



Concern Nepal

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Editorial

Enduring and temporary footprints of our toil

भर जन्म घाँस तिर मन् दिई धन कमायो यस घाँसीले कसरी आज दिए छ अर्ती
नाम केही रहोस भनेर कुवा खनायो । धिक्कार हो मकन् बस्तु नराखी किर्ति ।
.....
- भानुभक्त आचार्य

Some 250 years ago, Bhanunhakta Acharya, a Nepali poet who was then living in the capital city mingling with the royals, met a poor farm-helper who had saved his little money by cutting down even his survivalistic needs and constructed a wellspring for his village. What surprised the seemingly wealthy poet that the labourer was doing this to leave behind a **legacy**, which was an eye opener for the poet who was subsequently inspired to leave an enduring legacy of his own. Amidst the most grinding of hardships, the poor man found a profound significance in constructing the wellspring for a lasting benefit to his community expending all his life savings.

Today, while being rich in education and wealth, we individuals rarely pause to scrutinize whether or not the results of our toil do bring enduring legacy as aspired by the poor man, although we do work hard for ourselves and for the society. The tendency to be over captivated to achieve the short-term goals while overlooking the long-term is not only prevalent among individuals but also among the national and international organisations, where CFFN is no exception. With this realization, it seems necessary that we use our energy in such a way that our efforts could have enduring impact to the society. Imagine if the farm-helper spent his life only feeding buffalos! He would have retained a sense of purpose but it would have left no legacy despite pouring his life on the buffalos.

With our mission to help Nepal from a distant country, Canada, CFFN would reach great heights if we continue learning from our experiences and devise endeavours that carry long term implications. With this approach we will be closer to leave behind an enduring institution that acts as a wellspring for flowing knowledge not only in the proximity of the Himalayas but to the wider humanity. Let our efforts make positive contributions for now and in to the future!

CFFN Programs and Activities of 2008-9: Report from the Executive Board

The last year of Canada Forum for Nepal was full of exciting activities and achievements. While we pursued our traditional activities of organizing interaction programs and academic conference, we also shifted our gear in other legacy building pursuit in rural education in Nepal. We have acquired valuable understanding on many issues related to the education of rural children in Nepal. We have established target areas for pilot testing of our concepts.

In this respect, CFFN has continued its work with intentions of being useful in positive transformation of Nepal and in building better relations between the people of Canada with the people of Nepal. We remained a busy and energized. Here are some of the highlights of our activities of 2008-9 fiscal year:

1. Conferences and Workshops

- **CFFN Conference on Nepal: Unfolding Futures – Building Nepal Grounds Up:** On July 10, 11, and 12, 2008, CFFN organized a conference titled “Unfolding Futures: Building Nepal Grounds Up” that focused on developmental issues in Nepal. This conference attracted papers in three themes: "Political Restructuring: From the land of promises to promised land", "Economic Paradigm I: Natural Resources", and "Economic Paradigm II: Budgetary Priority, Innovation, and Social Issues". Like last year the program remained a great success. A spectacular Nepali cultural show was presented at the venue in the evening of the second day of the program.
- **NASO Conference: International Efforts for Dalit Rights:** CFFN scholars presented papers and led panel discussions in this academic conference on Dalit issues and rights in Nepal. This conference was organized by NASO Community of USA. Dr. Drona Rasali and Dr. Pramod Dhakal were key contributors from Canada Forum for Nepal.
- **NRN-Canada Convention:** Canada Forum for Nepal sent representatives and participated in NRN-Canada convention, and also presented thematic paper "Nepalese Diaspora in Canada: Possibilities and Opportunities" and also other articles pertaining to Nepal and NRN issues. CFFN members also were panellists in conference sessions.

