



Haiti - Power to the People

AMURTEL in Haiti has joined hands with a local women's group called the Association of Popular Educators from Anse Rouge (AEPA) to form a community bank that will support the development of cooperative businesses through micro-credit.



Over 500 women participated in a rally in Source Chaudes village to celebrate the International Women's Day and the birth of their new self help groups.

Since June, 2008 AEPA has been mobilizing women in northwestern Haiti to take control over their economic survival by training them in small business enterprises. AEPA has already formed 34 self help women's groups with a membership of more than 500 women. Under AEPA coaching during the weekly meetings, the women have identified potential income-generating projects in their communities and have managed to raise the original start-up capital from their own meager funds!! They are now on the road to self-reliance.

This year AMURTEL has been upgrading the skills of the AEPA monitors in small business development and financial planning through a series of training sessions. To celebrate their success the women gathered in Source Chaudes village on International Women's Day, March 8 for a parade and rally. The celebration and march followed a two day women's empowerment training for the women leaders. After gathering together at AMURT/EL's newly constructed Community Center for New-Humanist Education, the women sang cooperative songs and marched together to the village square, dancing and singing in celebration of their day.

"Today marks a historical day for these women", said Dinali Abeysekera, Women's Empowerment Project Coordinator for AMURTEL. "Just two years ago, not a single women's organization existed in this commune. Today the women are not only marching together in solidarity, but they are working together in cooperative organizations to operate businesses, improve their health, and provide support to their families and children."

2009 Events

AMURTEL women's conference in Ireland: "Preparing for Difficult Times, AmurTEL Responds to the Global Crisis". May 29 through June 1. For more information contact info@amurTEL.org.

AMURT & AMURTEL disaster relief Training, Taiwan. October 2-4. For more information contact support@amurt.net.

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Myanmar Update

Volunteer Diary

"I returned from Myanmar on the 18th February, having been through a very enriching journey, off the beaten track, to the Delta where no foreigner can tread without a permit. The people of Myanmar left a deep impression on me. With so few resources, they demonstrated an unyielding resilience in rebuilding their lives after Cyclone Nargis devastated their lands and took the lives of many of their loved ones. It was recounted to me by a local that not one tear was shed, for they quickly went to work and became a strength for each other in the village that they live in.

I was taken on a tour in one of the villages: Kwin Pone, where the villagers are indeed grateful to AMURT & AMURTEL for reinforced houses that can withstand future cyclone attacks. Their brand new houses are 4x4m with a 6m² verandah, and concrete footings with a massive bolted timber frame mounted from them. From the flimsy bamboo structure of the old to this!

As I walked along, some of the old damaged homes stood out amongst the brand new homes. These were the homes of the carpenters! They had "abandoned" their homes to build the homes of their neighbors first! These selfless acts were indeed widespread everywhere I went in the Delta.

**They quickly went to work
and became a strength
for each other**

Apart from village reconstruction, school reconstruction is a priority area. In one village, during a grass roots meeting, the elders told us they desperately needed a school for their children. Currently the children are being schooled in a tarpaulin make -shift structure, very hot indeed with children packed like sardines.

The children are so eager to learn. I saw a little boy on the lap of his big brother in the classroom. The little one had to tag along so that big brother could continue his studies while fulfilling his care-giving duties...!"

Extracts from the account of Mrs. Carol Yip, a Malaysian physiotherapist on her recent visit to Myanmar.

AMURT & AMURTEL in Myanmar

Emergency Distributions

After Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar in May 2008, AMURT & AMURTEL sent 31 truck convoys to deliver relief goods valued at \$US142,667 to 42 communities. 6,646 households were repeatedly benefitted with emergency food, hygiene kits and kitchen kits.

Child Centers/Pre-Schools

Four child care centers in four villages serving 197 children have been operational since October 2008. A one month training was recently completed for our 13 teachers and 4 assistant teachers that included seminars on "Neo-humanism", "Holistic Approach" and "Child-oriented Teaching". A daily nutritious lunch is also provided for each child at the learning center. The program is envisioned to carry on for another year.



Disaster survivors get a new house

Women's Groups

Skills Training and Economic Aid: AMURT & AMURTEL has initiated women's self-help groups in its four villages of operation namely: Kyon Chin, Lay Ywa, Chaung Gyi and Leik Kyun. Thirty of the poorest women of each village have been identified and have been divided

into 3 groups of 10 members. Thus far they have attended four seminars dealing with small businesses, micro credit, committees and accounting. A saving scheme has been introduced to enable each group to slowly accumulate their own resources. Many are the occupations the women have selected for themselves, including: tailoring, baking, vending, gardening, fish farming, weaving/knitting, water purification and battery charging. Those who complete the training course are entitled to a cash grant to start their own small business.

Integrated Village Reconstruction

AMURT constructed 445 houses and repaired 32 others in five villages that will benefit 2,859 people affected by cyclone Nargis. AMURT & AMURTEL's sturdy timber units are flood and earthquake proof and can endure winds of up to 100+ mph. Each unit have a core size of 198 sq. ft. (18.2 m²) with each family given the choice to add an extension (kitchen or living room or both).

In an innovative community-based approach, village construction committees became responsible for storage of equipment and supplies, security and transportation. The committees also recruited local carpenters and unskilled laborers and have involved the whole community as volunteers.

Permanent School Construction

Five permanent primary schools with 22 classrooms serving the needs of 528 children and 16 teachers will be constructed this year.

