

Nepal Sarangkot Self-Reliance Support Project

For the Children and the Community of the Future.

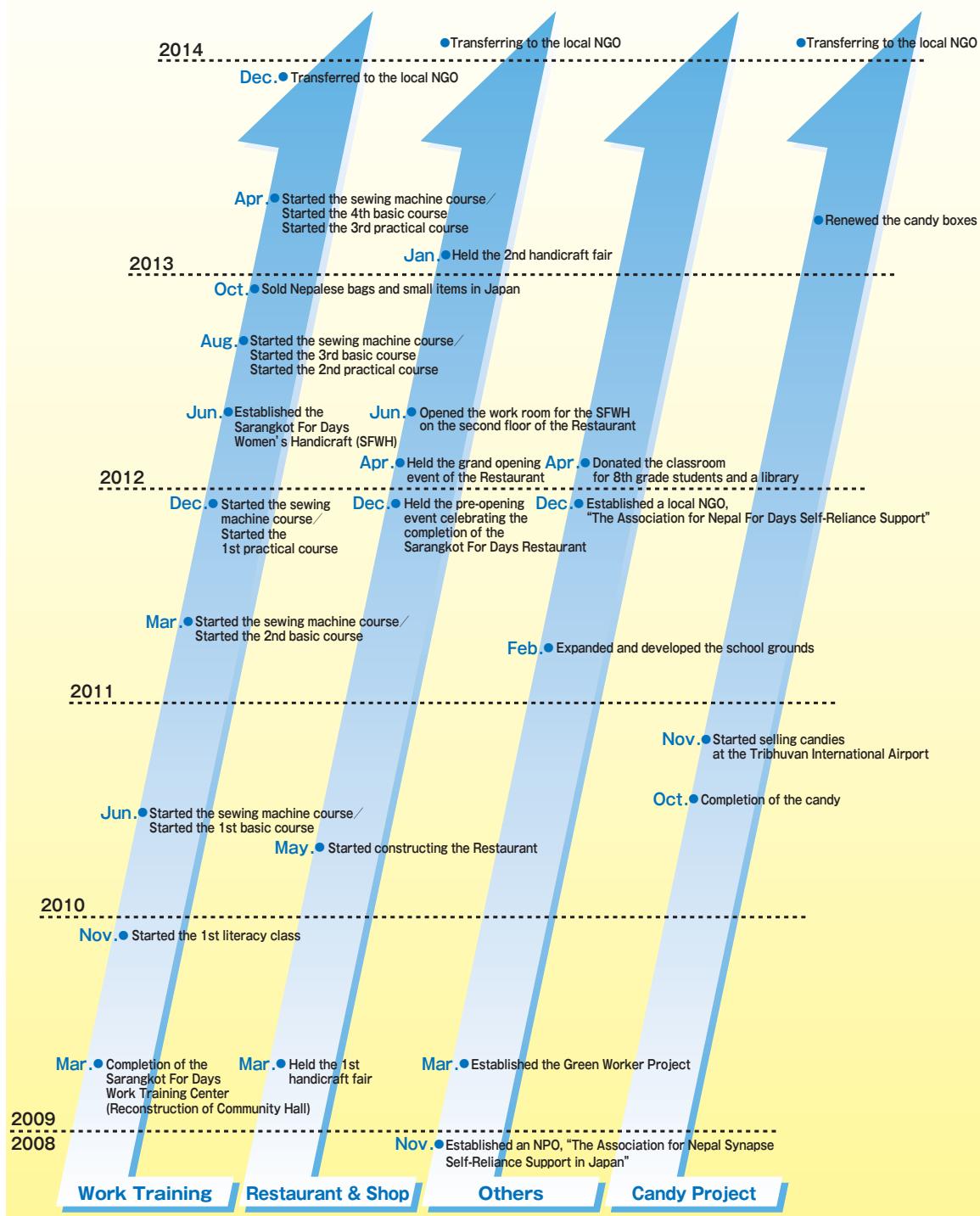


The Association for Nepal Synapse
Self-Reliance Support in Japan

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Reviewing the Record of 5 Years of Support



Supporting Mothers' Self-Reliance Will Create Children's Smiles



Children in Sarangkot Village, Nepal.

