



EDUCATE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL

Building a Better Future Christopher London, Executive Director

With this issue of our newsletter we inaugurate a new logo, a new project area, new projects and soon, a new website. But, despite all this newness, at Educate the Children we remain committed to pursuing our comprehensive Integrated Community Development (ICD) model. Indeed it is because of the model that we taken these dramatic steps.

The ICD model evolved slowly. When ETC initiated its women's development program in 1994, it did so with the knowledge that by working to empower women while expanding educational opportunities for children, whole communities would be uplifted. Over time, we learned that to make the changes we help introduce sustainable, we have to have a comprehensive set of projects and so our list of activities grew. While thoughtful planning on the part of Pamela Carson, Linda Farthing, Mira Rana and other leaders within ETC was essential to this evolution, just as essential was the fact that ETC was and remains very responsive to the ideas and needs of the communities with which we work.

Disadvantaged communities can easily identify multiple ways in which their lives can be improved. What the communities we work with continually tell us is that they don't just need better school buildings, better houses, better water supplies; they need better ways of putting these things to use. That is, they need better ideas. This is just what the ICD model has become; rather than take a simple bricks-and-mortar, *product-oriented* approach to economic and social development ETC has invested in designing change *processes* that put the innate creativity and thoughtfulness of communities to work.

Process-oriented approaches like ETC's are labor intensive: it takes a community to make change happen. It also takes time. It is precisely a slow and steady commitment to people and places which makes ETC a

unique organization and is the bedrock of our success. So, when we decided that we needed a new logo to better reflect our *modus operandi*, we strove to create an image that would capture both the complexity of our model and its integrated character, that would show how several projects cohere into a unified process. We tried many designs and then found it etched into the brass hardware of a door in the fabulous temple of Swayambu in Kathmandu. Thus what on the surface seems quite new is really quite old, ancient in fact.

In this newsletter you will find a story about a new project that further integrates our work in schools with our work promoting improved agricultural production (page 2). You will find an introduction to Badikhel VDC where we are initiating implementation of the ICD model (page 4). We also pay homage to a few of the many people who have made ETC what it is today (page 3 and 5). I urge you to keep checking our website: soon you will see an entirely new site, with many more resources for staying informed about our work. Finally, keep an eye on your mailbox: our holiday gift list will be there in short order.

Remembering Pamela



October 6 marked five years since ETC's founder, Pamela Carson, passed on. Her legacy and spirit are still alive in the organization and she is remembered dearly by many. We invite you to join us in commemorating her amazing life. Please visit www.justgiving.com/pfp/rememberingpamela or follow the link from www.etc-nepal.org to make a contribution in Pamela's honor.

Planting the Seeds of a Brighter Future ETC's "Agriculture in Schools" Program

ETC recently initiated an exciting new program which more deeply integrates its education and agriculture programs. The "Agriculture in Schools" program turns open school property into working kitchen gardens, planted with vegetables and flowers. Students involved in ETC-sponsored children's clubs work the plots together with their teachers and ETC staff.

Thanks to generous contributions from Bruce Lyon of Neill Cropper & Co. LTD (New Zealand), Shree Krishna, Pattlechhap, and Phulchowki in Bishankunarayan VDC and Nava Jyoti in Jharuwarasi VDC are participating in this program. Between the four schools, over 200 students in grades 3, 4, and 5 are involved with planting, harvesting, and overall garden maintenance. They devote 5-7 hours a week to their gardens.

Through this experience, students learn basic farming techniques and agricultural science as well as valuable lessons about teamwork and cooperation. The students are also realizing that life in rural Nepal *can*, in fact, be fruitful! The students are also learning a greater sense of responsibility and ownership. But the students are in no way the only beneficiaries of this program; the benefits extend to the teachers, the students' families, and beyond the schools' walls into the communities, and even to ETC's staff!

