

NEWS FROM FIELD THE MOUNTAIN INSTITUTE NEPAL PROGRAM

Message from Director

Namaste and welcome to the spring edition 2010. It is my great pleasure to write short word to introduce this news from the field. I have just returned from field trip to Jumla to assess the TMI's ongoing PRRO programs, to explore community-based tourism and to assess the current water and health sanitation in 8 VDCs of Jumla district.

The Mountain Institute Nepal program is pleased to announced that we did receive one year grant from Pro-Public Victimis from Switzerland to continue provide assistance to the farmers of Rasuwa and Dhading in central Nepal. Likewise, we have been asked to write full proposal on Improving Water Supply, Hand Washing and Food Security to Reduce Child Malnutrition in Jumla, which the due is on 30th April 2010. Mr. Richard Regan of WFP's country representative has been nominated for TMI's 4th Annual "Celebration of Mountain Gala" that will take place in October 2010. I on behalf of Nepal office would like to congratulate for his acceptance of this honoree.

I thank all the staff, who have made great contribution in the projects successful, both field and office staff alike. I hope that 2010 will be very productive as we try to develop new projects and expand our impact to more mountain communities and environments. Wishing you a Happy New Year 2067!! Namaste and Tashidelek

Brian J. Peniston
Director (Himal)



Director in the field



Richard Ragan in Dolpa 2008

CELEBRATION OF MOUNTAINS GALA HONOREES ANNOUNCED

The Mountain Institute Headquarters has announced Richard Ragan, Country Representative of the World Food Program (WFP) as one of the honorees for the 4th annual

"Celebration of Mountains Gala". Mr. Ragan has made a significant contribution to food security in mountain communities through his work with the World Food Program-Nepal and the Food for Enterprise partnership with The Mountain Institute.

TMI'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT FIELD VISIT TO JUMLA

The Director and the Senior Program Manager of The Mountain Institute (TMI) made a short trip to Jumla from 27th March to 3rd April 2010. Jumla is one of the four districts where TMI has been implementing "Lake-to-Lake: food for enterprise" project with financial support from World Food Program (WFP). In Jumla, the Institute of Community Development (ICD) is TMI's local NGO partner. The objective of the field visit was to oversee the ongoing WFP PRRO program in Food for Enterprise sites; to explore potential areas for involvement in the Great Himalayan Trail (GHT); and to collect data on health and sanitation from Jumla district in order to feed the information for WASH proposal.



MAPs cultivation training in Humla

MAPs and CONSERVATION TRAINING IN KARNALI

With the financial support from Warren Buffet's program in Karnali region, TMI has provided a series of MAPs cultivation trainings in Humla, Mugu and Jumla. This support complements the WFP's ongoing PRRO programs in the west. The purpose of these trainings was to build the capacity of communities to adopt on-farm cultivation/ex-situ conservation of few selected MAPs (*Swertia chirayita* or Chiraito, *Delphinium himalayai* Munz or Attis, and *Taxus wallichiana* or Lothsalla) as an alternative income generation option.

In this training, 30 participants had been targeted in the training. TMI and its partners selected the female participants to conduct these trainings, as women will make a greater impact as men often leave the area to search for food and casual work. Altogether the were total of 1200 farmers will receive the MAPs cultivation training primarily focused on *Chiraito* species. In this training, Chiraito, Attis and Lothsalla nursery beds have been established.

SUCCESSFUL APPLE FARMING IN KARNALI

TMI has been implementing enterprise development programs in Humla. The main activities have been: Ex-situ (Domestic) conservation and cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plant (MAPs), establishment and promotion of apple farming, and barren land utilization for food production. Among the enterprise programs, apple farming has been identified as one of the most effective and locally desirable activities in Humla.

Recently, 3000 saplings were transported from Jumla to Humla and distributed for plantation. TMI also purchased 2995 apple saplings from local farms and 2255 sapling has provided by Agriculture Development Office (ADO) to the farmers. All these saplings have been planted in 59 apple farms in 18 VDCs, and have begun to germinate. Apple cultivation training was first provided to the 30 participating farmers in February. Trainers were hired from the DAO.



