

Report on

Porters' Awareness - Workshop

(Trekking Porters)

Listen to Porters' unheard voices.



Report by

Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP)
Porters' Clothing Bank (PCB)

Nepal

June 3 2011

Acknowledgement

In the tourism industry, Porters are the essential and backbone for the successful trekking in the mountains/Himalayas worldwide. However, these tourism professionals have been highly disregarded, who in fact need much attention for their Welfare with a humanitarian perspective. KEEP also advocates a “Decent Work” promulgated by International Labor Organization (ILO) which is to be integrated by the trekking companies, especially in case of porters.

Understanding their welfare, KEEP has established Porters’ Clothing Bank (PCB), from many int’l supporters, to support porters by equipping them with full clothing sets before they resume trekking in the mountains of Nepal. KEEP believes the supporters to PCB has been able to save our brothers and sisters from cold, frost bites, amputation and other related problems. In coming years, it has been predicted that the tourists flow in Nepal is going to increase in their numbers.

However, it has been realized long before that training, education and research on porters’ rights, issues, and unheard voices to bring outside to the World. Therefore, this one-day workshop has been designed for porters’ welfare on June 3 (Friday), 2011.

Apart from advocacy on Porters, KEEP also has a strategic plan for the Porters’ Safety, which KEEP look forward with all supporters for porters’ sustainable growth and progress.

I’d also like to thank especially the Coordinator Mr. Ian Wall, and all KEEP staffs, in making this workshop success.

I’d also like to thank you to all supporters in this humanitarian work.

Thank you

DB Gurung

Director

KEEP

Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**
- 2. Porters Background**
- 3. Workshop Target Group**
- 4. Location and Time Frame**
- 5. Workshop Objectives**
- 6. Training Courses for Workshop**
- 7. Workshop Delivery Method**
- 8. Workshop Output**
- 9. Participants Lists : Porters**
- 10. Trekking Companies Participants Lists: Management Level**
- 11. Certificate Sample**

1. Executive Summary

The “*Tourism Porters*” are the highly disregarded, temporarily employed, poorly equipped, lesser knowledge and education, hidden/unheard voices; however, they have a potential to upgrade for better economic opportunities and an essential actor to make a successful tourism worldwide. This tourism industry is a booming industry worldwide, which needs such actors more and more in coming years to come. Therefore, KEEP has been strongly in advocating, building capacity of porters, equipping them with safety hardware (clothing sets). The porters and trekking company directors/managers were also places in same platform to discuss their issues for ‘decent work/job’ in this one day “*Porters’ Welfare Workshop*” in Nepal.

2. Porters Background

Porters have always been the backbone of the success of a tour operation in this tourism industry everywhere. However, still they have been *highly disregarded tourism professionals* from universal perspectives, who in fact, *need an attention* with an ethical ways and act with humanitarian approach.

Imagine the porter’s condition, carrying load with *less outreach to speak up their issues and continue to carry the burden on their back walking hours in the harsh hills and mountains*.

In 1997, a young Nepali porter employed by a trekking company became severely ill with altitude illness. He was paid off and sent down alone. It took just another 30 hours for him to die....He was 20 years old and left behind a wife and 2 small children.(IPPG)

About Porters in Nepal, a large part of professional trekking porters is often from the lower valleys. They frequently have to carry heavy loads in remote areas, sometimes higher than many expedition base camps (well over 5000 meters) and with the potential for severe weather. While trekkers sleep in down sleeping bags in lodges or tents, porters sometimes have to use caves, sleeping in damp clothes and with a thin cotton blanket. Although their life and the conditions of their work are different from one country to another, they all share similar problems:

- Lack of adequate clothing sets, and footwear
- Lack of adequate shelter , Lack of food and warm drinks
- Lack of appropriate medical care

- Lack of insurance, Inadequate wages and theft of their tips
- Overloading
- Lack of platform for their hidden/unheard voices.

Apart from the above, life threatening issues porters also face are *lack of education* on mountain safety, environmental issues and hygiene/HIV/STDs. They are often the meat in the *sandwich of political upheavals* and are usually *discriminated against through race, social position or religious caste*. *Exploitation*, often by their fellow countrymen, can mean overloading, poor wages and diversion of their tips or gifts.

