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Mitini Nepal Project Evaluation

1. Introduction. Please briefly outline the project, its purpose and overall achievements.

The main aim of this project is to help build the capacity of Nepalese lesbians individually and as a group through learning English and Computing skills. Lesbians in Nepal live in a society that discriminates against them, particularly around access to education and work. We hope that through improving our skills in English and Computing we can each have a better chance of getting a job, communicating with women from other organisations and countries, and improving the capacity of our own organization, Mitini Nepal. Once we have been able to improve our own skills, we want to help lesbians who are isolated and live in rural areas to learn the same things as us, and help them to set up their own organisations.

Over the last year since the programme has been running, many lesbians have started to speak English and they also started to read and write in English language. Some of them can understand the English language spoken by others. Those that can already speak some English are improving.

2. People assisted (target group). Please provide details on the people assisted by the Project. What were the type and level of needs and/or issues you encountered?

Over the last year, we have had approximately 20 people coming to learn English. All are lesbian women who have enough money to survive but not enough to pay for English language courses. Some want to learn basic conversation (taxi driver) and others want to be fluent in reading and writing to help them go onto higher education, or get a better job.

They are divided into 3 levels; those that know no English; those that have completed a primary education so can read/ write the alphabet and say their name, and those that can say/ write a few sentences. There is a core of 7-9 people that have completed the whole year and the other people have completed 3-6 months. The people that have not completed the year intended to, but some moved away, 2 had to look after sick family members and go their villages, and one had a baby.

All attend a good English Language Institute near their homes, in total 4 institutes. They have 1 hr of lessons 5 days a week.

Green Tara Trust and Mitini have reviewed the last year and agreed that those who are attending regularly can continue, but anyone who is coming/ going needs to stop. The money that is freed up can be used to start the computing training. A template has been created which Santosh and Laxmi

will fill out with each person to review their need, then work out the appropriate course in English/ Computing for them.

Currently there is no register and no assessment of students so it is hard to assess how things are going, even though the students feel that they are improving. We have agreed to implement a register and 6 monthly assessment sheet via the individual institutes so that GTT, Mitini and BODHI can get some sense of progress and alter the programme accordingly.

3. Number of people assisted. Please record the number of people who benefited from the project.

Approximately 20 in the last year

4. Assistance provided. Please describe what services were provided to the target group.

The funding is used to pay the fees at the English language institutes, and for each person's local travel.

Once we have assessed the needs of Mitini and each individual who wants to learn computing, we will see how much money remains from those regularly attending English then explore costs for different computer courses.

5. Outcomes achieved. Please describe what the target group achieved as a result of receiving assistance. Examples could include:

- an improvement in skills, knowledge, attitudes, self-esteem, motivation, social contacts/networks, confidence, empowerment, community participation, quality of life, life management skills, personal development
- Decrease in negative behaviour such as offending, drug/alcohol abuse;
- Gained access to other services or resources, employment, education or training.

The women who have attended report an improvement in their English language abilities (reading/ writing/ understanding), an improved ability to communicate in English to foreigners and an increase in confidence/ self esteem. They feel that it is more possible than before to develop themselves and their organization, and stand an improved chance of getting work. Some have started to take part in womens/ lesbian interaction programmes in English which increases their participation in mainstream society and enables them to put their perspective and explain their rights. This has also helped to increase their confidence.

In the last year they have been involved in 2-3 large women's rights programmes and in contributing to the creation of the new Nepali constitution which indicated their increased confidence and participation.

6. Other Achievements. Please describe other areas of achievements of the project.

Examples of other achievements could include:

- Community development/community building and;
- Improvement in facilities, services or organizational functioning;
- New facilities, programs or services established;
- Existing programs expanded or enhanced;
- Improvements in administration of a program leading to greater efficiency and/or service quality;

- Recruitment and training of volunteers to improve or expand a program or service.

This project is helping us to improve the capacity of our organization. We especially need to be able to communicate with other people in English to help us get international support, friendship and funding. We are slowly learning how to write proposals and reports in English. We hope that after some computer training our office can function more efficiently and between us we can learn book-keeping. For the future, if we want to work in an office we all need basic computer literacy.

More and more lesbians are now coming forward in Kathmandu and rural areas, and we need to develop these skills so we can help others who are like us.

7. Any other comments - Provide any other information relevant to the project.

First of all thank you for supporting this project. We appreciate your help and hope you can support us in the future for other programmes too.

Our next aim is to get some counselling training in Kathmandu for some of the staff so they can run self-help groups better and learn more about how to help people who have psychological difficulties. We have all had problems but had no one to talk to. Counselling is a new concept in Nepal so we are investigating possibilities at the moment.

Your Details: please update your details if necessary

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Project Details: 3 year English and Computing programme

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