

# News from The Mountain Institute

## *Culture, Conservation and Livelihoods*

### MESSAGE FROM TMI'S DIRECTOR

Autumn of 2010 has been a busy and productive time for The Mountain Institute's Asia Regional Office. Our work with UN World Food Program in the mid western Nepal continues in Humla with a new contract to distribute 1245.75 MT rice to build mountain enterprises. Program in the eastern Nepal continue to move forward such as the Kanchenjunga-Singalila Trans-boundary area except the Critical Ecosystem Fund for Partnership (CEPF) come to end in middle of this month where the closing ceremony of CEPF will take place in the land of Dragon this month. Both Karma Bhutia and I will present the progress. The Mountain Institute is also working in Mount Everest region to restore one of the oldest Buddhist monastery in Khumbu with financial support from US Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP). Likewise, our MAPs programs are continuing in Rasuwa and Dhading in the north of Kathmandu and Upper Arun Valley in Sankhuwasabha. I thank all the staff in Nepal, both in the office and the field, for their contributions, and am looking forward an exciting and productive NEW YEAR 2011!

NAMASTE AND TASHIDELEK

Brian J. Peniston

Director (Himal)



### TMI's HOT NEWS

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|--|--|--|
| I. TMI and World Food Program for food for enterprise in Humla                         | Conservation in the Trans-boundary region of Singalila Complex   | VII. Community-based Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) cultivation program in Upper Arun Valley Sankhuwasabha                   |
| II. Countries, Communities and Building Cooperation in Khanchenjunga Singalila Complex | V. US Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) to restoration of Pangboche Monastery           | VIII. Promoting Conservation and Improving Livelihoods in and around Rara National Park and Buffer Zone (Application under review) |
| III. Biodiversity, Market and Enterprise-Kanchenjunga Landscape in Eastern Nepal       | VI. A program to promote local livelihood through community based MAPs cultivation in Rasuwa and Dhading | IX. Community based climate change adaptation project in one watershed in Humla  |
| IV. Promoting Coordinated Community-based Landscape                                    |  |  |

1. TMI and World Food Program for food for enterprise in Humla distributing rice and building mountain enterprises.

The Mountain Institute and WFP Nepal has signed an agreement to continue working in Humla district for food for work programs in 19 VDCs. TMI will implement a project to create sustainable mountain enterprises and improve the resilience of local communities. This project has three objectives:

- 1 Using the Food for Work for work mechanism to build foundations for micro-level projects that increase household livelihoods;
- 2 To unite user groups more formally, encourage their evolution in cooperatives, and create the foundations for mountain enterprises, and
- 3 To promote underutilised crop production on improve land.

TMI's Food for work in Humla

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| DISTRICT       | Humla     |
| VDCs           | 19        |
| HOUSEHOLD      | 3893      |
| MT OF RICE     | 1245.76   |
| MT OF LENTILS  | 155.72    |
| PROJECT STATUS | ON GOING  |
| NGO partner    | HCDA      |
| DONORS         | WFP NEPAL |



2. Countries, Communities and Building Cooperation in Khanchenjunga Singalila Complex

The Mountain Institute has been implementing this MAPs cultivation program since 2002 to promote improve communication and better management of the contiguous areas in Nepal and India around Khangchendzonga and the Singalila range.

Our work in the Kanchenjunga area benefits over 5000 poor farmers and half of them have already generated a total income of US\$ 140,936 from MAPs cultivation and dairy products. 1200 ha land is under MAPs cultivation, a significant impact compared to no private cultivation practices that existed before the start of the project.

Kanchenjunga-Singalila Trans-boundary

|             |                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| DISTRICT    | ILAM, PANCHTHAR AND TAPLEJUNG |
| VDCs        | 45                            |
| FARMERS     | 5,891 farmers trained         |
| POPULATION  | 197885                        |
| STATUS      | ON GOING                      |
| NGO partner | Deep Jyoti and SHAPPI         |
| DONOR       | MAC ARTHUR FOUNDATION         |



### 3. Biodiversity, Market and Enterprise-Kanchenjunga Landscape in Eastern Nepal

The project has two major thrusts, which are to strengthen MAPs marketing groups and to expand the number of farmers involved in cultivation of MAPs throughout the eastern hills. Progress has been made on both fronts, with networking works conducted to strengthen MAPs groups, a radio based MAPs information system being put into place, cultivation training being conducted for 166 additional farmers and a major new breakthrough whereby 2500 farmers were issued identity cards which permits them to sell their MAPs products without paying government royalties.

#### Ford Foundation Project in East

|             |                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| DISTRICT    | ILAM, PANCHTHAR AND TAPLEJUNG |
| VDCs        | 45                            |
| FARMERS     | 5,891                         |
| POPULATION  | 197885                        |
| STATUS      | ON GOING                      |
| NGO partner | DJYC and SHAPPCI              |
| DONOR       | FORD FOUNDATION               |



### 4 Promoting Coordinated Community-based Landscape Conservation in the Trans-boundary region of Singalila Complex

The Mountain Institute has received a grant from WWF Nepal's Critical Ecosystems Partnership for Fund (CEPF) with a goal to build trans-boundary cooperation at both the communities and government levels so that the biodiversity of key threatened ecosystems, habitats and hotspots of the trans-boundary region is conserved. Working with communities of three districts of Taplejung, Ilam and Panchthar, the project focused on activities within Nepal, trainings and coordinations meetings including participants from adjacent communities of Sikkim and West Bengal. This two year project has come to end in mid-December 2010 where the closing ceremony of CEPF will take place in the land of Dragon this month. Both Karma Bhutia and the TMI Director for Himal will present the progress.

