance Team I keep three things as key to my work - faithfulness, integrity and transparency. I have met numerous good people and mentors in my time with UMN.

I would like to thank each one of you who encouraged me and trusted me to take on this responsibility to carry on the historic work of UMN.

BISHNU SARKOTA
Finance Team Leader



PRAY

Birthing centres located in Nepal's geographically remote and difficult terrain face a number of challenges. They often lack necessary equipment, trained staff or medicine. Because of their remote location and the hardship that comes with it, there is a rapid turn over of trained health workers and skilled birth attendants. Many women opt for home delivery also to save themselves from the long distance they have to travel, often on bumpy roads or by foot. UMN is currently working with 18 birthing centres. Please pray for our staff as they work through our partners to strengthen the services given at these centres. We would also like to thank our friends around the world who have given generously toward our birthing centre projects.

The current law sets the minimum age of marriage at 20 for both men and women. But sadly, in some parts of Nepal, children are being married away even before they reach their teens. UNICEF data indicates that Nepal has the third highest rate of child marriage in Asia, after Bangladesh and India. Child marriage results from a number of factors, such as poverty, lack of access to education and harmful traditional beliefs and practices, but key among them is gender discrimination, as girls are seen as a burden.

UMN has just started a new project in Somadiha VDC of Kapilvastu to stop the practice of early marriage in this area. Please pray that the 600 and more households that we will be reaching out to in this village will open doors to tackling this issue.

Don't forget the Nepal earthquake. Two years ago in April, Nepal suffered its worst natural disaster in over 80 years with the 7.8 magnitude earthquake. The country went into shock as it witnessed severe damage of infrastructure and the death of thousands.

From relief to restoration and re-construction, UMN has stood with the earthquake-affected communities in Dhading district and has helped them as much as possible to cope with terrible trauma and return back to normal life.



Please pray for our team in Dhading - for strength, courage, patience, and wisdom as they struggle with challenging work in remote/rural areas. Pray that the earthquake-affected communities in Dhading and other districts would receive the government grant through a smooth and fair process. Also pray for UMN's Contingency Plan and preparation for the next big earthquake, which has already been forecasted by scientists in the western part of the country.



JOIN US

UMN's **cross-cultural teams** provide opportunities for suitably skilled expatriates to work with Nepali colleagues, sharing technical skills and demonstrating God's loving concern for all people, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable.

Expatriate team members do not receive a salary or remuneration from UMN directly, but are self-supported volunteers, or supported by a sending mission or church in their home country.

If you are interested in any of these (three listed below) positions, or if you would like to ask about other opportunities for service in UMN, please contact us at expat.recruitment@umn.org.np to learn more. Send your CV or resumé with your email.

PRIORITY NEEDS

GENERAL SURGEONS AND ENT SURGEONS – for United Mission Hospital Tansen, to deal with both elective and emergency surgery and to teach and mentor junior Nepali doctors. Flexibility, the ability to work in a resource-limited setting and an interest in teaching are required. For visa purposes, applicants must currently be registered with the national regulating body in their own country. Long-term applicants preferred.

EXPATRIATE SUPPORT ADVISOR – to be responsible for supporting all expatriates in their roles, to liaise with Sending Agencies, to oversee expatriate recruitment, to advise on HR matters for all UMN expatriates, and to co-ordinate the Language & Orientation Programme. Background may be HR, Intercultural Studies, Member Care, Language Teaching, or other related fields. Prior experience in Nepal would be an advantage.

OTHER NEEDS – We are also interested to receive enquiries / CVs from expatriates called to Nepal whose experience and background may fit into UMN, even if not in one of the above posts. All posts require appropriate qualifications to Masters level or equivalent and usually considerable relevant work experience. We normally require a minimum three-year initial commitment, but four years is preferred.



DONATE



HOW TO GIVE...

- ➔ Make out a cheque or money order payable to United Mission to Nepal.
Post it to: UMN, PO Box 126, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ➔ Use your credit or debit card and give via PayPal.
 - ① Go to www.umn.org.np/page/give-paypal and follow the instructions and you will be redirected to the PayPal page.
 - ② Use your PayPal information to donate from your PayPal account.
- OR
- ➔ Don't have a PayPal account? No problem, follow the instructions above and click on [Don't have a PayPal account?](#) to make a payment using your Debit/Credit card without having to open an account.