The students have already harvested a wide variety of produce including tomatoes, cauliflower, cabbage, coriander, cucumber, pumpkin, radish, beans and different flower species. The school sells the vegetables to teachers, students, and their families, but also to villagers in the community. There is a great deal of community support for this program. The money earned from the produce is used to purchase gardening supplies such as seeds, agricultural tools, and composting ma-

terials. It is ETC's hope that these schools will one day reach the point where they can sustain the gardens by themselves.



Students at Nava Jyoti Primary School working in the school garden.

Teachers, students, and school principals are so excited about their new school gardens that they are planning to dedicate more of their school's land to agricultural development. Kalpana Bhusal, head madam of Nava Jyoti, said, "We enjoy our garden and we are happy because we are learning the theoretical as well as the practical and we can apply this in our homes." Because

the Agriculture in Schools program has been met with such enthusiasm, we plan to expand it into more schools in the future.

ETC participates in Innovative Research

In partnership with ETC-supporter Julie Lauren and John Duxbury, scientists from Cornell University, and the Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), ETC is field testing an innovative technique called "soil solarization." The technique uses plastic sheeting, water and the sun to reduce the incidence of soil-borne pests and pathogens in seedbeds, leading to more vigorous seedlings and more productive plants when seedlings are transplanted into fields.

More than 40 women's group members have been trained and begun to use this technique in

their vegetable, flower, and rice seedbeds. Through this applied agricultural research, the women will both improve their understanding of soil pests and pathogens and increase the productivity of their farms. The program will also strengthen ties between ETC, CIMMYT and Cornell University.



ETC staff, Kaman Bahadur Malla and Raju Dhamala, examining a solarization plot.

ETC's Board and Staff Corner

Board Spotlight: Colleen Flynn Thapalia



Colleen Flynn Thapalia, current President of ETC's Board of Directors has a long and personal history with this organization.

Colleen's initial introduction to Nepal came in 1989 when she began working as a United Nations Volunteer Program Officer in Kathmandu. That is also where she met her husband, Pawan. Colleen has also worked as a teacher,

educational administrator, journalist, and Peace Corps volunteer in Burundi.

Colleen served on ETC's board from 1993 until 1998, when she became the Academic Director of the School for International Training (SIT) College Semester Abroad program in Kathmandu. While with SIT, Colleen helped ETC's Nepal office with project proposals. After three years with SIT, Colleen relocated to Ithaca and took on the role of ETC's Co-Director, along with Susanna Pearce.

In 2003, Colleen moved to Albany, New York and has been serving on ETC's Board of Directors since then. Colleen recently turned a 5k run into a fundraising event for ETC, which brought in close to \$1400 and, last winter, she also promoted ETC's "alternative gifts" at Albany's Festival of Trees, for which she decorated a Christmas tree with handicrafts from Nepal and photos from ETC's program areas.

Colleen is currently the Associate Director in the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education Admissions at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, where she also teaches a course in Communication and Culture. She lives in Albany with Pawan, and their two children, Tess and Kieran.

Colleen's long-standing commitment to Educate the Children is truly commendable and we are grateful for all of her hard work.

Updates on Friends of ETC

Linda Farthing, director of ETC from 1997-2000, has continued to support ETC as a donor and volunteer since leaving the organization. Linda organized a fundraising event in Seattle, completed a 6th grade curriculum entitled "To Sustain Life: Water and Development in Nepal", and has made presentations about ETC's work.

Linda currently works as an editor for social science publications. She recently completed her own book with her partner, Ben Kohl, entitled *Bolivian Impasse: Neoliberal Globalization and Social Resistance*. She also produces reports for Pacifica's Free Speech Radio News, as well as radio documentaries.

Freema Hillman has been working with the International Child Resource Institute in Berkeley, CA. She recently traveled to Nepal where she has begun working with the Bal Mandir orphanage in Kathmandu to implement the SOS Children's Villages model. The SOS model replaces the institutional environment of dormitories with a more nurturing family-like setting where the children can develop strong filial relationships. The hope is to implement the model nationally within 5 years.

