



Karuna-Shechen
Humanitarian Projects in the Himalayan Region

Bamboo School in Ilam Bazar, May 1 2011



THE NEW BAMBOO School Ilam

First intermediary report, May 2011

in partnership with Samata Shiksha Niketan

*This report is by Karuna-Shechen's Supervisor for Bamboo School construction, Birendra Singh

Introduction

In Nepal adolescents represents 22% of the total population, a proportion that is expected to grow during the years to come.

How to educate this raising poor population? Parents are less and less able to send their children to private schools, as the fees are very high. The government schools have not been able to provide quality education because of corruption and lack of infrastructure.

As a result, the Bamboo School project is growing in popularity in every part of the country.

Ilam is in the far eastern district of Nepal approximately 700 km from Kathmandu. It is situated at an altitude of 1677 meters, and is famous for its unique view of Mt. Everest. It is situated at the foothills of Mount Kanchanjunga, the third highest peak in the world, and neighbors the famous Indian hill town of Darjeeling.

Ilam Bazar is famous for its green tea gardens, natural scenery, and landscape. The local people depend on the cultivation of tea for their income. This work is low paying and consequently the poor population finds it hard to feed family members. This is one reason that this location was selected.

The Ilam Bamboo School is located on a hilly site a short walking distance from the town of Ilam Bazar.



THE COMPLETED STAGES OF CONSTRUCTION

On May 1, 2011 Birendra Singh, and the Field Operations Director of Karuna-Shechen, Nadine Donnet, visited the Ilam Bamboo School construction site.

They found:

- 1. 70 % of the bamboo structure has been completed.*
- 2. 70 % of the partitions of the classrooms with bamboo strips was completed*
- 3. Bamboo walls for the upper levels is being done*
- 4. Toilet/ sewer tank is completed*

Observations:

1. The whole school will be built by the end of June 2011, if there are no extenuating circumstances.
2. Lack of skilled manpower (frequent visits to their home by the migrant workers) creates a problem for getting the school built quicker
3. Raising Inflation for supplies is also a problem (the price of raw material is permanently increasing)
4. As the school is on a hilly location, the land had to be leveled, modifying the natural topography. To secure the land during the monsoon season, 3 walls built in stone and concrete 1,20m high need to be built. (This was not included in the original budget)

Remaining stages of construction

- Fixing the bamboo on the upper stories
- Iron roofs need to be put up
- Plastering the classroom walls
- Making furniture (Desks and benches)
- Plastering the toilet walls and putting up the corrugated iron roof
- Connecting the water pipe
- Fixing doors
- Leveling the land in the courtyard
- Paving the bricks in the courtyard
- Filling the mud in the class room
- Paving the bricks in class room
- Laying concrete for the foundation and floors of the class rooms
- Building the wall to avoid a landslide on three sides of the land
- Partition of the toilet room
- Stairs

Budget spent so far for 50% of the construction

35.000 USD:

- Leveling the hilly site on 3 levels:1000\$
- Bamboo materials (between 15000 to 20.000): 28.000USD
- Sand for filling the class room floor before putting bricks: 1000 USD
- Toilet excavation and tank in bricks: 1000 USD,
- Manpower for a 15 person team: 2000 USD
- Food for the workers: 2000 USD

Conclusion

Construction will be completely finished by the end of June 2011. Around two thousand five hundred children have already enrolled for the academic year 2011. In Nepal, the school year begins at the end of April. As the school will not be finished by this time, Uttam Sanjel, the founder of the Bamboo School, plans to complete half the school by the end of May 2011 to make it possible for classes to begin. In order to accommodate all the children, there will be classes in two shifts (morning and afternoon sessions). Holidays for this year will be cancelled so that the students have sufficient time to complete their courses.

A final report of the construction will be sent at the end of June, when all work has been completed

Photo Gallery, May 1 2011



First level



Second level



Third level



Opening one window



cutting one piece of bamboo in two.