2. Collaborations and Publications

- **Suggestions to Nepalese Constitution:** CFFN contributed a significant amount of work in providing suggestions for Nepalese constitution in the month of January-March of 2009. CFFN was one of the largest contributors of ideas of any NRNs throughout the world.
- **Collaboration with University of Ottawa:** CFFN collaborated with Centre for International Development and Globalization of the University of Ottawa, to send post-graduate researchers to rural Nepal to carry out research on issues and possibility of improving livelihood of rural women in Nepal.
- **Publications:** CFFN published **memoirs of volunteers** who collected valuable experiences in working with people of rural Nepal. It also contributed more than two dozen **articles** to newspapers, magazines, and conferences. It also published a collection of ancient **philosophical thoughts** of the East and the West.

3. Interaction Programs

- **Jan 31: Interactive Talk Program on Personal Success:** CFFN Executive Director, Pramod Dhakal, presented a paper titled “In Search of Wisdom: Where Does Success Live?” in a workshop titled “Power of Persistence and Hope: A Pathway to Success” in Virginia, USA on January 31, 2009. Please click [here](#) for details.

- **Jan 30: Interaction Program on Constitution and Federal Restructuring:** On January 30, 2009, CFFN Executive Director, Pramod Dhakal, participated in a televised interaction program on Nepal's constitutional issues and federal restructuring. Along with the keynote speaker Ken Thomas of USA, Pramod Dhakal presented his views on Federalism and Constitutional Reform.
 - **Jan 18: Presentation of Project Rural Education Nepal:** The preliminary draft proposal of Project Rural Education Nepal was presented by Pramod Dhakal, who is also International Affairs Coordinator of NRN-Canada, on a community interaction program of NRN-Canada on January 18, 2009.
 - **Nov 14: Workshop on Youth Entrepreneurship:** CFFN launched a youth group named CFFN Youth for Global Entrepreneurship (CYGE) in late 2008. This group organized a workshop on youth entrepreneurship with a successful Nepali entrepreneur Dr. Ramesh Sunar of North Carolina, USA on November 14, 2008. Please click [here](#) for details.
 - **Sept 27: Diasporas and Nepalese Government** This was an interaction program organized to take input from invited Nepalese Diasporas to the Prime Minister of Nepal. The interactions from this and the previous day interactions were prominently covered by media. Executive Director of CFFN was interviewed by dcnepal.com during an earlier program on the same day.
 - **Sept 26: New Nepal: Justice, Equality and Prosperity** Organized by New School University of New York, ten Nepal related organizations from Canada and USA were invited to speak with the Prime Minister of Nepal on the stated topic. Canada Forum for Nepal was one of those. CFFN also submitted in writing a set of suggestions for the advancement of Nepalese democracy and economy.
 - **Aug 29: CFFN, SAP and CCIC Talk Program** This interaction program between Nepal's then Minister of Physical Planning and Infrastructure and Canadian NGOs and public was organized in Ottawa. This interaction program focused on policies and programs of the government that was going to emerge.
 - **Aug 25-28: Various Interaction Programs** Six interaction programs were organized in Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston and University of Toronto with Minister Hisila Yami on various areas of interest related to Nepal. Each program was geared to specific issues and tailored accordingly to public, academics, international development workers, development experts, and scholars of federalism.
 - **Aug 27: Federalism: Dreams and Realities of Inclusive Nepal** This interaction program concentrated on federalism and associated issues of national integrity and people participation in governance and more. This program was arranged for the members of the Nepalese community to interact with Minister Hisila Yami.
 - **Aug 25: La transformation démocratique de Népal post conflit** This interaction program on issues related to transformation of Nepal from a state of conflict to the state of democracy was organized in Quebec City. President of Nepal Bar Association Mr. Bishwa Kanta Mainali was the guest speaker.
 - **June 11: Media in Post-Conflict States** CFFN presented a paper on Media on Post Conflict States in a program organized at National Press Club of Canada.
4. **Project: Rural Education Nepal**
- This project is intended to provide opportunity to grassroots people of North America to get directly involved with the grassroots people of Nepal. It has made many strides since its inception two years ago. Today we update you on its activities of the last few months. Please visit www.cffn.ca/school to learn more about the project. Visit [click here](#) to see the brief history of the project's evolution.
- **Technology Education:** Tom Lea, a retired teacher of Computing Technology from Illinois USA has reached Janata Higher Secondary School, Baglung District, to lift the computer literacy one

