

Individual Project Report

Raising rabbits for food & income in Nepal

Project Description

1. Describe the project. What was done, when, and where did the project activities take place?

The Raising Rabbits for Food and Income in Nepal Project was developed in response to the devastating earthquake in central Nepal (7.8 on Richter scale) in April 2015, which killed approximately 10,000 people and did enormous damage to homes, farms, schools and animals. The Himalayan Rabbit Farm, founded in 2012 by Ujjwal Chapagain, the director of our project, was one of the facilities damaged by the earthquake.

The Rotary Club of Kingsville heard about Mr. Chapagain from Professor Steven Lukefahr, a noted rabbit expert who teaches at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Dr. Lukefahr has served as a technical consultant for the project, via e-mail. Financing for the project came primarily from Rotary District 5930 (\$2,000) and several South Texas Rotary clubs. The Rotary Club of Tripureswor, Nepal has been an active participant in the project.

Most of the project activities took place in a village called Chogau, populated by people of the marginalized Tamang Community in central Nepal, not far from the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu. Members of the Rotary Club of Tripureswor have been active participants in the project. A document prepared by Mr. Chapagain entitled "How Sarita Tamang and her family were helped," which is attached to this report, describes what was done in personal terms.

Sarita is a farmer who produces maize, millet and vegetables in a small piece of non-irrigated land. Her husband works as a construction laborer. She has a 5-year old son. The family's house was destroyed in the earthquake, which also killed their milking cow. The six-person family could not afford to buy another cow, let alone build a shed for it.

Sarita was introduced to rabbit meat, which she and most of the other trainees had never eaten before, and was shown a video of rabbit dishes she could prepare. She liked the rabbit meat and agreed to be trained on how to raise rabbits, produce fodder for them to eat, and build hutches for them to live in. After the hutches were built—using wood from her destroyed house—Sarita was given three does and one buck. Three months later, she had 21 bunnies in her cages. (See the attached document "Sarita Tamang and her rabbits", which shows baby rabbits in their newly constructed hutches.)

Individuals from 50 families were chosen (in two stages) to participate in the project on the basis of discussions and field visits. Hutches were constructed with some material contributions from the project and under expert supervision. A follow-up meeting of all participants took place on March 10th, 2016 to monitor progress and deal with any problems was . (See the document "2nd Phase Report on Nepal Rabbit Project", which includes pictures of various project activities.)

Specific objectives of the program were: 1) to promote rabbit farming by providing hands-on training; 2) to encourage fodder production; 3) to use locally available resources for the construction of hutches; and 4) to expand the market for rabbit meat by partnering with private and governmental institutions.

The Raising Rabbits project members participated in a large (1,000 person) exhibition organized by the Nepal Agriculture Research Council in Khumaltar on May 7-8, 2016, which was inaugurated by the Nepalese Minister of Agriculture. Three hundred people had their first taste of rabbit meat. On April 8th, 2016, the project participated in a mini-food fest aimed at students and professionals in hotel management. Ujjwal has made a great effort to create a demand for rabbit meat, most recently in a Spanish restaurant in Kathmandu.

All the above has been accomplished in the most difficult of circumstances. People of the lowland Terai region, who were unhappy with the new constitution, organized a blockade of the main border crossing with India, creating severe shortages in the capital. The price of gasoline rose to five U.S. dollars per liter at one point, although it has since gone down. The Economist magazine reported on 1/30/16 (p. 33): "A special state agency created to organise earthquake relief and reconstruction has yet to choose a logo, let alone begin work."

2. How many people benefited from this project?

The first wire of US\$2,500 was sent to the Tripureswor Rotary Club from the (noon) Rotary Club of Kingsville on September 9, 2015. This initiated phase one of the project, when twenty families were supplied with rabbits, after undergoing training and building rabbit hutches, with some of the inputs being supplied by Mr. Ujjwal Chapagain of the Himalayan Rabbit Farm.

Ujjwal has sent a full report of first and second phase project activities and expenditures, including receipts, to the Rotary Club of Kingsville. Some of the 1st phase purchases were made on credit, since expenditures in this phase came to \$U.S. 3,529, which was more than what had been sent by the Kingsville club. (One US dollar at the time was equivalent to 103 NRs in Nepal.) Phase receipts have been sent to Mr. Eddie Bartnesky District Grants Subcommittee Chair of Rotary District 5930 and also appear as documents in this report. All expenditures were approved by the President of the Rotary Club of Tripureswor, Nepal.