An unprecedented example of a project supporting self-reliance in Nepal

For Days, which has realized substantial growth by selling its nucleic acid drink, has also been focusing on social-contribution activities in order to continue to be a company offering people ways to “live.”

The company established a non-profit organization (NPO), “The Association for Nepal Synapse Self-Reliance Support in Japan” in November 2008, in order to “impart sustainable and lasting values to society and fulfill our responsibility as a growing company.” Rather

than merely being a volunteer satisfied with only providing monetary support, the company has been practicing the concepts of “Creating Shared Value (CSV)” in the form of self-reliance.

The trigger came when Ms. Wada, President of For Days, was moved by volunteer activities held in Cambodia while visiting Angkor Wat. When she learned about the current situation of Nepal after she returned to Japan, for example, children who could not go to school

Extending people's ties and
health awareness to next generation
For Days



because of poverty, parents who had no jobs and could not work, people who could not benefit due to the caste system, and illiterate people, she started to consider creating an opportunity to give some sort of support.

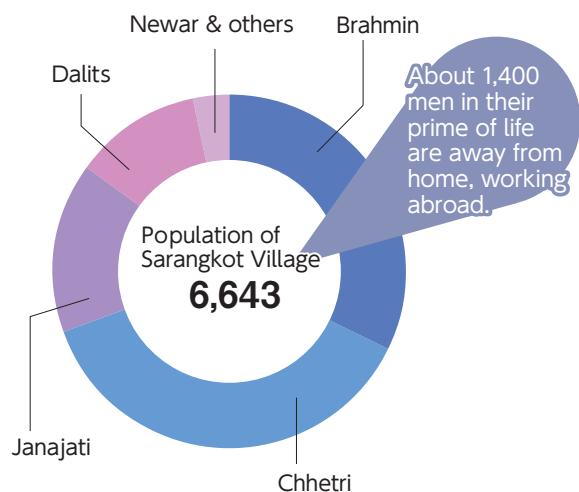
Ms. Wada then promptly flew to Sarangkot Village in Nepal in January, 2008 and visited a primary school built by donations from Japanese people. However, what she observed there was a scene of stagnated operations coupled with an insufficient number of teachers, resulting in a vicious circle.

It has been said that schools themselves can be built by spending one to two million yen. But much more difficult part is its operation thereafter. It is not true support un-

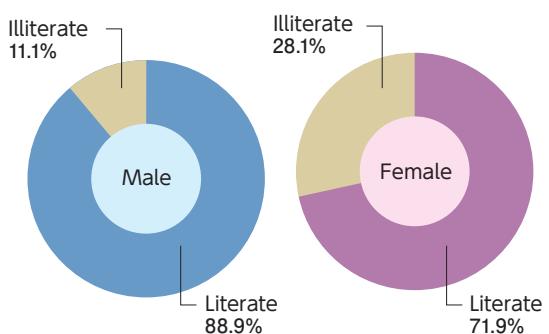
less this kind of project is carefully followed-up through to the time when it can secure high-quality teachers and increase the percentage of children of school age attending school. There are few cases where supporting programs are extended on a long-term basis, and people could never be relieved by mere donations in actuality. Ms. Wada came to realize that the most crucial factor was to maintain and continue those projects and ensure that those who are in hard straits would not be eliminated from these projects." This is how she came to start a project aiming at supporting people "until they can financially support themselves."