- step up. His primary focus has been “train the trainer” so that the literacy could be spread in the region. He arrived at the school on January 10, 2009 and returned back to USA in mid April 2009.
- **Computer Training Workshop:** Sumit Paudyal, a Ph.D. scholar from University of Saskatchewan, Canada conducted one week long computer training program from 24-29 August 2008 at Kushmisera of Baglung District. One teacher each from 19 schools in the area participated in the program.
 - **Local Awareness Project: Cultural Festival:** On December 11, 2008 (Mangsir 26, 2065) CFFN sponsored a local initiative to organize a cultural festival in Southern Baglung district, where cultural teams from various schools in the area competed in the premises of Shanti Higher Secondary School, Kushmisera.
 - **Local Awareness Project: Sports Competition:** CFFN sponsored a sports competition organized through local initiative in collaboration with District Education Office from December 30, 2008 to January 2, 2009 (Poush 15-18, 2065) in our target project piloting area. Teams from all secondary schools in the area competed in the premises of Shanti Higher Secondary School, Kushmisera.
 - **Proposal for Content Development:** CFFN prepared a proposal for an ambitious project for developing educational content for Kindergarten to Grade 12 classes in rural Nepal with the mobilization of individuals and organizations around the world. This project intends to harness the education and skills of Nepalese Diaspora to help develop the content.
 - **Proposal for Uninterrupted Power Generation:** Tom Lea found that the biggest hurdle faced by computer literacy programs in rural Nepal, including our project area, as the unavailability of reliable and predictable supply of electrical power. He surveyed the local potential in the area for a permanent and uninterrupted source of power supply for a school. In February, 2009, he completed necessary investigation and developed a proposal for building a 10kW hydropower project. We are seeking US\$32,000 to make this project a success.
 - **Proposal for Library:** Tom Lea noticed that libraries are necessary foundations to strengthen education in rural Nepal. Having seen the lack of educational resources in the school where he is volunteering, he has prepared a proposal for establishing a library in the target area.
 - **Project Brochure:** A two page brochure of the project has been created for the content development project to make the promotion of the project effective and economical.
 - **Research Survey on Women's Livelihood:** Two researchers (Alexandre Genest and Genevieve Sarazin) from University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada went to Nepal to investigate on the issues and prospects for livelihood enhancement for the village women. They have completed their research and will be writing their findings in the next few months. They made remarkable presentation at the University of Ottawa.
 - **Groundwork on Early Childhood Education:** Michael Casey and Tineke Casey, two Nepal enthusiast Canadians left Ottawa, Canada on February 18, 2009 to do the groundwork for establishing an Early Childhood Education Centre in the project area. In a month of stay in the area they were able to do most of the groundwork and the construction of the centre is starting soon. They will be back in the area in October.
 - **Survey on Broadband Wireless Connectivity:** Michael Casey of Ottawa, Canada along with a CFFN Field Staff are embarking a survey a section of Muktinath-Lumbini corridor for developing broadband wireless Internet connectivity. The envisioned corridor crosses 12 districts: Mustang, Manang, Myagdi, Kaski, Baglung, Parvat, Gulmi, Syangja, Arghakhanchi, Palpa, Kapilvastu, Rupendehi.
 - **Survey for Tourism Promotion:** Through their personal survey, exploration, and feasibility studies, Michael and Tineke Casey of Ottawa, Canada along with a CFFN Field Staff identified a 5-day trekking circuit never explored before in the target area for community centric tourism.

We intend to develop a model for local income generation for supporting our education endeavors, such as early childhood education centers.

- **Hiring of Field Personnel:** Two field staff have been recruited by CFFN to work with international volunteers and local people in making it possible to (1) facilitate communication between international volunteers and local people, (2) form user groups for piloting various programs of Project Rural Education Nepal, and (3) register local organization to oversee the work in Nepal.
- **Securing 200 Computers:** CFFN has acquired 200 computers to be distributed in select schools in Muktinath-Lumbini corridor. These computers will be loaded with appropriate software and be delivered to Nepal in coming months. Thanks to POA Educational Foundation for the offer.

