

INF NEPAL UPDATES

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Greetings and Namaste! Welcome to the 18th issue of INF Nepal Updates.

As we bid farewell to 2019, we must be very grateful for all the challenges, opportunities and learning that were showered towards us; and start a new year, a new decade with a new joy, new hope and a heart to serve the poor and disadvantaged people of Nepal.

Read below for more.

Welcoming the New Year!

As we were welcoming the new year on 1st January, INF staff in the ICO sat together outside the office basking in the dim light of the sun, committing to work in synergy with “We Are INF” feelings among all of us as we serve to bring life in all its fullness for all we cared for. We prayed with the Lord for his guidance and grace for us to be given with the wisdom that will allow us to focus on our work, and a heart full of compassion towards the most vulnerable people of Nepal.



Unprecedented events yet we are hopeful

We saw unprecedented events with the start of the new year, Australian Bush Fire, Corona Virus, Political unrest in many parts of the world due to which many human lives were lost and many deeply wounded physically and emotionally. The dark clouds of confusion and fear are still spreading but we still hope that peace and calm will win, we pray that fire is quenched and the virus is defeated. The fear of uncertainty will be replaced with the new hope for humanity.



Welcome Tanka!

INF Nepal welcomed **Tanka Subedi** as a new Community Programmes Director. Over the two decades of career, Mr Subedi has been involved in community development and empowerment in different I/NGOs. He has Masters degrees in Sociology and Public Administration. Mr Subedi specialises in community development works, leadership, training, empowerment and organisation management. Originally from Khotang district of the eastern part of Nepal, Mr Subedi is married to Poonam and they have two daughters Shristi [18] and Abha [11]. Shristi has a profound visual impairment, so Tanka brings personal commitment, as well as years of experience, into his role of supporting inclusion and empowerment of poor and disadvantaged.



"I am very much excited with my new role in this organisation which I have taken as an opportunity of a lifetime and looking forward to utilising knowledge, skills and experience to INF to promote values by deeds while serving those in need as envisioned by INF", says Mr Subedi during small staff gathering and introduction session on the 1st of January.

INF Nepal Board Meeting and visit

The 85th INF Nepal Board meeting took place in Surkhet & Banke in the first week of January.

The Board also visited INF Surkhet Shining hospital and Fistula Centre based in the premises of Karnali Provincial Hospital, Banke Office and also interacted with the staff members of Surkhet and Banke.

This meeting also appreciated the valuable contribution of outgoing board member and bid farewell to **Ps Mohan Das [Solomon] Gurung** who completed his three years tenure on last September.



Medical Outreach Camps

The two-day Free Medical Camp was organised by the Ministry of Social Development [MoSD] Gandaki Province Health Directorate at Singdi, Kholasothar Rural Municipality, Lamjung with the technical and logistic support from the INF Nepal Green Pastures Hospital. The camp was inaugurated by *honourable Chief Minister of Gandaki Province Mr Prithvi Subba Gurung*. INF Nepal Green Pasture Hospital provided services in Dermatology, Ear, Ortho and Physio Services along with two vehicles for the camp.

Medical services provided at the camp included Dermatology, Ear, Eye, Dental, Physio, Ortho, Gynecology, X-ray, Lab-test and General Check-Up.

A total of 350 people were directly benefited from this camp: Derma 32, VIA [Gynae related] 35, Ear 26, Dental 75, Eye 106, General Medicines 138, Ortho 80, Gynae 53, Lab service 45 and USG [Video Xray] 77.

The team from INF included Dr Ramesh Sharma [Dermatology], Dr Nirajan Khadka, Subash Poudel [Ear], Swikriti Poudel [Physiotherapy], Karna Gurung [Outreach], Prithvi Raj Baral and Krishna KC.



67th World Leprosy Day Celebration

It is quite interesting that INF has been serving the poor and disadvantaged people of Nepal for the last 67 years and has been a pioneer in the field of leprosy treatment in Nepal and we celebrated the 67th World Leprosy Day.