With Board of Directors approval, Linda Hahn, treasurer of the Rotary Club of Kingsville, wired a further US\$5,000 to the Rotary Club of Tripureswor on March 15, 2016. Seventy-five percent of the budgeted funds have now been sent to Nepal. We anticipate sending the remaining US\$2,500 after the June 6th meeting of the Board of Directors of The Rotary Club of Kingsville. The project will run until September/October of 2016.

The final phase of the project will involve the following: 1) field training on forage management and distribution of forage and fodder saplings to the farmers, 2) training on how to use rabbit manure for vegetable production, 3) training on how to process rabbit skin, and 4) promotional activities to increase the market for rabbit meat.

Individual rabbit projects will be monitored to deal with any problems.

As of 5/30/16, approximately 300 people have directly benefitted from the Nepal Rabbit Project—50 families multiplied by an average family size of six persons. Individuals from the 50 families—in two phases-- have been trained in rabbit raising, have constructed rabbit hutches, have received three does and one buck each, and the rabbits are rapidly producing offspring.

3. Who were the beneficiaries, how were they impacted by this project, and what humanitarian need was met?

The biggest immediate benefit of the project is that some 300 people in Chogau Village now have rabbit meat to eat. This is particularly important in rural areas of Nepal, where, according to government statistics, 24% of women are malnourished; 13% of children under five years are wasting, 39% are underweight and 49% are stunted, (<http://www.npcs.org/np/nutrition.html>). These figures were from before the 2015 earthquake, which destroyed many houses in Chogau and killed at least three people and many farm animals.

As more rabbits are produced and market demand for rabbit meat increases, people of the village will see their incomes rise from the sale of the animals. This is an integral part of the project. Rabbit manure will be recycled to promote organic food production. Increased food production will improve nutrition and will provide additional income from sales of vegetables.

There will also be substantial indirect benefits of the rabbit project. As village income rises, a multiplier effect will come into play. Shops will have additional sales and families will be better able to keep their children in school. We anticipate health benefits as well, since parents will be better able to buy medicines for their children.

Members of the Rotary Club of Tripureswor became aware of health problems in Chogou village. They organized a Prolapse Uterus Screening camp and a general health camp for children, with the help of four doctors, on April 19, 2016. Free medicines were distributed to patients and two referral cases of Prolapse Uterus will have surgery free of charge. A total of 92 individuals were examined by the doctors. This was an unanticipated benefit of the rabbit project.

4. How many Rotarians participated in this project?

On the American side, the main Rotary participants in the Raising Rabbits for Food and Income project were President of the Rotary Club of Kingsville Mike Fountain and his mid-year replacement Alan Guggenheim; President-elect Ricki Cunningham; Club Treasurer Linda Hahn; Club Secretary Claudia Trevino and Richard Hartwig, who was the day-to-day coordinator of the project via e-mail, as International Services Director of the club. Hartwig was the primary author of the original grant proposal to the District and of the final report. The Presidents of Corpus Christi South Side, Rockport, Burnet and Kingsville Morning Rotary clubs were also involved, since they and their Boards authorized contributions to the project. Various officers and committee members of Rotary District 5930--including Andy Hagan and Eddie Bartnesky--evaluated and approved the District grant (\$2,000). Administration was a significant part of the project, which was unusually complicated.

Members of the Rotary Club of Tripureshwol, Nepal supervised and participated in the project. 2015-16 President Manish Ghiraiya, plus members P.E. Bijay Sainju and Rajendra Krishna Shrestha formed an approval committee for the rabbit project. They controlled disbursements of funds to Mr. Ujjwal Chapagain (not a Rotarian), who directed project activities. Seven members of the Rotary Club of Tripureshwol, plus three Rotaract students, participated in different programs of the project.

5. What did they do? Please give at least two examples, not including financial support provided to the project.

Board members of the Rotary Club of Tripureswor took part in distributing rabbit hutch construction materials to the families involved. As described above, they organized a free health clinic for the residents of Chogou village. Three Rotaract students also participated in some project events. The Rotarians have decided to "adopt" Chogou village and implement additional projects in health and educational support. They plan to expand the project to 200 families next year. Ujjwal has already identified these families, who live in nearby communities.

As noted above, Rabbit Project members participated in a large exhibition organized by the Nepal Agriculture Research Council in Khumaltar on May 7-8, 2016, inaugurated by the Nepalese Minister of Agriculture. On April 8th, 2016, the project participated in a mini-food fest aimed at students and professionals in hotel management.