Since leaving ETC in 2004, former Executive Director **Susanna Pearce** has been exploring her interests in the healing arts, salsa dancing, windsurfing, traveling, and enjoying the time and freedom to live a full life. She has completed her MA at Cornell and is serves on the board of directors of the International Mountain Explorer's Connection. These days, Susanna says she is "following the spirit of Pamela's famous song, 'Enjoy yourself, enjoy yourself, it's later than you think!'"

Long-time ETC supporter and board member **Phyllis Wynn** recently made presentations on ETC's work at the First Unitarian Church in Wilmington, DE and at her 50th college reunion, where she received an award. Phyl's presentations included an introduction about Pamela and Phyl's own connections to ETC. She included photos of Bimala Lama, the young woman whose education she has been supporting for the past 15 years, as well as photos of the women's groups she has sponsored.

Welcome to Badikhel

ETC expands into a new VDC

To the south of ETC's current Godavari program area is Badikhel Village Development Committee (VDC). Badikhel will be the next community with which ETC will work to implement its successful Integrated Community Development model.

Before initiating program work, ETC staff has been visiting Badikhel for several months to meet with school personnel, community leaders, and community members. After talking with the citizens of Badikhel and assessing the community's needs, ETC and the Badikhel community decided that a collaboration will greatly benefit both parties.

In Badikhel ETC will be working primarily with the *Pahari* ("people of the hills") ethnic group. Many of the children attending Path Pradarashak Lower Secondary School, the village's lone government school, are the first in their families to receive an education. The school is in poor physical condition and student dropout is all too common. Forty-eight percent of the population in Badikhel VDC have minimal or no education and an overwhelming 72% of women in the area are illiterate!



A village scene in Badikhel VDC.

The *Pahari* women of Badikhel work with bamboo to make a variety of craft goods which they sell in the local markets. These crafts, along with agriculture, are the main source of income for the *Pahari* people.

The land and climate of Badikhel have great potential for commercial horticulture as numerous fruits and vegetables, particularly grapes, already grow in the area. Lack of irrigation is a major problem, but with ETC's assistance, the farmers of Badikhel will be able to directly address this issue.

Sanitary conditions in Badikhel are less than ideal. A mere 10% of the households in the VDC have a toilet, leading to serious public health problems. ETC will work to rectify that and improve sanitation in the community as a whole.

Family planning is widely practiced in Badikhel, but its citizens lack awareness about HIV/AIDS and other STDs. ETC will initiate its public health program and provide numerous trainings that focus on preventative health maintenance, safe motherhood and other strategies for improving the overall health and well-being of the community.

As we begin our work with the villagers of Badikhel, we are filled with great hope and optimism that soon the community will see substantial improvements in their quality of life. For the next five years, ETC will collaborate with the community to implement its Integrated Community Development program: activities that empower children and women and provide them with the skills with which to build a better future. We welcome you to join ETC in this endeavor by becoming a sponsor of a child or women's group. See page 6 for more information on our sponsorship programs.



ETC Country Director, Mira Rana, meeting with villagers in Badikhel VDC, ETC's newest work area.

ETC's Friends in Japan

Raju Dhamala Recounts His Visit to Japan on behalf of ETC

Since 1993, ETC's Friends in Japan have been making steady and significant contributions to support the children and women in the communities with which ETC works. This relationship began in 1992 when Shodo Harada Roshi, the abbot of Sogenji Zen Temple in Okayama and former spiritual teacher of ETC founder Pamela Carson, introduced the work of ETC to women in the community surrounding Sogenji.

