

Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco-Foundation

Chalnakhel-5, Khahare

Kathmandu Valley, Nepal

Progress report, May 2011



1st May 2011

Dear friends,

Greetings from "**Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco Foundation**" Kathmandu, Nepal. In May 2010, we sent out our first report regarding KRMEF. Our second report was sent out in December of 2010 (It is attached with this report). It is important that you read the second report, if you have not already done so; it includes detailed developments since 2010 completely and is an essential document of the growth that has occurred here. This is our third installment, which includes updates on our previous work and exciting new projects we have underway.

We here at the foundation hope that you all are doing well,

Sincerely,











Krishna Gurung

The Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco-Foundation (KRMEF)

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Acknowledgments

We have come a long way here at the KRMEF foundation and would like to acknowledge all the participants that have assisted along the way. From Bill Hutchins an Eco-architect from Washington DC who has helped us to build the extension to our community center, members of greenPILLAR who have been vital in the progress of the foundation in many ways, volunteers from around the world who have stayed and offered their talents towards developing programs, Liza and Friedhelm from Germany, who have helped establish carpentry and teach music at a local community school, International friends that have assisted in our travels and global connections, US Embassy members who have supported our visions, and most importantly the community here in the village of Kharare that continues to grow and work daily to maintain the integrity of the Foundation.

We would also like to acknowledge and give a special thanks to all the well wishers and great friends who have volunteered in the past year from USA, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Israel and Nepal. With the financial and physical assistance from our friends we have gotten this far. We will always remain grateful towards their contributions.

We are fortunate enough to be nominated in the Buckminster Fuller Challenge award. Please click the link below for more information; it also gives a nice detailed explanation of our work here.

http://challenge.bfi.org/2011Semi_Finalist_PromotingHealthandtheEnvironment

Introduction

The Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco Foundation (KRMEF) is a Nepali NGO set in a village - Khahare - in the Kathmandu Valley, seven miles or so below the Kathmandu ring road. The foundation tries to be a resource for sustainable practices, which are being integrated into Khahare. As Khahare becomes a model village, the sustainable practices implemented there will be offered to other villages in the valley. As the valley holds a great proportion of Nepal's population, the work of KRMEF will have a significant impact in Nepal. Within few years, the programs described below can be fully operating.

KRMEF has been in operation for less than two years and has already drawn the financial and creative support of many friends as well as appealed to a wide spectrum of Nepali's. Traction has been gained in the programs described below; with any opportunity, we will be able to fill a part of the overwhelming need, especially that which we already have relationship with. Ultimately our goal is to become 100% self sustaining by creating eco friendly jobs for locals by using local materials.

To date, significant contributions of time and effort have and are being made. Countless volunteers have stayed at the foundation and worked, some with years of expertise from which they have helped develop the programs described below. Primary amongst these individuals are Hans Mulder, an internationally renowned teacher and practitioner of Bio-Dynamic Farming. Two American organizations have and are serving the work of KRMEF - Helicon Works Architects, who have helped develop the natural building methods as well as the holistic vision of Kharare, and greenPILLAR, which operates with a creative team of practitioners to support foundations such as KRMEF. greenPILLAR recently brought such a team, who initiated the yoga work (which is also supported by Give Back Yoga, an American organization dedicated to serving those in need as service work), supported the natural

building, brought fresh creative ideas to the jewelry and craft work, and a documentarian who is producing a film on the work of the foundation. All these supporters are providing ongoing support and advice, at no charge.

1. Biodynamic Activities

After the success of four biodynamic seminars in April/November 2010, we feel encouraged in the preparation for a larger seminar this November. The seminar is intended to be held in three different locations, including Ittahari, Pokhara and Kathmandu. Our intention is to further extend to mid west region like Jumla and Dolpa. After our survey visit together with our GDAA friends in those places, we saw a high potential and possibilities. Our foundation shall be working with NGO leaders and local grassroots organizations to continue this work effectively.