TMI Received grant from Pro Victimis Foundation



Chiraito (*Delphinium himalayai* Munz) in Dhading

The Mountain Institute has received a one-year grant from Pro-Victimis Foundation (PVF) objective to strengthen livelihoods and conserve natural resources in Rasuwa and Dhading districts by training local farmers in MAPs cultivation and to strengthen the skills and organizational capacity of farmer groups to operate effectively in market.

These impacts will be measured by the number of farmers actually cultivating MAPs on their private land and participating in TMI program planning, additional trainings, and assessment activities, against the stated goal of 500-600 new farmers, and 200 previously trained farmers.

Improving Water Supply, Hand Washing and Food Security to Reduce Child Malnutrition

The Mountain Institute was asked to submit a full proposal on “Improving Water Supply, Hand Washing and Food Security to Reduce Child Malnutrition by USAID Nepal. The proposal due is on 30th April 2010. This project, Improving Water Supply, Hand Washing and Food Security to Reduce Child Malnutrition, addresses determinants of malnutrition by improving access to safe drinking water; improving hygiene awareness and practice through changes in hand-washing behavior; and improving food availability through consistent food distribution to families identified as highly vulnerable. The project will repair and maintain 30 existing --- but nonfunctioning --- drinking water systems in eight village clusters in Jumla District. Jumla was selected based on its overall Human Development Index (HDI), which ranks 69th out of Nepal’s 75 districts, with 74.1 percent of children under five classified as chronically malnourished. The project will be piloted and overseen in eight Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Jumla, the local administrative apparatus.

NEWS FROM RED PANDA NETWORK

Supporting community-based Red Panda eco-tourism in PIT Corridor

Eco-tourism is now growing as the one of the largest foreign currency earners in Nepal. It is considered an alternative means of supporting local conservation initiatives through the enhancement of livelihoods in forest dependent communities. The Eastern Himalayan region, in particular the forests of *Panchthar, Ilam* and *Taplejung* districts (the PIT corridor) are rich in biological and cultural resources, making them a prime location for tourism.

The Mountain Institute (TMI) and Red Panda Network (RPN) are assisting local communities in the initiation of red panda tourism in the PIT corridor. Tourists come to the region for its natural beauty, including tea gardens, Kanchenjunga (the world’s third highest mountain) and the lush Himalayan cloud forests, which house various endangered species in which red pandas are the main attraction. Because the PIT corridor is a priority area for red panda conservation and ecotourism, TMI and RPN have been providing technical and financial support to minimize the negative impacts of eco-tourism. Through this work, local communities have earned money through the sale of local product and employment. These activities have motivated them to engage in conservation activities.



Visitors from Hongkong enjoying Red Panda Habitat

The Mountain Institute (TMI) has organized a half-day discussion workshop on rainwater harvesting with the theme of **The Need and Scope of Rainwater Harvesting in Nepal**.

The workshop was held on April 28 2010, 1:30 – 4:30, followed by drinks and snacks, Hotel Manaslu.

AGENDA

1. Review of Rain Water Harvesting system-typical design, costs, and government policy
2. Context-geography/altitude; meteorology/rainfall patterns areas of greatest need
3. Improvement potentials-alternative construction, funding policies
4. Integrated programming-micro-finance, RWH and livelihood

Discussion questions:

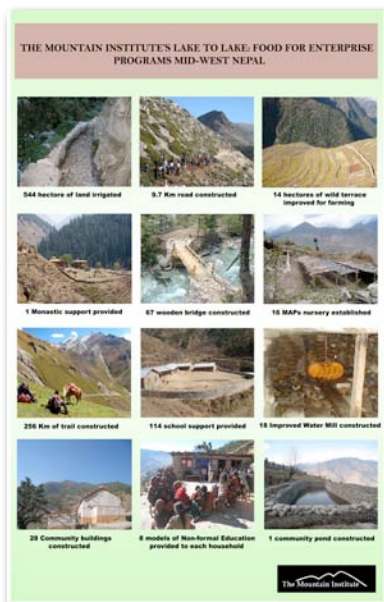
Who are the priority population for RWH?