The Current Situation of Sarangkot Village, Nepal

■ Distribution of the population by caste and ethnic group



■ Adult literacy rate



Children who cannot go to school due to poverty, caste, and ethnic issues

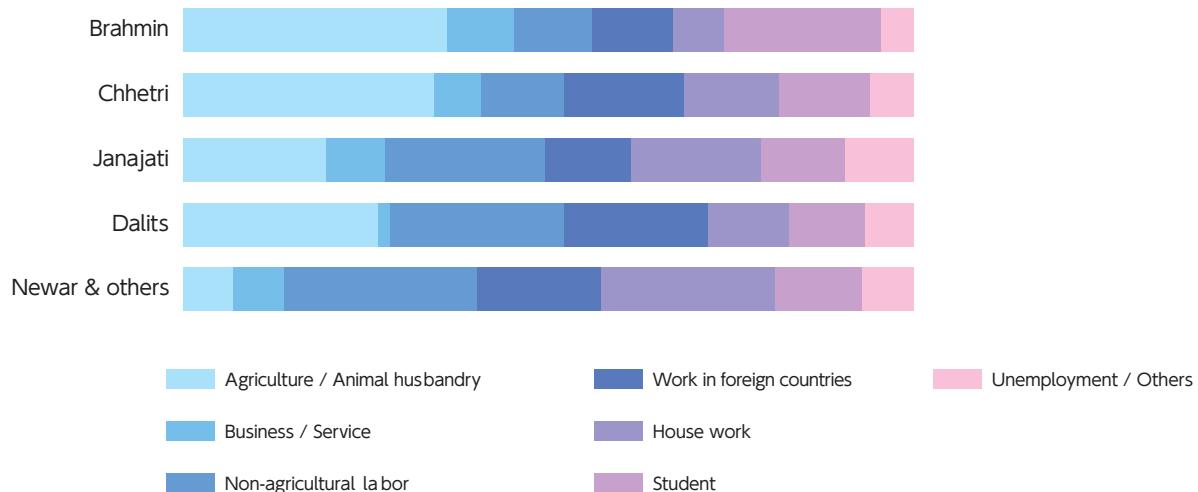
After the company investigated the situation in Sarangkot Village, it became apparent that it would not be at all easy to fill gaps created by differences in income or living standards due to the intricate caste and ethnic relations that existed in the village. Moreover, as there were only a small number of jobs to be found in the region although villagers wanted to work, educated members of the younger generations had to live in cities for their careers, and many fathers had to work away from home—such as India—leaving women, children, and people of the older generation at home. Furthermore, it was also noted that the basis of agriculture, the key industry in Nepal, was also vulnerable, and that Nepal was one of the “Least Developed Countries (LDC)” with the second lowest level of Gross National Income (GNI) in Asia after Afghanistan. Sarangkot Village, in which many people stopped over when visiting “Pokhara,” the second largest city, was no exception.

While the only energy source the economy in Nepal had to rely on was hydroelectric power generation, as electric shortages worsened, the country had to con-

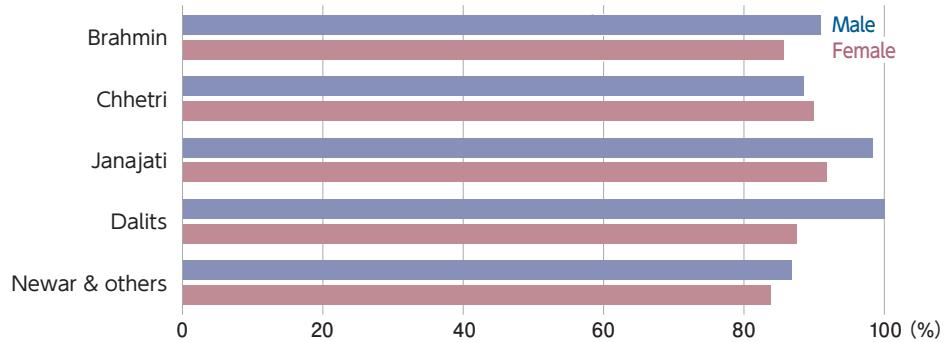
duct planned electricity cuts of over twelve hours per day in 2010. This severely influenced the citizens’ livelihood, to say nothing of factories and offices. Even the political situation is unstable; anti-government protest rallies and demonstrations over constitutional conventions have been occurring frequently, and people go on general strikes, hamstringing or closing all traffic systems, factories, and educational institutions, and even causing casualties in some cases.

In such a situation, women left in the village have scant opportunity to receive sufficient education and little means to make money. There are parents who even have difficulty paying tuition, and the enrollment rate of school-aged children is also low. There are currently five primary schools, two junior high and two senior high schools, one university, and one child care center in Sarangkot Village. There are, however, gaps between parents who are and are not interested in education due to poverty, caste, and ethnic issues, and there are some children who cannot even go to primary or junior high school today.

■ Major occupation of the population above the age of 15 years



■ School attendance rate by caste and ethnic groups (primary schools)



There are different levels and types of caste systems and ethnic groups in Sarangkot Village restricting people's dwellings, farmland, and occupation.