Over the years, these women have participated in annual craft fair and bake sale bazaars to raise money for ETC. Since their first contribution in 1993, the Friends in Japan, under the direction of Hisako Kunitomi, have provided close to \$60,000 in general donations to support ETC! Sogenji Friends in Japan have also contributed another \$7300 by sponsoring three women's groups. Raju Dhamala, ETC's Senior Administrative Officer in Nepal, recently traveled to Japan and had the opportunity to visit with ETC's friends.

I recently had the opportunity to visit ETC's Friends in Japan and the Sogenji Temple in Okayama. Okayama is a very beautiful city about 500 miles south of Tokyo and the Sogenji Temple is referred to as "ETC's headquarters" by our Japanese friends. I was so impressed by the Japanese people, their traditions, their culture, their forwardness, their honesty, their country's development, and how they manage to successfully balance tradition and modernity.

When I arrived in Okayama, I received an overwhelming welcome from ETC's Friends in Japan. I found Okayama city and the Sogenji Temple to be beyond my imagination; it seemed that it was the real place where we could get eternal peace. It was in a lovely location, had a peaceful environment, and was full of friendly people. I heard from Chisan, who has been living there for thirty years, that Pamela Carson had visited there some 17-18 years before and took some meditation courses. When she was there, Pamela made very good friends and Chisan says that Pamela is still alive in their hearts and, to this day, they are committed to supporting ETC's work with children and women in Nepal. Chisan also says that ETC is the only organization which is being supported by Sogenji.



Raju Dhamala with ETC's Friends in Japan at the Sogenji Temple in Okayama.

Since I was there representing ETC, and as they have great emotional support towards our organization, they were very happy and grateful having me there. They felt appreciated and recognized by ETC as someone came to visit and thank them. The friends at the Sogenji Temple organized a small gathering for ETC's supporters and I made a presentation about ETC's ongoing activities. They were very excited to hear of all of ETC's recent accomplishments and plans for the future.

I also presented them with a commemorative plaque on behalf of Educate the Children. They were pleasantly surprised by this recognition and they expressed their happiness with their support for ETC's noble cause. I shared with them so many things about Nepal and ETC's work. They were deeply grateful to ETC for visiting them and for recognizing their generous support over the years. After my visit, ETC's Friends in Japan seemed even more committed to raise funds for ETC. They also requested ETC visit more often and continue to share our work with them in person, which will encourage them to continue and increase their support of our work with communities in Nepal.

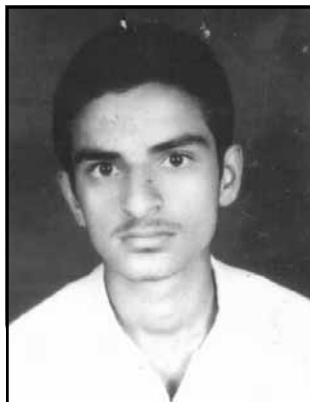
At last, thank you so much to Chisan and Hisako, who have been working hard to collect support for ETC and to all of our Japanese friends for their generous help to the people of Nepal. I would also like to thank Dai En who managed my stay in Okayama and showed interest towards ETC.

Former ETC Scholarship Recipient Earns an MBA

Before implementing its Integrated Community Development program in the current work areas of Godavari and Ichangunarayan, ETC worked in Nuwakot and Rasuwa districts to the north of Kathmandu.

ETC had many successes in these districts of which we are very proud. One example is the Samyukta Women's Savings and Credit Cooperative, which was featured in ETC's Fall 2004 newsletter. Another is Hari Prasad Acharya.

Hari was born in Laharepouwa VDC in Rasuwa District in 1981. He grew up in a big family, and like with most families in rural Nepal, money was tight. His mother did odd jobs here and there in the community, such as working in other people's fields and selling firewood used for cooking. But these jobs only brought in 40 or 50 Nepali rupees per day, about 50 cents US which is not an adequate income for an entire family.