Biodynamic lecture in west Nepal Pokhara Demonstration BD 500 sprinkling Ittahari East Nepal



Preparation of Biodynamic compost heap done by villagers and university students together

1. Visits and Seminars attended around the World

In December 2010, KRMEF participated and attended several seminars in the United States. We attended the J Term course at University of Virginia(USA) as an International visitor. There the vision of community building, biodynamic agriculture, and holistic living were shared. We also

presented a lecture at California Rudolf Steiner College, where we spoke on the biodynamic introduction and growth in Nepal. In Feb 2011, we attended an International biodynamic seminar in Switzerland. Thanks to my friends, who organized my trip, air fare and stay? End April, we attended (APAC) Asia Pacific Anthroposophic Conference in Hyderabad, India. From these seminars and global connections we came back to KRMEF with inspirations and ideas, and by selling some goods we collected funds for furthering the goals of the Foundation. We also traveled locally through and Mid-west Nepal surveying to find the ecological and economical status of the residents there. Through these visits and seminars we have gained great knowledge and connections that will help to further the mission of the Foundation. We look forward to working and sharing with our new collaborators, to create a brighter future everyone involved.



Visits and speeches in the USA and Europe 2010/2011



Visit and speech in the USA and Europe 2010/2011 Survey visit inside Nepal with GDAA friends

2. Introducing Carpentry & School Support

Mr. Friedhelm Homburg, who has worked as a senior expert in the field of Carpentry for many years has assisted in establishing a carpentry workshop here at the Foundation. He has worked with KRMEF methodically in merging local carpenters with the foundation and to build better relations with locals. He has trained to repair furniture at a local school, helped build windows and doors for the Community Center, and purchased needs for the Clinic. He has been a fundamental part of building projects and progress here.

Liza Dohr has also been an essential part of the community development. She has kindly shared her love and talent of music with the local secondary School. There she offered her teaching expertise in guiding teachers and children to play the flute. She shared her knowledge of Nepali Folk music with them. They continue to practice what she has shown them. She also distributed number of flutes to the school. She is committed to continue her work here, and will be coming back from Germany periodically to teach at the school. Although this was her first time at KRMEF, she is dedicated to her role here at the Foundation. We have been honored by the presence of these two highly talented individuals and we look forward to hosting them on their future return.



Lisa leading music class at School Friedhelm helping local carpentry for clinic

3. Green Building with Bill Hutchins

Under the direction of Washington D.C. based architect Bill Hutchins, community members and volunteers engaged in green building. Using a natural building method from local materials - structure from bamboo, roof from thatch, and walls from waste bottles and paper set in earthen plaster (sand, clay and straw), the group worked together to create an extension of the community center. This had added the one of the main missions of KRMEF.

Bottles set on their sides limit the need for earthen plaster; as such, bottles are strong enough to hold the structure with little else. The plaster, clay and sand were aided through a mixture of various shredded trash paper, which adds tensile strength and with the sand acts as filler. The bamboo structure and roof is a flexible structural system, which will move along with an earthquake. By using materials at hand, we have created a structure that is both sustainable and

incorporates methods of earthen building. Through this process, a building team is now established that has knowledge and capabilities to replicate this process in the future.

The building is on its final stages. With bamboo foundation, walls in place, and windows and door set; the rooftop is the last step in completion. The community is excited about the expansion of space and the room for growth and development.



Bamboo bottle community clinic being built. A model mud bottle house for family can be built by any.

4. Working with greenPILLAR

It was great to meet Justine Light founder of greenPILLAR.org in DC. That made our connection and that led our work together. In March, greenPILLAR brought a volunteer team of experts in various disciplines to KRMEF. greenPILLAR's mission is to assist in the process of empowering local efforts, to create new projects and support in the sustainability of community. greenPILLAR worked under the direction of Bill Hutchins to build an extension of the existing community center. greenPILLAR also offered an on-site daily practice of yoga, meditation and breathing exercises at the eco-village, as well as at the local leprosarium. These practices continue in the village. Also, greenPILLAR has assisted in the economic development of handicrafts created in the village. greenPILLAR purchased a variety of commissioned items from the village, to produce 50-100 gift bags for presentation to funders and partners. This Travel Well bag includes locally grown and crafted items, a bamboo spoon/fork, biodegradable soapnut shells, and a organic necklace made from local soap nuts seeds. Furthermore, greenPILLAR has documented daily activities and the partnership created with KRMEF. This footage will be compiled to create an in-depth documentary which will explore how the collaboration works within all the various categories greenPILLAR engages, as a tool for future efforts.



Yoga being taught by expert Marc & Erica from greenPILLAR

Women workshop Justin & Leela



Green community building by locals and volunteers and experts

5. Fruit Tree Plantation (continued)

Tree plantation continues here in the village. All of our citrus fruit trees are being planted on community barren land. Visitors and sponsors are welcome to plant trees in designated areas. All the fruits that are yielded from these trees will be used for community purposes. With the community expanding, these fruit trees will be a valuable resource in the coming future. The benefits include: community acknowledgement of volunteer work, long term remembrance for the helping hands that have come through KRMEF, introduction to community organic agriculture, and the utilization of common land for the benefit of future generations as these trees begin to bear fruit.