SAGUN Survey Report
(August 2009)

A poverty-stricken area with scanty roads, drinking water, and medical institutions

Although there was revenue from tourism, only a very small number of local residents were able to make a living by being involved in tourism. It was a poverty-stricken area with insufficient basic infrastructure and not enough roads to link villages, drinking water, and medical institutions. Most of the villagers were engaged in traditional agriculture, but they could only harvest agricultural products such as maize or millet (cereals such as maize, foxtail millet, and barnyard millet) because they had to

depend only on rain-water in a dry region. As those farmers who had started growing coffee were making profits, others, influenced by them, have also started to grow coffee and their numbers have increased in recent years. It has been suggested that if villagers could introduce new and advanced agricultural technologies, they would then become able to generate cash by selling their agricultural products in Pokhara, but there is still a long way to go.

Starting the Nepal Sarangkot Self-Reliance Support Project



Construction of the Sarangkot For Days Work Training Center started in November, 2008.

Establishing a cyclical economic society in which villagers can lead stable lives permanently

Compounding this desperate situation, the Sarangkot villagers had lost sight of their goal as their community hall, which was still under construction in the center of the village, was entirely destroyed by a landslide that hit the area after torrential rainfall in 2007. The company promised to make its utmost efforts to reconstruct the community hall, which was in complete collapse. It established an NPO, “The Association for Nepal Synapse Self-Reliance Support in Japan” in November 2008, and decided to earnestly focus on its activities. However, making donations merely to build a hall is not the same as providing support in a real sense. Monetary aid provided for a certain period of time does not constitute genuine support when the self-reliance of the residents, the community, and the village is considered. Rather, it

would truly link to the real development of the local region if a cyclical and sustainable economic society were established in which villagers could earn their own living and sustain their lives; fathers would then no longer need to work abroad.

The Association decided to start the “Nepal Sarangkot Self-Reliance Support Project” aiming at creating a sustainable community where villagers could earn income through their own efforts. It first contacted the Nepalese NGO “Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural Resources (SAGUN)” to request research and other cooperation in order to grasp the real situation of the village. Programs within this project were planned through discussion with local citizens’ organizations, a mothers’ group in the village, and other residents.



Held the opening ceremony with the attendance of Ms. Astha Laxmi Shakya, Nepalese Minister of Industry (in those days) in March, 2009.



Ruins of the community hall which was collapsed due to a landslide in September, 2007.

Generating cash by maintaining and continuing the program

The new community hall was named the “Sarangkot For Days Work Training Center.” It was used not only for meetings, but also for training courses to obtain various skills; for example, vocational training mainly for females. It was also decided to construct the “Sarangkot For Days Restaurant,” in order to “link vocational skills with opportunities to generate cash income,” which is one of the biggest challenges related to this kind of support.

The most important point was to ensure that the program would be maintained and continued, and that those who actually had needs were able to participate in this program. It was a significant challenge to introduce a program in a community where there were people of diverse ethnic groups and social strata, and to aim at enhancing the living standard of the people in need.

The support program was deliberately set for five years, aiming at providing the necessary support to villagers so that they could acquire the means to lead stable lives permanently, also taking into consideration the development of tourism, by establishing a cyclical and sustainable economic society in Sarangkot Village.

Extending people's ties and health awareness to next generation

For Days

Enabling Women to Earn Income by Themselves

Offering literacy classes for illiterate women

Awareness among Sarangkot Villagers was high – the Sarangkot For Days Work Training Center was completed in March, 2009 with the participation of the local residents and donations, both of which accounted for 20% of the construction costs. As students needed skills to read the textbooks provided and understand their content in order to proceed with vocational training, the first literacy class was held at the Training Center before the actual training started. Sewing machine courses started as vocational training from June 2010.

As the literacy class became extremely popular, it was

promptly decided to open a second round of literacy classes after receiving a formal request to continue the class from Mothers' Group, a mutual support group in the village. The classes were divided into introductory and senior classes according to the students' level of acquisition. Senior classes also covered basic arithmetic and newspaper reading. The students could then communicate with their husbands and children working abroad through letters, maintaining family ties even when they lived apart from each other.



Women taking a sewing machine class.

Extending people's ties and health awareness to next generation

For Days



Attending a literacy class before starting the sewing machine course.