Marking this day, we have launched a new leprosy awareness and fundraising campaign on our website: <https://www.inf.org/beat-leprosy-together/>

Pokhara

In Pokhara, a special programme was organised in coordination with the Health Directorate of Gandaki Province. Government officials, local representative, health officials all pointed out the necessity to work in coordination and collaboration among all the stakeholders in fighting leprosy and the stigma associated with it. Everyone agreed that there is still much to do in raising the awareness about leprosy and today is the best day to embark on that journey. Fighting leprosy can't be a one-day event, rather, it needs a coordinated effort from all sectors.

Different activities were also performed during the programme such as handing over trophies to the winners of the sports events organised for patients, Leprosy Awareness Poster Competition among nursing colleges and schools, testimonials by some patients. Fruits and warm clothes were also distributed to the leprosy inpatients [30] and 15 leprosy-affected people residing in Pokhara Aaryogya Aashram, Tutunga which is run by Nepal Leprosy Relief Association [NELRA].



Banke

INF Banke Office celebrated the World Leprosy Day in coordination with the District Health Office, Banke and Janaki Rural Municipality, Banke.



Surkhet

Surkhet office also organised a programme on the occasion of the 67th World Leprosy Day among leprosy patients and staff.



Interaction Programme on Skin and Leprosy

INF Nepal Banke Office organised an interaction programme with the leaders and representatives of *Interreligious Social Cohesion Forum* about leprosy and skin related disease. The forum was also given a round trip to the hospital where the representatives saw the work of INF in the field of leprosy treatment.



New CD's visit to the districts

Newly appointed *Community Programmes Director* **Mr Tanka Subedi** visited the INF's working areas of Terai and hilly regions of Province 5 & 6. He visited Banke, Dang, Kapilvastu, Rolpa and Surkhet. This visit was aimed at giving the opportunity to see the work of INF, interact with the field staff, community and know each other. In the second phase of the visit, Mr Subedi and the team will be visiting the mountainous districts where INF is working in the first week of February.

It has been exactly a month since Tanka joined us. Through this visit, he has covered almost half of the operational areas. When asked about this visit and his experience so far, he replied, "I feel that I have been able to grasp all about INF's long history, I can sense what INF wants to achieve through its community work". He further added, "Still, I need to get a closer look at some mountainous operational areas in western Nepal. We are focused on downtrodden people and are able to create hope, but we need to be proactive and specific about what to do and how to do it."



Knowledge Management Workshop

A three-day participatory Knowledge Management Workshop was conducted by the Quality Assurance Department [QAD] from 24 to 26 January in Pokhara. The workshop was designed to generate a common understanding of the strategic relevance and potential of Knowledge Management [KM] and knowledge sharing approaches for INF Nepal. The workshop used a collective learning approach through a mix of presentations, group work and role-plays to exhibit the fundamentals of KM and need for KM to be integrated into INF Nepal strategy. Some of the underlying objectives of the workshop were to develop a knowledge management strategy to institutionalise KM practices in INF Nepal, application of knowledge sharing tools and techniques in practice and to foster an enabling environment within INF Nepal that encourages knowledge sharing. The workshop was facilitated by **Ms Nibha Shrestha**.

A total of 30 staff from different departments, programmes and projects participated in the workshop. INF Nepal senior management team was also present on the first day of the workshop. The workshop demonstrated the need for interdependencies between the contributions of different functions and disciplines within INF Nepal to effectively realize and integrate the KM approach.

The interactive session throughout the workshop provided opportunities for all the participants to explore the importance of KM, the critical knowledge to be managed, and several other areas of strategic input. Based on the input gathered from the workshop, a draft framework has been developed for further progression to INF Nepal KM Strategy. The workshop also helped in identifying the communication gaps and understanding about the current INF Nepal knowledge sharing and accessing platforms, to which everyone agreed on the need to orient all the INF Nepal staff on current platforms and to make additional developments. As one of the primary tools of KM Knowledge Harvesting implemented for the Banke MNCH as a pilot project.