5. **Miscellaneous**

- **Koshi Flood Relief Contribution:** CFFN made a \$1001 contribution to Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund in Nepal to help Koshi flood victims through NRN-Canada and NRNA in September 2008.
- **Return to Nepal:** A notable Canadian contribution in producing a documentary film on Nepal with Canadian singer Bruce Cockburn as he visits communities across Humla was produced by Robert Lang and Guy Clarkson of Kensington Communications. The proceeds of this work go back to Nepal to help people of Humla through USC Canada. CFFN volunteered in translating Nepali conversations into English for the purpose of creating subtitles in the film.
- **Networking and Consultations:** CFFN activities were widely covered in media; many featured articles were published by CFFN. A number of other activities throughout the year, such as networking, consultative meetings with Canadian organizations and other organizations, web publications, participating in events organized by like-minded organizations, periodic communications with members and friends, and so on.

Featured Articles:

The World As I See It

Albert Einstein

Source: American Institute of Physics, <http://www.aip.org/history/einstein/essay.htm>

"How strange is the lot of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he sometimes thinks he senses it. But without deeper reflection one knows from daily life that one exists for other people -- first of all for those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness is wholly dependent, and then for the many, unknown to us, to whose destinies we are bound by the ties of sympathy. A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving...

"I have never looked upon ease and happiness as ends in themselves -- this critical basis I call the ideal of a pigsty. The ideals that have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty, and Truth. Without the sense of kinship with men of like mind, without the occupation with the objective world, the eternally unattainable in the field of art and scientific endeavors, life would have seemed empty to me. The trite objects of human efforts -- possessions, outward success, luxury -- have always seemed to me contemptible.

"My passionate sense of social justice and social responsibility has always contrasted oddly with my pronounced lack of need for direct contact with other human beings and human communities. I am truly a 'lone traveler' and have never belonged to my country, my home, my friends, or even my immediate family, with my whole heart; in the face of all these ties, I have never lost a sense of distance and a need for solitude..."

"My political ideal is democracy. Let every man be respected as an individual and no man idolized. It is an irony of fate that I myself have been the recipient of excessive admiration and reverence from my fellow-beings, through no fault, and no merit, of my own. The cause of this may well be the desire, unattainable for many, to understand the few ideas to which I have with my feeble powers attained through ceaseless struggle. I am quite aware that for any organization to reach its goals, one man must do the thinking and directing and generally bear the responsibility. But the led must not be coerced, they must be able to choose their leader. In my opinion, an autocratic system of coercion soon degenerates; force attracts men of low morality... The really valuable thing in the pageant of human life seems to me not the political state, but the creative, sentient individual, the personality; it alone creates the noble and the sublime, while the herd as such remains dull in thought and dull in feeling.

"This topic brings me to that worst outcrop of herd life, the military system, which I abhor... This plague-spot of civilization ought to be abolished with all possible speed. Heroism on command, senseless violence, and all the loathsome nonsense that goes by the name of patriotism -- how passionately I hate them!

"The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science. Whoever does not know it and can no longer wonder, no longer marvel, is as good as dead, and his eyes are dimmed. It was the experience of mystery -- even if mixed with fear -- that engendered religion. A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, our perceptions of the profoundest reason and the most radiant beauty, which only in their most primitive forms are accessible to our minds: it is this knowledge and this emotion that constitute true religiosity. In this sense, and only this sense, I am a deeply religious man... I am satisfied with the mystery of life's eternity and with a knowledge, a sense, of the marvelous structure of existence -- as well as the humble attempt to understand even a tiny portion of the Reason that manifests itself in nature."