What is the size of that population?

What changes to current programming might support reaching more of the priority population?

POSTERS MADE AND DISTRIBUTED

TMI has produced series of 20"x30" informational posters on a variety of topics, and these posters have been prepared to distributed to partners in Ilam and Panchthar as well as in western Nepal.



DISTRICT LEVEL MAPs NETWORKING AND MARKET MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP IN ILAM AND PANCHTHAR



One day-long district level medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) market management and networking workshop was conducted in each of the district headquarters of Ilam and Panchthar districts on 5th and 7th February 2010. A total of 64 participants (54 male and 10 female) from VDC-level MAPs groups, local and regional traders, media reporters, Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs), District Plant Resource Office (DPRO), District Agriculture Office (DAO), District Cooperative Office (DCO) and District Forest Office (DFO) participated the workshop. The objective of the workshop was to build a district level coordination mechanism to address the sustainable management and marketing of NTFPs produced in private land. The program reviewed the findings of village level discussions and focused itself on resolving the pre-identified challenges, from grassroots to national policy levels, seen in commercialization of on-farm cultivated NTFPs. The major outcome of the workshop was the formation of two District Level Ad-hoc Enterprise Development Committees (one each in Ilam and Panchthar districts), with 13 members, from government line agencies (DFO, DPRO, DAO, DCO), MAPs farmers groups, Federation of Community Forest User Groups-Nepal (FECOFUN) and Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ-district branch).

Karma Bhutia in USA

Mr. Karma Bhutia is currently attending a five week long on-the-job training in plant propagation techniques organized by Washington State University in the USA. Mr. Bhutia will be getting practical training in integrated pest management and that will help to train the local farmers back in Ilam and Panchthar, Nepal where he has already trained more than 5000 mountain farmers in MAPs cultivation techniques. His expenses during this five weeks has been generously covered by Mr. Rand Jack of Bellingham, Washington, one of the main donors supporting the project and hosting Mr. Bhutia during his stay in the US.



Advancing Mountain Cultures-Preserving Mountain Environment

Farewell to Sushila Thing and Ramesh Shrestha



Sushila in upper Chilime during field visit in 2007

SUSHILA THING

TMI would like to thank Ms. Sushila Thing, who served as Gender Development Officer of TMI since 2002. She worked in different fields such as the PVO funded program in the Rasuwa, Alpine Conservation and Restoration in the Everest region, TMI's Lake to Lake: Food for Enterprise Program based in Dolpa and the Transboundary Cooperation Program in Kangchenjunga Landscape. She worked closely with local partners, CBOs and district line agencies in all these sectors. Her roles in these fields have been vital to TMI programming implementation in mountain communities across Nepal. Ms. Thing also prepared the original high altitude nursery operation plan. Her proposal development and fund raising activities have been vital to TMI programming implementation in mountain communities across Nepal. She also co-authored several publications, including Khumbu Alpine Conservation and Restoration both in the Imja and Gokyo valley.

RAMESH SHRESTHA

Ramesh Shrestha joined TMI as GIS specialist since 20.. He developed a series of VDC and DDC profiles for the TMI MAPs project in the east and for TMI's Lake to Lake projects in Dolpa, and prepared a resource profile for upper Dolpa.. Mr. Shrestha served as district coordinator for Dolpa and made a great contribution to TMI in the PRRO programs. Mr. Shrestha also developed a map containing the Great Himalayan Trail in which TMI, SNV and ICIMOD have been involved. We thank him for his vital contributions to TMI and its programming.



The Mountain Institute
3000 Connecticut Avenue NW,
Suite 138
Washington, DC 20008
Phone:
Tel.: 001-202-234-4050
Fax:
Fax: 001-202-234-4051
Website:
www.mountain.org

Text and Concept: Ang Rita Sherpa
Photos: TMI Staff

The Mountain
Institute
P.O. Box 2785
Baluwatar, Kathmandu
Phone:
977-1-4414237
Fax:
977-1-4410073
Email:
tmiregional@wlink.com.np