

Himalayan River Girls - Report 2011

2011 has been a nice year for the development of our project. Although we are still having a difficult time getting more girls employed in the rafting industry, the girls have become stronger as a team and our senior paddlers and have become more confident in their skills as kayakers and as instructors for junior girls. The most impressive thing has been that the senior girls, this year, have been organising successful kayaking training camps for new girls completely on their own. This year we planned to make a training trip for the girls to Sweden, but unfortunately we did not manage to collect enough funds to make it happen.

Background:

Nepal is one of the most famous countries in the world for white water kayaking and rafting. With the high Himalayas, guaranteed snow and rain feeding rivers in the numerous and beautiful valleys, Nepal is a perfect playground for those that love to explore a country by raft and those who just simply love the adventure of the sport of kayaking.

There are currently over 100 rafting companies registered in Nepal. Some fifteen years ago most of the river guides, kayak instructors and safety kayakers were western. Since then, things have changed and Nepal has a considerable and proud pool of professional river guides. The many challenging rivers in Nepal have made Nepali river guides develop unusually competent skills. With this, they have gained respect throughout the world and often get offered seasonal work in the rafting industry in countries like Norway, Iceland, Japan and Bhutan. They also do very well competing at the same level against western professional kayakers in the annual international Peak UK White Water Challenge and have on a few occasions competed in world championships.

100% of the Nepali river guides and kayak instructors in Nepal have until this project started been *male*, reflecting the country's out-of-date view on equality. After the start of our project in 2008 – there is now opportunity for ladies to get employment as river guides, although, it is still only a few companies willing to give ladies a chance, and it is quite difficult for ladies, physically and culturally, to work in this field.

Trekking is the main tourist activity in Nepal – and still very few Nepali women work as trekking or mountaineering guides. Other adventure activities that are becoming more and more popular in Nepal are mountain biking and paragliding – fields still lacking female guides.

Vision:

For most women in Nepal a job as an adventure guide would be impossible as they will marry young and need to live at home looking after the family. The dream of this project is to see some of those adventurous Nepali women, who have decided that they will not live a traditional life, teaching female tourists kayaking and guiding groups on the beautiful rivers and mountains of Nepal. We would like to see Nepali women travelling the world, kayaking, raft-guiding and competing in international events.

Project activities in 2011

Jan: Six girls completed a three-day long first aid course.

Jan: Radha Tamang comes back from a ten-day training camp in canoe slalom outside Chiang Mai in north Thailand. The training was part of the International Canoe Federations slalom development program in Thailand. Himalayan Adventure Girls sponsored Radhas flight ticket and the rest of the costs were covered by I.C.F.

Feb: Our senior girls, Radha, Ritu, Sita and Kamala organised a two-week long kayaking training at the Bhote Koshi for young girls from the Sindupal Chowk district.

April: A five days long river guide training was held by Anup Gurung at the Trisuli river for the senior girls, especially to improve their raft guiding skills. Eight girls attended.

May: Radha goes to Iceland. Radha Tamang who joined Himalayan Adventure Girls in 2008 gets a seasonal employment for a rafting company in Iceland. She works there doing raft guiding from May to September.

May: Some of the senior girls were working hard to find sponsors for a planned trip to Sweden, but unfortunately they could not find the money so we had to cancel the plan.

Dec: A five day long river rescue training (WRT) was held by Sander Barten and Ruben Zeinstra on the Bhote Koshi. Ten girls attended and all got certified. This training is necessary to have if you work as a river guide.