In Search of Wisdom: The Values of Our Values

Pramod Dhakal

Ottawa, Canada

2009 February 19

In most societies, the pressure of executing tasks is so strong that there is hardly ever time for contemplation and reflection. Our pursuits are hardly ever guided by our values - the emotionalized truths resident in us. Instead, our pursuits are driven by external pressures. We, who should have given up our lives to uphold our values, have turned into servile beings and find solace in belonging to a group, be it a community, organization, or a country. What we forget to realize is that we are most often neither united nor strong as our numbers would suggest. We are like an iron slab that is made up of magnetic particles but cannot exhibit magnetic strength. To turn into a magnet, the magnetic particles in the slab must be aligned in one direction. Similarly an organization or a group of people becomes strong only when everyone is guided by common values and aspires to reach a common goal.

Our values feed us a psychological energy that is needed for us to be devoted to a cause. The intensity of that energy determines how strong, aware, receptive, and intent we are to the cause. When we become disinterested in the cause, it is often because our inner values do not coincide with the values embodied in the cause. On the contrary, no ridicule, prosecution, and death can deter us if we are pursuing something that embodies our endeared values. Even our entrepreneurship takes social or business direction depending on the types of values we carry. And our undertakings appear easier, and positive results come sooner, when our pursuits are for upholding our values. Therefore, a success driven societies or organizations must build their foundations on common values that bind and align all members to a single direction.

While recognizing the usefulness of having values, it must also be known that we cannot succeed through randomly picked values. If making money is our primary value, we may not be able to give as much respect to a professor of physics, mathematics, or philosophy as we would to a person of wealth. We may not be able to take creativity as a foremost value of our society. Similarly, a pursuit of comparative happiness (unlike absolute happiness) may give us a sense of purpose but may keep us fixated in minor issues. Often the ideas of “superiority”, “inferiority”, “righteousness” and “unrighteousness” sprout out of selecting values without giving careful thought. Beliefs like “my family, clan, caste, religion, color, or gender is superior to yours” rouse in us. Therefore, there exist some “values” - call them pseudo-values or complex - that can keep us ignorant, stagnated, tense, hateful, and jealous. If pseudo-values are perceived as values, our actions may be counterproductive, erasing even the past achievements. What we think as values may very well be attachment, anger, and pride. However, thoughtfully chosen values certainly lead us to a path of inspiration, creativity, and wisdom.

Scholars group values in many different ways. Some say there are absolute and relative values. They say that our absolute values are those fundamental values that are independent of our culture, race, religion and time. And relative values are those which reflect our personal, cultural, and religious views that may not necessarily be viewed by other people, other cultures, and religions with the same way as we do. They are experience-driven and may change over time. Others say that there are intrinsic values (something worthy in its own right such as happiness, truth and wisdom) and extrinsic values (some worth derived from external means or from the intrinsic values such as welfare or happiness derived from helping others). Some say there are material values (augmentation of desirability or monetary-worth of something) and philosophical values (ethical value of owning something). I would leave it to the scholars of philosophy to determine what else there may be. However, it would be practical if we categorize our values into “inspirational”, “ethical”, and “preservative” categories.

Inspirational values are the ideals that motivate us to DO something. They unleash our psychological energy, which propel us to create, invent, or produce something. This is the manifestation of productive energy hidden within us. The reason societies get into explosion of innovation and creativity is that they give great importance to inspirational values. “I want to be a scientist like Einstein” like energy comes from one of those inspirational values. Being a great scientist or philosopher may not bring me riches but I would be willing to trade my riches for my ability to be like Einstein. Therefore, our inspirational values determine the extent to which we pour our energy into our endeavours. In doing so, some people may channel their energy into monetary endeavours, while others may do it for beyond-monetary accomplishments.

The ethical values are those values, which motivate us to NOT DO something dishonourable. Ethical values deter us from doing something that would not be good either to ourselves or to those who have placed trust on us. This is a form of self censorship of our own will. Why we would not take a bribe even when it is offered to us? Why we would hire a person for her abilities although she is not like us? Why we well-treat people who seek services

in our offices? These may be because we have ethical values that set boundaries to our deeds. For example we may serve people well if we put people in a position of respect. When a person is given a position of trust, his or her conduct may be evaluated based on the ethical values. When someone breaks ethical values, we may derive psychological energy to stop their degeneration. Most revolutions happen because of a sense of breakdown of ethics in society.