#### CRITICAL ECOSYSTEMS PARTNERSHIP FUND (CEPF)

|                |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| DISTRICT       | ILAM, PANCHTHAR AND TAPLEJUNG |
| VDCs           | 15                            |
| POPULATION     | 59094                         |
| PROJECT STATUS | COMPLETED                     |
| NGO PARTER     | DJYC and SHAPPCI              |
| DONOR          | WWF NEPAL CEPF                |



5 US Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) to restoration of Pangboche Monastery

The Mountain Institute is currently working on preservation and restoration of Pangboche Monastery with grant received from Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Program (ACFP). With this grant, TMI has started to implement the project through active cooperation and participation of Pangboche Gumpa Management Committee (GMC) with close cooperation from Sagarmatha Buffer Zone Committee. In order to begin the program implementation, several steps have carried out both in Kathmandu and in Khumbu. The residents were called at TMI office and briefed them about the project support and shared the program and funding opportunity. Similarly, the GMC were called at Pangboche and shared the plan and the program and as a result, Gumpa Restoration Program has formed.

| PANGBOCHE MONASTERY PROFILE |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| DISTRICT                    | SOLUKHUMBU      |
| VDC                         | KHUMJUNG-8      |
| HOUSEHOLD                   | 180             |
| ALTITUDE                    | 3900 M          |
| RELIGION                    | BUDDHIST        |
| SECT                        | NYINGMAPA       |
| LOCATION                    | UPPER PANGBOCHE |
| DONOR                       | AMBASSADOR FUND |



6 A program to promote local livelihood through community based MAPs cultivation in Rasuwa and Dhading.

The Mountain Institute’s Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) program in central Nepal is one of its middle phase in 12 northern and marginalised VDCs of Rasuwa and Dhading districts. The program has directly benefited 207 households in Dhading and 118 households in Rasuwa through MAPs cultivation and conservation training and seed distribution to the farmers of the project area. The program aims to strengthen livelihoods and conserve natural resources through domestication of wild MAPs. TMI signed an agreement with local NGOs such as MSN, RTEES and HEED to implement this project.

| MAPs project in Rasuwa and Dhading |                        |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| DISTRICTS                          | RASUWA AND DHADING     |
| HOUSEHOLDS                         | 325                    |
| FARMERS                            | 325                    |
| PROJECT STATUS                     | ON GOING               |
| PROJECT PERIOD                     | 1 year                 |
| NGO PARTNERS                       | MSN, RTEES and HEED    |
| DONOR                              | PRO-VICTIMS FOUNDATION |



7. Community-based Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) cultivation program in Upper Arun Valley Sankhuwasabha.

The Mountain Institute has been conducting MAPs cultivation program in Bhot Khola of Upper Arun Valley since November 2008. The Upper Arun lies on the eastern edge of Makalu-Barun National Park and Buffer Zone in Sankhuwasaba District. Locally known as Bhotkhola is a home to some 10-14000 indigenous people, occupying dozens of permanent village settlements where they practice subsistence farming and animal husbandary as they have for centuries.

The Goal and Objectives of the project is: to train local farmers in the cultivation, production and marketing of high value medicinal plants and timber crops.

MAPs CULTIVATION IN UPPER ARUN

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| DISTRICT       | SANKHUWASABHA      |
| VDCS           | HATIYA AND CHEPUWA |
| HOUSEHOLDS     | 204                |
| FARMERS        | 350                |
| PROJECT STATUS | ON GOING           |
| PROJECT PERIOD | 3 YEARS            |
| NGO PARTNER    | UA VDC             |
| DONORS         | INDIVIDUAL         |



8. Promoting Conservation and Improving Livelihoods in and around Rara National Park and Buffer Zone (Application under review).

The Mountain Institute is applying second time project support from Keidanran Nature Conservation Fund (KNFC) to mitigate key threats to biodiversity of Rara National Park and Buffer Zone and the surrounding area, improve livelihoods through innovative income generating opportunities and strengthen the national park's and buffer zone's capacities to sustain initiated activities. This project is aim for 9 VDCs of Mugu district and it lies within the Rara National Park and Buffer Zone of west Nepal. TMI has signed an agreement with Rara National Park and Buffer Zone in July 2009 for the period of one year.

PROMOTING CONSERVATION AND IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS IN RARA NATIONAL PARK AND BUFFER ZONE

|            |                               |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| District   | MUGU                          |
| STATUS     | NATIONAL PARK AND BUFFER ZONE |
| AREA       | 106 Sq.Km                     |
| GAZETTED   | 1976                          |
| ALTITUDE   | 2990M                         |
| LAKE       | 10.8 Sq.Km                    |
| IMPORTANCE | BIODIVERSITY                  |



9. Community based climate change adaptation project in one watershed in Humla

TMI plans to facilitate innovative watershed management in two vulnerable watersheds in Nepal to increase community and organizational resilience, ecological resilience, resilience to hazards and natural disasters, economic resilience and food security, leading to an increase in overall resilience and successful adaptation to climate change.

The project will cover the Rodikot and Darma watersheds in Humla district. All VDCs are one to two days' walk from the district HQ and are between 1,500-3,000 meters above sea level. The project will reach approximately 2,655 households and 11,926 people. District was selected based on vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change, poverty levels and implementation capacities of local NGOs.

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| DISTRICT       | HUMLA              |
| VDCs           | Rodikot and Darma  |
| HOUSEHOLDS     | 2,655              |
| ALTITUDE       | 1,500–3,000 meters |
| BENEFICIARIES  | 11,926             |
| PROJECT STATUS | ABOUT TO START     |
| NGO PARTNERS   | HCDA               |
| DONOR          | GERMAN             |



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