TELL OTHERS

FRIENDS
of UNITED MISSION to NEPAL

WHAT MAKES A GOOD FRIEND?

- Someone you feel comfortable with.
- Someone who shares your dreams and aspirations.
- Someone who trusts you, believes in you, and will support you, no matter what.
- Someone you can rely on.

We all need friends like that!

So does UMN. As we seek to be God's friends here in Nepal, sharing his love and compassion with the poor, the neglected and the marginalised, we need friends who will stand with us, pray with us, and support us financially.

Through **Friends of UMN**, you commit to a regular monthly gift through direct debit or credit card. The amount is up to you. UMN will send you an e-receipt each month, and an annual statement for your records. You will also receive *UMNews* four times a year, and occasional email updates and prayer requests.

Let's be friends!



BECOMING A FRIEND OF UMN IS EASY!

- ➔ Visit the **Friends of UMN** page at umn.org.np/friends
- ➔ Click **Proceed to Give via PayPal, Credit Card or Debit Card** button.
- ➔ Fill in the amount you want to donate monthly and select your currency. Click on **Donate**. You will be redirected to the PayPal website.
- ➔ Use your PayPal information to donate from your PayPal account.

OR

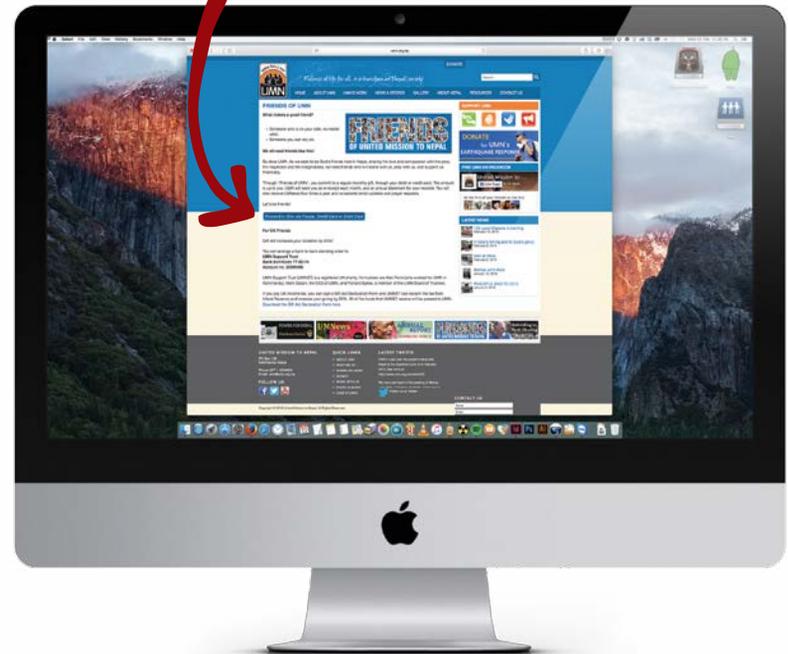
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UK DONORS

Give through UMN Support Trust and your donation will attract Gift Aid from the UK Government. Go to umnsupporttrust.org to find out more.

Please remember that you will be subscribed to monthly recurring donations after successfully completing this giving process, which you can cancel at any time.

click here!



GIVE A ONE-OFF DONATION

- ➔ Make out a cheque or money order payable to United Mission to Nepal. Make a note indicating how you would like your donation to be used. Post it! (to: UMN, PO Box 126, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal)
- ➔ Use your credit or debit card and give via PayPal.
 - ➔ Go to www.umn.org.np/page/give-paypal and follow the instructions and you will be redirected to the PayPal page.
 - ➔ Use your PayPal information to donate from your PayPal account.
- OR
- ➔ Don't have a PayPal account? Follow the instructions above and click on [Don't have a PayPal account?](#) to make a payment using your Debit/Credit card.

“THE INTEGRITY
OF THE UPRIGHT
GUIDES THEM...”

Proverbs 11:3



Fullness of life for all, in a transformed Nepali society

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