

Focusing Philanthropy Diligence Trip Report
charity: water - December 26, 2013
Bholtar, Nepal



Nepal Water for Health ("NEWAH") is the local implementation partner for charity:water projects in Nepal. charity: water works throughout the developing world to implement potable water systems in rural areas lacking such services. Although 80% of Nepal's rural villages nominally have clean water systems, most are old, unmaintained and, according to a recent survey, only 18% are in fully functional order. Rampant health problems exist in villages without clean water because running stream water contains dangerous minerals and contaminants, particularly in villages on the lower slopes (where waste runoff from higher villages causes substantial water contamination). Women and children often must walk several hours each day to collect clean water in those villages without functioning (or any) water systems.

In Nepal each charity: water clean water "scheme" is built to service villages of 40 to 200 homes. The average one-time cost per capita to deliver clean water is \$41 to \$45. Each scheme consists of a water intake located at the nearest uphill clean water spring (sometimes several kilometers away), a gravity fed system of delivery pipes (buried more than a meter underground to prevent freezing and landslide damage), one or more reservoirs near the village, and several taps located throughout the village to make access easy from most homes and schools.

We visited one NEWAH scheme in Bholtar, which is a mountainous village two hours west of Kathmandu. The scheme serves a village with 17 households (91 residents) and a school with 492 students drawn from surrounding villages. We inspected the entire water system which was well constructed, fully functional at all the tap heads, and well designed to minimize walking distances from most homes. There were two reservoirs, each protected by locked fences and barbed wire. Incoming water is directed solely to the school's reservoir during school hours because of its large water needs when all the students are present, then to the second reservoir (serving residences) after school hours. We met with village elders and the school principal, and spoke with several school students, all of whom praised the water scheme and were emotionally thankful to NEWAH and Focusing Philanthropy for their combined involvement in the project. The slides below illustrate what we found on our tour of the Bholtar scheme.

The nondescript dirt road leading to the village from the highway is difficult to notice.



Hiking to the village takes around 30 minutes.



The school houses 492 students who are the primary beneficiaries of the Bholtar water scheme.



charity: water's taps are easily accessible to the children, located outside the toilets in the courtyard.



Children drink directly from the water tap. Without these taps, water would need to be carried in or the children would be drinking dirty stream water.



When the children understand the purpose of our visit and our role in the water project, their excited display of thanks creates an emotional moment.



The school principal and a village elder describe the impact the project has had on the village and the lives of the students.



Several students take us further uphill to another tap which services some of the nearby homes.



There are 19 homes served, whose 91 residents no longer have to walk long distances to obtain clean water. In Hindu cultures, the women do most of the manual labor, so they are the primary beneficiaries of the water project.



Happy kids take a drink of fresh water, a luxury we take for granted living in developed countries.



Water from the spring is gravity fed through underground pipes to two reservoirs. The pipes are buried four feet underground to prevent freezing and to prevent damage from surface landslides.



Community leaders describe how they operate the water system to provide water to the school's reservoir during the day when demand is high, then filling the reservoir serving the homes at night.