But Hari had the good fortune to live in a community where ETC was working and that changed his life. Hari was one of ETC's Higher Study Scholarship students from 1998 to 2002. Through this support, Hari was able to attend school where he excelled. He eventually went on to earn a Bachelor's degree in Management and he recently graduated in the first division in an MBA program at Shanker Dev Campus in Kathmandu.

Without ETC's support, neither Hari nor his family could imagine him having achieved this. Hari now has a job in Nepal Bank Limited's central office in Kathmandu, where he works as a loan officer

but he returns often to his home village in Rasuwa. He is very grateful to ETC for its valuable contribution to his life and his village. He tells us "If there were no ETC, there would be no Hari Prasad Acharya." We wish Hari the best of luck. Stories like his are an inspiration to all of us at ETC.

Sponsors Needed for ETC's New Community

With ETC beginning work in Badikhel VDC, there are many children who will have the opportunity to attend better schools and many women who will organize into groups, where they will gain literacy, solidarity, and empowerment. But this also means that there are many people who need your support. Through our **Community Sponsorship (SPC)** and **Women's Group Sponsorship (SPW)** programs, you can make a tremendous difference in this community. By sponsoring a child or women's group, you make it possible for ETC to provide many educational and economic opportunities for women and children. As a sponsor you will receive periodic updates (including letters and photos) regarding the student or women's group benefiting from your generosity. For more information write to us or visit our website.



Vijay Pahari and Kabita Pahari are two students in Badikhel VDC who need your support.

Become a Volunteer Fundraiser for ETC!

Justgiving Websites

Justgiving is a web service you can use to create temporary webpages which serve as tools for fundraising. Justgiving websites are a great way to spread the word about Educate the Children and your efforts to support our work with children and women in Nepal.

Board President and former ETC Co-Director, Colleen Flynn Thapalia was the first to take advantage of this service. She created a website to raise money for a 5k race which she ran (AND completed) in early June. Colleen raised close to \$1400 through her Justgiving website!

These websites are easy to set up and can be used to commemorate any event. For more information, please contact us or follow the link from our web page: www.etc-nepal.org.

Recycling Can Go a Long Way

Do you see lots of toner or inkjet cartridges getting thrown away at your workplace? If so, why not recycle them and support Educate the Children at the same time?

Through US Recycling you can put those cartridges to good re-use and also support ETC's work in Nepal. US Recycling will provide you with everything you need to collect cartridges in your workplace. They even provide shipping labels so that there is no cost to you. This is a simple, earth-friendly way to show your support for ETC!

For more information, contact us (info@etc-nepal.org or **607-272-1176**) or even better contact US Recycling directly to get started today: **Kristen Bennett**, Project Coordinator, US Recycling, **888-628-3639** kristenb@usrecycleink.com

Thank You!

- ~ Thank you to **Jon Krakauer** and the **Everest '96 Fund** for their continuing support and generosity.
- ~ Thank you to **Christopher Bugg** and the **Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust** for their support.
- ~ For their generous support of ETC's Animal Housing project, thank you to **Arlene Blum, Barbara Mercer**, and the **Himalayan Fair**.
- ~ To **Bonnie Chollet** and the members of **Delta Kappa Gamma, Alpha Rho Chapter**, thank you for your kind contributions.
- ~ Thank you to **Cornell University's Asian Studies Department** for supporting ETC through the cartridge/toner recycling program.
- ~ To **Gopini Lama, Zack Nelson**, and **Bharat Pathak**, thank you for speaking about your lives and experiences in Nepal to students at the Lehman Alternative Community School. Thank you also to **Sara Jane Bokaer** and her 7th and 8th grade students for inviting us into their classroom and for their very active participation.
- ~ Thank you, **Gail Uilkema**, for promoting ETC through **Lantern Projects**.
- ~ For helping organize ETC's grant database and gathering resources for ETC's website, thank you to **Asa Asgeirsdottir**.
- ~ Thanks also to our hard-working volunteers: **Leslie Eliet, Tianai Lin**, and **Maira Seeley**.



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