The preservative values motivate us to GIVE PERMANENCE to our DEEDS. These values help us leave legacy by preserving, solidifying, or immortalizing our achievements so that the fruit of our labour could be enjoyed and appreciated by future generations. It is similar to how inherent mechanisms for survival and growth of a species emerge along with the emergence of a species. In organizations and societies, these values give rise to institutions and traditions, although they must evolve over time to suit the contemporary context.

All aspiring societies and organizations should better know what their common values are. Or else they may be just wandering like a crow lost in a cloud. It is not proper for me to say what those values should be. However, I would present five examples in each three categories of values. It is up to the collective aspiration of concerned people to decide what those values should be for them.

1. Five Inspirational Values:

- a. Learning: We strive to learn and make other learn. We do not hide knowledge but rather spread it for the betterment of the world.
- b. Passing: We are thankful about other's contributions to our lives and we strive to do good to others in return. We want to pass it on to the next generation.
- c. Serving: We all are here to serve each other.
- d. Creating: We like novel endeavours, we like to innovate, invent, and create. We strive for originality and excellence.
- e. Collaborating: We strive to work collectively to build our collective identity as families, communities, a nation, and one world.

2. Five Ethical Values:

- a. Equality: All humans are free and equal in dignity, rights, and access to tools of empowerment.
- b. Non-discrimination: No discrimination shall be perpetrated on rights of humans based on race, sex, caste, class, color, religion, belief, or any other natural attributes of humans.
- c. Honesty: Truth is our value. We are in search of truth. We avoid paths that mislead us and others.
- d. Commitment: We do what we say and say what we do.
- e. Respect: We respect the needs of individuals, families, nations, and the world.

3. Five Preservative Values:

- a. Generative: When someone copies our work, it helps us rather than hurting.
- b. Additive: Each of our new work adds onto old one and creates integrative effect.
- c. Inclusive: Our works **reach all** and benefit all (rich, poor, learned, and illiterate) equally.
- d. Obtainable: Our works **reach far** and are suitable for being taken to distant places and people.
- e. Lasting: Our works endure, evolve, and keep bringing results now and into the future.

Conclusions:

Values unleash our psychological energy that propels us to do something, to set boundaries on what we do, and to give continuity to what we have achieved. Therefore, an aspiring society or organization must establish values and propel its deeds based on those values. When the values are engrained in the mindset of the members and their actions are guided by those values, the society or the organization would attain success and leave behind institutional legacy to their future generations.

CFFN VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary would be based in Ottawa, Canada and is responsible for coordinating the organizational activities and managing official publications, and would report to the executive director. The candidate must have excellent writing and communication skills and basic computer skills, with Bachelor Degree or equivalent experience. Experience in international development would be an asset.

Key Responsibilities:

- Editing and writing: edit and proofread professional writings; prepare educational and organizational materials.
- Analytical: search literature and synthesize information relevant to CFFN activities
- Organizational: organize and manage projects independently in multi-cultural settings
- Communication: professional communicator and able to represent in national and international meetings and conferences, and with consultants and advisors
- Collaboration: develop strong working relationships with educational institutions and other concerned agencies, stakeholders and targeted beneficiaries
- Interest: Desire to help marginalized communities in developing countries

Application and Interview Process: Qualified individuals may email a resume and cover letter explaining interest for the advertised position to, info@cfn.ca.

This newsletter - Concern Nepal - is a periodic publication of the Canada Forum for Nepal and is circulated electronically and posted in its website. We invite you to be part of the Forum by getting involved and by sending news, views, op-ed writings and research articles to info@cfn.ca.



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Membership Form

Name:

Address:

Phone and Email:

Name of Family Members (Optional):

Membership Fee Included (circle one): (Cdn\$25 individual), (Cdn\$35 family)

I support the objectives of CFFN and am applying for a membership in pursuit of fulfilling those objectives. I understand that CFFN reserves right to decline my membership application.

Signature:

Please print this page, cut this section, fill all the information, sign and send with appropriate membership fee to above mentioned address.

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