Knowledge Harvesting Workshop

Following the Knowledge Management Workshop in Pokhara - the QAD Team put into practise the new learnings and conducted a Knowledge Harvesting Workshop under the guidance of our facilitator Nibha Shrestha.

The workshop took place in Nepalgunj, where the staff of the Banke MNCH project were invited to share their knowledge and learnings from the four years of the project, that is about to phase out. The two days were long and fully packed, but it was eye-opening and a great opportunity to retain the knowledge and experiences of the front-line staff. We thank everybody for their generosity in sharing.



Ear camp at Dulegauda

Ear team from GPH conducted ENT Camp at Dulegauda, Tanahun. A total of 38 people mostly having ear infections, allergic rhinitis, pharyngitis and sensorineural hearing loss benefitted from this camp.



ICO Picnic

INF Nepal Central Office organised its annual picnic programme on the last day of January at the hilltop of Kahun Danda. INF Nepal Board members, general members, expat volunteers and staff attended the picnic.

Word of wisdom came from **Hari Ram Ghimire**, Chairperson of Pokhareli Christian Community. He explained the importance of teamwork and recognition of service of others. He established his point through a couple of stories including a biblical story of four men carrying their paralysed friend to Jesus with the hope of healing him by tearing the roof of the house. Upon seeing the faith towards Him, Jesus healed the person. He also gave an interesting story of Colgate company, where the almost bankrupt company came to life simply by changing the size of the nozzle.

There might be a problem and conflict while working in a team but that can be resolved through teamwork and collaboration. Everyone in the team has a unique role. All should be valued and heard. Sometimes the only solution comes from the very bottom, all we have to do is to open up our hearts and listen to those voices.

The programme was really joyful and everyone seemed to enjoy. There were games, songs, dances and good food. A celebration should be a part of our work, in fact, Joy is one of the value of INF and we believe informal events like this will bring everyone even closer.



Staff Spotlight:

Meet **Dr Ramesh Sharma**, our Consultant Dermatologist and Head of the Department of Dermatology and Leprosy for the last three years at GPHRC. He has brought years of knowledge, wisdom and skills required to treat hundreds of people through our hospital.

Dr Ramesh is also worried that many new patients are being diagnosed with leprosy, last year alone there were 3000 new cases in Nepal. Though Nepal was declared leprosy eliminated in 2010. Many people are misdiagnosed and come to GPH at the very last stage with severe complications. He urges that Government and organisations working in the field of Leprosy Treatment need to collaborate and make more efforts in fighting this highly stigmatised disease.

He has a compassionate heart especially for the people affected by leprosy and other skin conditions. He is proud of being involved in INF and being able to treat the patients. In fact, people queue up from wee hours of the morning to get his appointment. We are also proud of having you, Dr Ramesh.

Dr Ramesh is from Pokhara and is married to Dr Sandipa Kafle [Dental Surgeon]. They have a beautiful daughter Suravi Wagle [9 months old].



Meet **Rekha Rawal**, our MNCH Project Officer based in Banke. Rekha is married and is from Rupandehi. She has a Bachelor's degree in Public Health. She joined INF in 2016 as a Monitoring & Documentation Officer for MNCH Project based in Kapilvastu.

She is very excited about her role as she gets involved in many activities from managing the project-related intervention, budget planning, implementing, ensuring the effectiveness of activities in communities. She also conducts training and orientation as well as sensitisation activities for health workers and local mothers' groups. She also needs to coordinate and collaborate with different stakeholders including government bodies and prepare donor narratives and financial reports. We are very thankful for your hard work.



Please pray for the work of Dr Ramesh Sharma and Rekha Rawal and pray for their family's wellbeing.



INTERESTING FACTS

Ethnicity of Nepal

Did you know? Nepal has 123 different languages among 125 ethnic groups. These languages fall into four different categories Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian. Most of the languages fall either under Indo-European or Sino-Tibetan, while only a very few of them are Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian. Kusunda is the only language that is not listed among these four sub-categories and is spoken by very few people.

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