Obtaining stable income by acquiring skills in using sewing machines

Mothers who had children and lived in Sarangkot Village were first chosen to attend the first round of basic sewing machine courses, and they acquired basic skills in using sewing machines. The classes were divided into two. The curriculum consisted of cutting cloth accord-

ing to a pattern, learning how to use a sewing machine, and making bags and small items using six sewing machines. Twenty-four mothers completed the basic course in approximately six months. The second basic course started from March, 2011, and fifteen students completed the course. Of these, seven students who were willing to study further participated in a practical course to formally make bags and small items. After they obtained their skills, they continued to accumulate income and practical experiences by utilizing the Sarangkot For Days Restaurant as a sales outlet, so that they could continue to obtain stable income using skills gained through the training. The fifth basic course is currently being held, and both the areas from which people attend and the number of students have increased. It has been reported that women who completed these courses have since bought their own sewing machines, and are sharing them among family members and obtaining income by receiving orders to make and mend clothes. Some have also been using the skills they obtained through training to find jobs and even to become financially independent.



Twelve females selected to attend the practical course.

Sarangkot For Days Restaurant, Supporting Economic Independence



Restaurant staff members were those who completed the sewing machine courses.

Attracting tourists and selling handicrafts made by local women

The Sarangkot hill is a globally-renowned sunrise viewing spot. Although a fairly large number of tourists visit the hill on a daily basis to enjoy the view of the rising sun, they had tended to go back right after, as there were no tourist facilities in the surrounding area. The Sarangkot For Days Restaurant (hereafter, the Restaurant) was constructed to facilitate the development of tourism, and to provide support to women who had completed vocational training, generating an economic effect by encour-

aging tourists to stay and spend money in the village. Its objective was to create a place from which to revitalize the village as a whole, one which provides tourists a spot from which to enjoy beautiful scenery while dining and to buy handicrafts made by local women at the shop located next to the Restaurant.

The Restaurant was built in one corner of the school area based on requests from Manijyoti Lower Secondary School which had an insufficient number of teachers. The school became able to recruit two additional teachers that they needed by using the rent paid by the Restaurant based on a contract that the Association had concluded with the school to rent part of its land and build the Restaurant. Moreover, the “Green Worker Project” was established, centering on children, as a part of moral education. The children promoted Sarangkot to tourists by cleaning up their own village. It is expected that this kind of activity will nurture their sense of participation in social activities as members of the community, and allows children to grow to be leaders of the village in the future.



An exterior view of the Sarangkot For Days Restaurant.



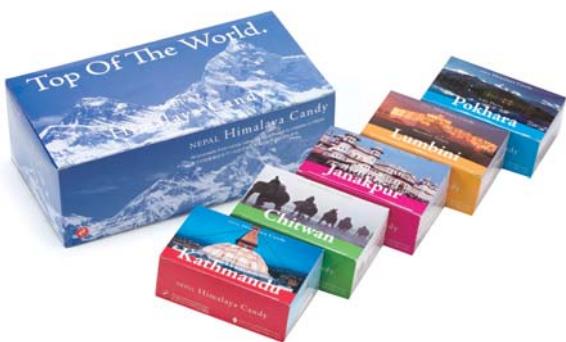
The terrace where meals can be taken while viewing the Himalaya Mountains.

Managers and waitresses are women who took sewing machine courses

The Restaurant, opened in April 2012, has been very successful. The picturesque view of the beautiful rising sun and the Himalaya Mountains from the open terrace and large windows captivate visitors. The Restaurant is a clean facility that could become a model for future development, incorporating a water purifying plant, composting toilets, solar heat and power generators, and so forth, respecting nature in development, and taking into consideration environmental factors. Managers and

waitresses are women who took sewing machine courses. The shop established besides the Restaurant sells handicrafts that local women who participated in sewing machine courses have made. Their biggest concern at this moment is to ensure that this Restaurant continues to be on the right track, as whether they could successfully realize the economic independence based on earned cash income is determined by the degree of success achieved by this Restaurant.

Developing and selling a new Nepalese specialty



Himalaya Candy in which five small boxes designed with pictures of different scenic spots are kept inside a big box designed with a picture of Mount Everest

On the occasion of the Nepal Tourism Year 2011, "Himalaya Candy" was developed in collaboration with the Nepal Tourism Board, in order to develop a local specialty which could be purchased as souvenirs by tourists who visited Nepal. This product was first launched at the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, the Capital of Nepal, and it has also been sold at the Restaurant in Sarangkot. Moreover, by procuring raw materials and manufacturing products in Nepal, it has contributed to generating employment and developing industries, and it has become popular particularly among the tourists. Its profits have been utilized extensively to support disadvantaged children in Nepal, not limiting to children living in Sarangkot Village.