Continuation of fruit tree plantation on community land

6. Connections with Greening Coordinator at US Embassy

At the Green Fest 09¹ in Washington DC, we met with the couple who happened to be a Greening Coordinator of the US Embassy in Khatmandu. It was a blessed synchronicity and we have had good connections thus far. His wife Alder is programs director at US Aid. Both Alder and Ryan have visited the Foundation and have had good contacts and feedback to offer. They have shown their concern and have offered us useful resources. The US Embassy of Nepal currently donates recycled bottles that we use for Earth Building and shredded waste paper that we use for making bio- briquettes. We intend to maintain good relations with them so that we can further our work together on common visionary projects.



Visit of expats and explaining about the program and uses of mud and waste liquor bottles.

7. Sponsored Children

One of our sponsored children Sunita Pariyar, obtained first position in her school and we are very proud of this bright child. Her father committed suicide due to poverty, two years ago. This left a young mother and her children alone and with little funds. In this hardship, the mother decided to discontinue the children from attending school. We at KRMEF were pleased to give them the sponsorship and emotional support they needed to attend school. The children are a sweet part of the community here in Khahare. They welcome guests and volunteers at the foundation with love and care; which leaves a lasting impression.

Another of our sponsored children is Anita Thapa. She has suffered heart problems from a very young age and was in need of surgery. She received surgery approximately 6 years prior. After surgery her mother had to leave to Saudi Arabia to earn more money to keep family going. At that time they did not even have enough money to call or keep contact. Anita took care of her younger brother while her mother left. One year later her Mother returned but had little money to offer. Now, Anita needs regular medication for her heart condition. We are pleased to support her financially, so that she can continue medication and also continue school. She is a very brave individual with a tough story and we are honored to have her be a part of the KRMEF Community.



Swastika, Sunita and their widowed young mother.

Anita Thapa

9. Condolence

We here at KRMEF would like to recognize Dawa Tamang. Dawa, a sweet Nepali boy, suffered muscular dystrophy. He was not admitted to any hospitals due to the severity of his disease. His mother hoped that bringing him to Kathmandu would solve these problems. His sister weaves carpets, which is quite difficult and not lucrative financially. We were very thankful when Verena from Switzerland visited Bouddha and found Dawa. She requested the us to assist Dawa and look over the family. We continue to assist the family. Unfortunately Dawa passed away last year. We are grateful for the time that we had with Dawa, he has a genuine spirit that will stay with the organization and in the hearts of the community here. Sincere thanks go to Verena as we continue to support and encourage Dawas family. His mother is learning to knit and we continue our relationship with her and her family.



8. An orphanage and day care centre:

We have just rented this deteriorating yet traditional house for an orphanage and day care centre in the vicinity. This needs repair and renovation. We will try to keep as local as possible and serve the Children who are desperate and orphaned. We are also thinking of integrating the local children during the day as kindergarteners & introduce a meaningful education, thus mothers are freed for work and be productive. Those who's parents are able, we will request them to pay for food and facilities. That might enable us to be sustainable to some extent. The house owner is glad to rent/sell the property to the organization for this humanitarian cause & preserve of their traditional house. If any organization/individuals would like to contribute to this meaningful cause, we will remain in contact.



Conclusion

We here at **Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco Foundation** are encouraged by the developments and the potential for growth. We intend to maintain clear and professional relations with all whom we are working with, all while preserving the integrity of the foundation. We look forward to continuing our work to benefit all people and local communities in creating a more sustainable environment. We are determined to save the local environment by using local manpower, local waste, and educating the local population about the benefits of protecting the environment. We will continue our work on developing and promoting our programs which include - renovations of the clinic and school, establishing a child care center, continuing biodynamic farming and encouraging local community to do so, hosting our biodynamic seminar in November, green building, economic developments of handicrafts, yoga therapy, relations with co-collaborators. With this, we encourage feedback and support from all of our benefactors and are in deep

gratitude to all have assisted us along the way. With your support and the support of many we are creating a healthier and more sustainable environment for all. Thanks to GDAA Germany, Sangrila Swiss who honored me with the post of country representative, is keeping me financially free, so that I can continue to work this way. The work looks more wider, we are trying to connect all the bubbles one at a time to make an entire/complete community.

With sincere gratitude,

Krishna Gurung

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