Active club members in 2011:

(if employed in 2011 - company name mentioned in brackets)

* new from 2011

Sita Thapa (Rapid Runer Expeditions)
Anu Shrestha (Ultimate Descents Nepal)
Kamala Magar (Equator Expeditions)
Radha Tamang (Ultimate Descents Nepal)
Kamala Chepang
Rupa Tamang (office manager, Rapid Runner Exp.)
Goma Sunuwar (Lotus Waves)
Ritu Tamang (Adventure Aves)
Sonam Dolma (office work Ultimate Descents Nepal)
Shrijana Shrestha (office work Himalayan RST Expedition)
Samjana Rai
Muna KC*
Prasuna Ghising*
Babita Kumal
Laxmi Gurung

Economic Report Himalayan Adventure Girls 2011

IN (donations, work, rent etc)

Month	From	Amount	Used curr	USD
Jan	Result from 2010	-475,44	USD	-475,44
Jan	From Far Away Adventures (Inka)	8750,00	SEK	1300,00
March	PayPal donation Jamie Mc Guinness	628	SEK	100,00
March	PayPal donation Pierrick Gosselin	900	SEK	141,63
March	PayPal donation Tomas Torsein	150,00	USD	150,00
March	PayPal donation Henrik Lernmark	300,00	SEK	47,20
April	Donations from Sweden/Nepal society	2100,00	SEK	332,70
April	PayPal donation Tomas Torsein	150,00	USD	150,00
April	PayPal donation Jenny Körlin	100,00	SEK	15,85
April	PayPal donation Richard Fox	350,00	SEK	55,00
April	PayPal donation Lena Cedrenius	100,00	SEK	16,00
May	PayPal donation Stefan Erdman	200,00	SEK	32,00
May	Donation Sia	1000,00	SEK	165,00
Nov	Collection in Kalmar (Anna-Karin Eriksson)	1500,00	SEK	242,00
Nov	Rental club kayak (Hans Torstensson)	150,00	USD	150,00
Dec	Collection in Kalmar (Anna-Karin Eriksson)	1500,00	SEK	219,00
Dec	interest rate	25,00	SEK	4,00
Total IN amount:			USD:	2644,94

OUT (costs)

Month	Activity	Amount	Used curr	USD
Feb	2 weeks training for 10 new girls	16000,00	NPR	214,00
April	First aid course 6 girls	28000,00	NPR	386,00
April	5 days training camp for senior girls	17860,00	NPR	246,00
June	special training one girl in Trisuli	15000,00	NPR	206,00
Dec	Kathmandu meetings, printing, transport	13730,00	NPR	162,00
Dec	Club house rent 2011	19500,00	NPR	230,00
Dec	WRT Bhote Koshi (food + transportation)	30000,00	NPR	353,00
Dec	Paypal Fees	28,00	USD	28,00
Total costs			USD:	1825,00
Result:			USD	819,94

Note: The result will be used for activities in 2012.

Special thanks 2011:

Special thanks this year to:

- **Sander Barten and Ruben Zeinstra** for coming to Nepal and providing our girls with a sponsored WRT course.
- **The Sweden/Nepal association** who did a collection at the celebration of Nepali New Years Eve in Stockholm
- **Karin Kock, Marianne Delmar, Anna-Karin Eriksson** who did a trek in the Annapurnas with Ritu and Srijana and then collected money for their future trainings.
- **All the other people who donated money.** All mentioned in the economic report.
- **All the people who helped and encouraged us in any way!**

How does the club work?

- Any Nepali woman who has a sincere interest to become a river guide or who wants to practise the sport of kayaking can join.
- The club organises around two training camps every year for all members to get everyone together to share experiences and improve skills.
- Inka and other volunteers as well as the senior Nepali female kayakers teach new girls who want to work in the rafting field or who want to try the sport of kayaking.
- Any girl from the club who starts working for a rafting company will be lent a set of equipment to use when she is working. The purpose of this is to make sure she has proper, safe equipment while working. This also enhances the chance for the girl to get an employment.
- The club sponsors the girls with transport and entry fees in competitions such as the yearly Himalayan Whitewater Challenge and the New Year kayak race on the lake in Pokhara as well as sometimes international trainings and competitions.
- The club will also at times support male kayakers in its aim to develop the sport of white water kayaking in Nepal.

Project Contacts:

For more information and pictures on the project / club please visit following sites:
<http://www.farawayadventures.com/girls>

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At the spring training on the Trisuli River, April 2011.



At the river rescue training (WRT) on the Bote Koshi river in December 2011