Enabling Children to Go to School

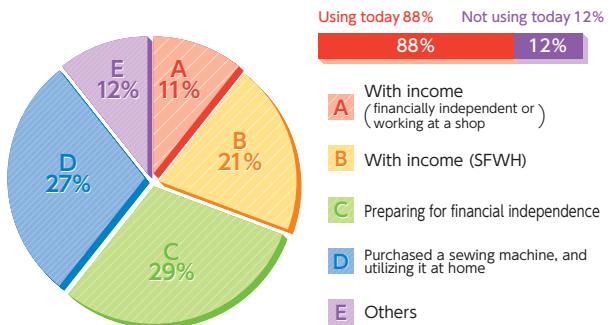
When the mothers become active, the whole region is revitalized

The fourth round of basic sewing machine courses and the third round of practical courses which started in June 2010 were completed in September 2013, with a total of 93 female graduates (73 students from the basic course and 20 from the practical course). The fifth round of basic courses is now in progress.

As shown in the pie chart on the right, most of the female graduates have been using sewing machines, and more than 30% of the graduates have been able to earn income with the skills they have acquired. This point has been highly evaluated by the administrative officials of Sarangkot Village. There are high expectations for regional revitalization centering on women who completed the practical course.

Students in practical courses, which started in December, 2011, were selected by the instructor and the Program Coordinator, taking into consideration their degree of eagerness and level of accomplishment in the basic course. Students in the practical course will not only learn technical matters, namely, how to make products

73 students who completed the basic sewing machine courses



using sewing machines; but also concepts vis-à-vis product manufacturing. Sarangkot For Days Women's Handicraft (SFWH) was established in June 2012, in order to allow all the practical course graduates to become financially independent and to earn cash. Graduates can save their capital and reinvest it; in addition to the skills that they acquire in courses, such as design, quality, and sales channels. The SFWH has converted the office on the second floor of the Restaurant to a work room, and has



Visit to a sewing machine class by supporting members of the Association.



expanded its activities using the shop on the first floor as one of its sales outlets.

The Restaurant and the adjacent shop have become indispensable for the development of the village. Moreover, mothers in Sarangkot Village can generate cash income by attending the sewing machine courses in the curriculum. They have begun to realize a sustainable economic environment in which mothers can afford to send their children to school and have some measure of financial stability.

The third round of practical course

Ms. Kanya Thapa Magar



We greatly appreciate all the members for providing us with these courses and various kinds of support. The courses that we took were extremely meaningful. We are convinced that these courses will help us tremendously in the future.

Establishing an NGO centering on Sarangkot villagers

Even when the support program ends in five years, it will not mark the end of the project. In December 2011, the residents established an NGO, "The Association for Nepal For Days Self-Reliance Support," to succeed the support projects. Necessary preparations have started so that residents will be able to take over these projects and take the initiative to promote them.



The office of the local NGO, "The Association for Nepal For Days Self-Reliance Support."



Mr. Dhruba Shrestha,
Chairperson of the local NGO



Mr. Sonam Sangpo,
Program Coordinator

The Association for Nepal Synapse Self-Reliance Support in Japan will transfer and appropriately hand over all of the vocational training, restaurant, and candy projects to the NGO free of charge. The role of the former Association in the future is expected to be to verify and give advice regarding the soundness of the local NGO and its business operations, and to continue to watch over the independence and development of Sarangkot Village in the future, mainly through monitoring.

“Wanting to Do Something to Help Some – A Small Circle Eventually Led to a Large

Providing heartfelt support, together with members

This Nepal self-reliance support program is constantly looking for supporting members. 53 supporting members and others have visited the site in 2009 as part of their activities. The number of members has exceeded 100 as of September of that year.

73 members participated in the fourth on-site visit held in January, 2013. It has been reported that they were pleased to feel how people's lives have changed and to learn of their growth and development, after talking with the Sarangkot villagers. The number of members has become 1,967 in total in April, and the supporting circle is gradually and steadily expanding in size.