More information about our work in Myanmar: www.amurt.asia

Ghana Update

Mafi Zongo Water Project: New Roughing Filter Smoothens Drinking Water Access

We are excited that we have finally started the construction of a new larger filter with assistance of Engineers Without Borders (EWB). The new filter is close to eight times larger than our current roughing filter. When completed in May this year, it will ensure a better water quality year round, and prevent the clogging of the filters that has made it difficult for the project to meet the high demand for water during the dry season. Two engineers from EWB in Tucson, Arizona supervise the construction.



New roughing filters construction crew

The water project was planned in three phases. In September 2008 we connected three communities of phase 3, bringing the total number of communities served to 26. The communities of Mankokope, Avlavikope and Avukope did all the

hard labor of digging the trenches. With the help of AMURT Italy, and community groups in Casalmaggiore we were able to connect three more communities to the Mafi-Kumase Water Project. The communities are Kpevekor, Dekpoe and Kpokukope.

We started to nurse tree seedlings to be planted around the dam and the catchment area. With the inspiration and guidance of volunteers from New York City, a group of school children has started a tree nursery near the Zongo dam. We intend to plant 3000 seedlings around the catchment area to protect the dam and reduce silting.



Villages celebrate their first piped water system

KEKELI PROGRAM – Focus on Maternal Health

Twenty-five traditional birth attendants (TBA's) trained by volunteer Lisa Dalporto graduated in a ceremony at the Seva Clinic in 2008. Four representatives from the District Health Department and six assembly men graced the occasion and inspired the TBA's in their work.

We are confident that our ongoing maternal health campaign will make a difference in maternal and infant health in the project area which extends to forty communities, and a population close to fifteen thousand.



Staff at Seva Clinic get expert training from Italian volunteers

Mafi-Seva Clinic – New Laboratory

In March, a team from AMURT Italy came to install a laboratory at Seva Clinic. Gideon from the Seva Clinic had spent two months as an apprentice at the Adidome Hospital and was well trained. The clinic lab at Seva can now do diagnostic tests for the most common diseases in the area, including malaria, typhoid, HIV, hepatitis, syphilis, giardia, e.coli, strep, etc. They can also do complete urine test, hemoglobin and blood sugar tests. AMURT intends to continue to support the improvement of the clinic's facilities and services so as to serve the community better.

More about our Ghana projects: www.africa.amurt.net/ghana

GIFTS FROM
THE heart



A little kindness goes a long way

This gift program enables you to share your holiday and birthday gifts with other less fortunate people around the world, to make a permanent difference in their lives. It is a great way to remember others in our larger human family.

www.amurt.us



A Gift from the Heart brings trees to Haiti

Team Challenge - Creating a Team out of a Group

Doing service work we are often tasked with the challenge of making teams out of groups. The objective of all organizations and companies, football clubs, etc. is to create a team out of the individuals that make up the group. A group of individuals are transformed into a team when the following five components are present:

1. **Unity around a common purpose and goal**
2. **Dependence on each other to achieve this purpose and/ or goal**
3. **Structure to work together in synergy**
4. **Empowerment to implement decisions**
5. **Joint responsibility for the outcome of the task**

The roles and behaviors of members in a group are two central factors that will determine whether a group is transformed into a team. Each member of an organization fulfills two roles. One is his/her "formal" role, i.e. Bank Manager, PR Secretary, etc. The other is his/her "informal" role. This informal role relates more to the person's personality, style, or manner of working. Someone may perform one or more of these roles in the organization.

Informal Roles in a Team

1. Planter:

- 1) Provides seeds for which major developments germinate
- 2) Generally prefers to work in isolation using their imagination and unorthodox working practices
- 3) Independent
- 4) Original
- 5) May not always be practical and may have difficulty communicating with people

2. Resource Investigator:

- 1) Enthusiastic, proactive, extrovert
- 2) Natural negotiator
- 3) Talented at exploring new opportunities, especially with other people's ideas
- 4) Relaxed, inquisitive and ready to see the possibilities

3. Coordinator:

- 1) Helps the team to work towards common goals
- 2) Quick to delegate
- 3) Mature, trusting and confident
- 4) Not necessarily the most intelligent member of the team
- 5) Open minded
- 6) Respected by colleagues

4. Shaper:

- 1) Highly motivated and filled with nervous energy
- 2) Enjoys challenging and leading others
- 3) Enjoys finding ways around obstacles
- 4) May be argumentative and lacking in interpersonal sensitivity

5. Monitor-evaluator:

- 1) Serious minded
- 2) Makes decisions slowly and prudently
- 3) Seldom over enthusiastic
- 4) Is seldom wrong
- 5) Makes shrewd judgments that take into account all factors

6. Team Worker:

- 1) Relaxed, sociable and concerned about others
- 2) Most supportive members of the team
- 3) Adaptive and flexible
- 4) Strong listening skills
- 5) Sensitivity in their work dealings

7. Implementer:

- 1) Self controlled and disciplined
- 2) Lot of common sense and practicality
- 3) Systematic in approach to tasks
- 4) Hard working

8. Completer-finisher:

- 1) Unlikely to start something that they cannot finish
- 2) Attentive to detail and ability to follow through
- 3) Self-motivated: Don't require much incentive or stimulus
- 4) Generally avoid delegating and like to take ownership of all tasks

9. Specialist:

- 1) Dedicates attention to acquiring technical skill and specialized knowledge
- 2) Maintains professional standards
- 3) Can be indifferent to other peoples' favorite subjects

If there is a happy blending of each of these informal roles there is every likelihood that an effective team will be the outcome. But if there are too many shapers or ideas people and no finishers the ideas being put forth will not materialize. A good leader will have to find a way to effectively combine the talents of his/her members so that these roles mesh together for meeting the goals of the organization.

Next issue: Informal Roles in Teams part 2



TeamTalk

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