See also pictures of project events in the supporting documents to this report. One of the pictures shows the Rotary Governor of Nepal and Bhutan being shown newly constructed rabbit hutches.

6. If a cooperating organization was involved, what was its role?

The cooperating organization in this project was The Himalayan Rabbit Farm, founded in 2012 by Mr. Ujjwal Chapagain. See Ujjwal's impressive CV in the supporting documents. The Rabbit Farm serves as the contractor for our project, so to speak—under the supervision of the Rotary Club of Tripureswor. Mr. Chapagain is a practical expert in rabbit science. He has considerable experience in training people to raise rabbits and in monitoring their projects. Ujjwal has also made progress in developing a market for rabbit meat in Kathmandu and surrounding areas.

Mr. Chapagain agreed to below-market compensation for his training activities in this project for humanitarian reasons. He is a remarkable person in all respects, able to function well in difficult circumstances. His English is excellent and he responds to e-mails very quickly. It has been a real pleasure to work with him.

Ujjwal has cooperated closely with Professor Steven Lukefahr, the rabbit expert at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. They will participate together in a panel at the meeting of the World Rabbit Science Association (WRSA) in Qingdao, China, June 15-18, 2016. Dr. Lukefahr is currently General Secretary for Developing Nations of the WRSA.

Financial Report

Date	Description	Funding Source	Amount	%		
Aug 24, 2015	Raising rabbits for food & income in Nepal	District Grant	\$2,000.00	19.74 %		
May 30, 2016	Ujjwal Champagain	Club/Other	\$131.00	1.29 %		
May 29, 2016	Individual donations from members of Kingsville Noon Rotary Club	Club/Other	\$500.00	4.94 %		
Aug 07, 2015	Burnet Rotary Club	Club/Other	\$1,000.00	9.87 %		
May 29, 2016	Rockport Rotary Club donation for Nepal rabbit project	Club/Other	\$1,000.00	9.87 %		
Aug 07, 2015	Kingsville Sunrise Rotary Club	Club/Other	\$1,500.00	14.81 %		
May 29, 2016	Corpus Christi South Side donation for Nepal rabbit project	Club/Other	\$1,500.00	14.81 %		
May 30, 2016	The Rotary Club of Kingsville (noon)	Club/Other	\$2,500.00	24.68 %		
Total:			\$10,131.00	100.00 %		
Description	Supplier	Local Amount	Currency	Tax	Total	Amount
Supplies and Equipment - Rabbit breed 50* 4 breed rabbits at \$15		\$2,400.00	USD	\$0.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
					Total:	\$10,131.00

Description	Supplier	Local Amount	Currency	Tax	Total	Amount
Supplies and Equipment - Material for hutch construction 50 farmers* at \$25		\$1,250.00	USD	\$0.00	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00
Transportation and Communication - Motorcycle fuel and telephone bill at LS \$60 a month for 18 months		\$1,080.00	USD	\$0.00	\$1,080.00	\$1,080.00
Supplies and Equipment - Promotion for rabbit meat marketing (publication, meat tasting event)		\$1,000.00	USD	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Meetings - Lunch during meetings for 50 people for 28 days at \$0.70 a person		\$980.00	USD	\$0.00	\$980.00	\$980.00
Contingencies at %10		\$921.00	USD	\$0.00	\$921.00	\$921.00
Rabbit trainer for 16 days at \$40 a day		\$640.00	USD	\$0.00	\$640.00	\$640.00
Sationeries - Publication of booklet - rabbit farming		\$500.00	USD	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Field Facilitator 24 days in 12 months at \$20 a day		\$480.00	USD	\$0.00	\$480.00	\$480.00
Fodder management training 8 days at \$25 a day	Training and Consultation	\$200.00	USD	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
Sationeries - Photocopy papers, print refills, pens and diaries at LS \$200		\$200.00	USD	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
Training and Consultation - Manure		\$160.00	USD	\$0.00	\$160.00	\$160.00
					Total:	\$10,131.00

Description	Supplier	Local Amount	Currency	Tax	Total	Amount
management training - 4 days at \$40 a day						
Training and Consultation - Field survey (baseline & after implementation 16 days at \$10 a day		\$160.00	USD	\$0.00	\$160.00	\$160.00
Stationeries - Markers, cardboard papers		\$100.00	USD	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Training and Consultation - Monitoring hutch construction 2 days at \$30 a day		\$60.00	USD	\$0.00	\$60.00	\$60.00
					Total:	\$10,131.00