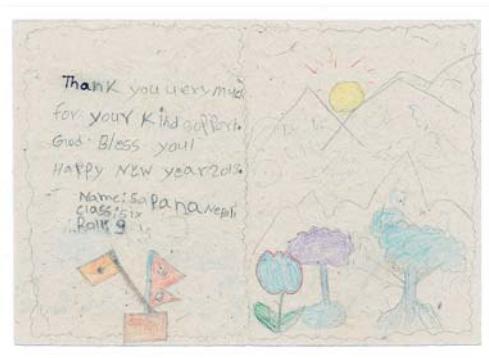
■Comments by the members

Ms. Harumi Sawai

Although I had some concerns before departure, they faded away day by day. It was not as severe as I had thought in the beginning, and I greatly appreciate all the members for their consideration because the members always watched over us carefully and were very considerate. I was able to understand what kind of support For Days has provided when I actually came here and saw the site. The expressions of the local people were very cheerful, and I understood how much they welcomed us. I was able to learn about the “hearts” which we often forget, such as mothers’ strong desire to accomplish something or children’s happy faces and perseverance. I assume they went through a lot of hardships before they were able to realize their strong desire to be able to “move other people’s hearts.” Although it would not take them long to become independent, what I could do now is to extend this current situation to many people. I consider that this small circle will lead to a large activity, and formulate a page in our history and a page in our hearts. It was a significant week, and I was able to learn a lot from this activity.



■Letters of appreciation sent to the Association from local children



body.” Activity

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health awareness to next generation
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Ms. Yurika Matsuura

It was a marvelous country in which flowers of all four seasons bloom at the same time and can be seen in various places … I was totally thrilled and impressed by the different shades of colors of the mountains, which changed from the sunrise. Their magnificent views and awesomeness made me think that this was a place where the mysterious power of gods dwelled. While I was continuously amazed by the severity of the environment surrounding Sarangkot Village, I was deeply impressed by the bright and enthusiastic looks of children and the happy smiles beaming from the faces of women at the Training Center. The week has passed quickly, but it became a trip in which I found many important points to consider as I continue to lead my life from here onwards.



Ms. Kumiko Nakamura

When I visited Sarangkot Village before, honestly speaking, I wondered what local women could actually do… However, I was very surprised and also affected to see how much they have changed in only six months. Moreover, I was also extremely impressed when one middle-aged woman who studied letters in a literacy class told me that “she could now read and understand the contents of the letters sent by her son who lived far away.” The faces of women living in the village looked different from the previous visit, and they showed confidence and looked lively. I was able to understand how people could change and how their lives could also change when they have dreams and objectives to fulfill.



■The Association's activities were taken up in local newspapers and The Sankei Shimbun (a daily industrial and economic newspaper in Japan).



The Sankei Shimbun article on the 25th of January, 2013.



Nepalese newspaper articles

Hope for the Future — Offering Ways for People to “Live”

—Five years have passed as of November last year since you started your support activities in Nepal. How is the situation today?

The faces of local mothers look different compared with five years ago. I feel that they have now come to foster an endeavoring spirit, feeling that they really want to become self-supportive. We were considering providing some kind of “scholarships for children” in the beginning. However, when we saw a group of mothers going into the forest to collect branches, we changed our plans. We started to understand the feelings of mothers who were striving hard to foster their children by doing whatever they could in order to earn a paltry sum of cash to raise them. We thought then that we should be supporting those mothers rather than their children. Men, who are children’s fathers, went to cities to work, but many of them have been missing since. We therefore started thinking that we needed to establish an environment where mothers can feel secure to raise their children, and that was why we decided to support women. We worked out our stance so that it would not merely be one-way support as a contributor, but rather carefully devised support also aiming at fostering their mental self-reliance, by promoting villagers themselves to voluntarily participate in those activities. It was not merely 100% support rendered by us, but rather was supposed to be developed by their own initiative, with us acting as supporters, so to speak, and therefore everybody is earnestly striving.

—You have also been developing activities to enhance children’s awareness.

We have started the “Green Worker” Project, centering on volunteer children in order to foster awareness of social participation. They maintain the village’s nature and beautiful scenery by putting garbage and litter in buckets. They are very proud of participating in these activities, as they can now participate as social workers, contributing to their community. They did not know that they needed to return items that they borrowed before, and they used to throw litter anywhere around, but they seemed quite unconcerned. But now, there are people who warn children who are about to throw away a candy wrapper. It seems that their thinking has started to change gradually. We want children to live with dreams, pride, and confidence. We believe that they can feel



happy to sleep and wake up on the next day if they have dreams, and their lives will become more affluent.

—For Days must be a major presence for the local people by now. Isn’t it?

Fortunately, the reputation of this support activity is high in Nepal, and they have been saying that “it is not just Sarangkot Village which has changed but the whole region.”

His Excellency Dr. Ganesh Yonzan Tamang, former Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal to Japan, also said, “I firmly believe that this is an endeavor which will become a model for other developers in Nepal.”

—You began to transfer the projects in 2011 to the local NGO, which has also begun to conduct support activities.

Although our support program has been concluded after five years, this does not mean that the projects have accomplished their goals. The operations of the Restaurant, vocational training, and candy project were transferred to the local NGO. Our role in the future presumably will be to ensure that the local NGO retains fairness and reliability. Troubles may even occur when they generate profits. A person who tries to monopolize profits may emerge. We will continue to check whether it is operated responsibly.

—On the 5th of December last year, the company celebrated its 15th anniversary since it started selling “Natural DNA Collagen,” a nucleic acid drink using “nucleic acid,” a genetic nutrient, as its main ingredient, and 5 years have passed since it started its support activities. Both of these dates seem to be important

decisive points – can you speak of your aspirations regarding the support and For Days in the future?

We consider that the “Creating Shared Value (CSV)” concept is important. We want For Days to continue to be a company which can offer people ways to “live.” As for support activities, we hope to take the time to foster people and do projects with them in the future; it would be our main goal if we could do so. The same can be done to the company. The nucleic acid drink has also grown by linking with people. Moreover, it would be crucial to be active if we were to create an environment that is comfortable for people to live in. Young people who support the aged need to be energetic and healthy in an aging society. We will also develop new supplements in the future, and we consider that our mission is to extend people’s healthy lives further.

A Leading Company of Nucleic Acid Nutrients

For Days started focusing on a nutrient referred to as nucleic acid* from early on in 1999 and developing products based on the idea of allowing it to be absorbed from inside our bodies. “Natural DNA Collagen,” a water-soluble nucleic acid drink that is its current flagship product, has been renewed six times up to 2011, making it a more powerful and well-balanced nutritional supplementary food.

There are many types of supplements containing nucleic acid sold on the market today, and an ingredient referred to as the nucleic acid has started to be recognized. The company will continue to pursue how nucleic acid is related to health and how it can evolve further to create new standards as a leading company of nucleic acid nutrients.

The business style of For Days is to introduce its impressive benefits to one’s friends and acquaintances, after actually experiencing it and recognizing how superior the product is. The number of current members is approximately 290,000 (and the total sales for the fiscal year ending on the 31st of March, 2013, marked 35.8 billion yen).

*Genetic information is encoded in the DNA which exists in cell nuclei, and RNA utilizes this information to synthesize various types of protein. As the DNA and RNA are acidic substances in nuclei, they are referred to as “nucleic acids.”



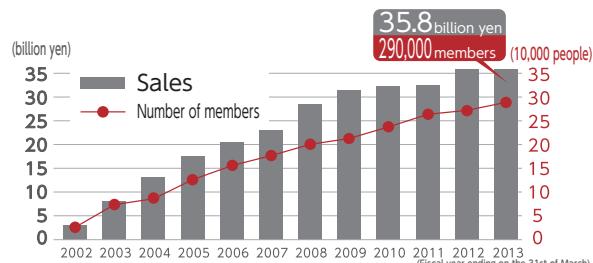
Keiko Wada
President of For Days Co., Ltd.

Born in Hiroshima in 1956. After graduating from Meiji University in the School of Political Science and Economics in 1979, she worked at an ordinary company, then changed her job and joined a cosmetics company. She has worked as a branch manager, experienced training and education department, and become Executive Director of a subsidiary, working there for 13 years. She then worked as a sales general manager at a foreign capital company for two years.

She established For Days in 1997, and the company has continuously accomplished increased earnings for 14 consecutive business years up to 2013. She is currently the leader of a company with annual sales of over 35 billion yen.

She graduated from the Graduate School of Business Administration of Meiji University and obtained a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in 2014. She has also published two books with DIAMOND Inc.

Transition of sales and number of members





The Association for Nepal Synapse
Self-Reliance Support in Japan

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