Employing porters is a great form of aid if done in an ethical way. Understanding the complex problems facing porters and interacting with them will give a new meaning to your trip. With time, *many porters upgrade to a guide level*, then, expedition leader. Some of them have even reached a height of a trekking company director. It is therefore, that this workshop course will also help porters in paving their future by upgrading them with all necessary skills and knowledge.

Considering everything, Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP) has been the foremost in the advocacy for porters' right and safety, and established Porters' Clothing Bank (PCB) with a humanitarian support from IPPG, Porters Progress, Intrepid Foundation and others. Since long before, it was realized that the "clothing set" alone is not sufficient, the awareness through education and research on their issues, are other important part for their rights and legal issues, safety, and align future directions. Therefore, this workshop will ensure the complete awareness on their issues to these highly disregarded tourism professionals.

3. Workshop Target Groups

This workshop is targeted to the Porters and Trekking Company, both the tourism industry associates. There were 42 participants as a porter from different districts of Nepal and 11 participants who represented the trekking company of Nepal. All the lists of the attendees have been attached in the Annex in this report.

4. Location and Time Frame

The workshop was conducted on June 3, Friday, 2011, at the Mustang Holiday Inn, Kathmandu, Thamel, Jyatha, from 9.00 am- 3.00 pm.

5. Workshop Objectives

The following were workshop objectives:

- a) To discuss about Porters as a Job: duty, difficulties, expectations from a trekking company, good ambassador of Nepal, issues and government policy, insurance policy and rights, personal care, team work.
- b) To teach basic First Aid, Mountain Sickness (AMS), safety procedures.
- c) To aware about the Responsible Trekking in the Himalayas,
- d) To interact and aware with the Trekking company about porters issues, KEEP-PCB and procurement method.
- e) To research on porters' problem.

6. Workshop Delivery Methodology

The delivery methods were the demonstration, MS power-point slide show presentation by the use of projector, interaction, questionnaire developed for research. The means of communication were English and Nepali. During each session, participants had actively put forward their queries, which made workshop very interactive. Each set of a hand copy and a pen were provided to each participant, so that they could be able to jot down notes.

7. Training Courses for Workshop

The course program has been designed majorly focusing on their rights, mountain environment, safety, PCB utility and procurement, also interaction with trekking companies. The research questionnaire was filled during application to this course.

ONE-DAY PORTERS WELFARE WORKSHOP-2011, June 3, Friday			
TOPIC	Time	Program	Resource Person
	9.00-9.15	Participants Arrival	
	9:15 – 9:30	Welcome, Introduction and Workshop Purpose	DB Gurung
PORTER'S JOB & RIGHTS	9:30 – 10:30	Porter as a Job: Problems, Difficulties, Future, emergency & preparedness, Insurance policy and porter's rights in Nepal. Govt Policy, security	IAN WALL
	10:30 – 10:45	Tea Break	
ENVIRONMENT	10.45 - 12.00	Responsible Trekking in the Mountain environment, Waste mgmt, Health & Hygiene	ARJUN K. LIMBU
	12:00 – 1:00	LUNCH	
SAFETY	1.00 - 2.00	Basic First Aid, Mountain Sickness,	RAJENDRA K.
PCB UTILITY & INTERACTION	2.00 - 3.00	KEEP -Porter's clothing Bank (PCB) History, Clothing details, & Procurement methods, Support to PCB by Nepali companies.	IAN WALL
	3.00- 3.15	Certificate Distribution & Closing	KEEP
	3.15 -	Refreshment : Tea and Snacks	

8. Workshop Output

The workshop was inaugurated by the Welcome speech program from DB Gurung, Director, KEEP, to all the participants. His speech was focused on the importance of tourism in Nepal regarding poverty alleviation, mountain tourism, porters' invaluable contribution to the every success of trekking operation. He also highlighted the death of a porters, injuries and other current emerging trend for their safety issues and possibility of up-gradation to become a guide/ cook one day, for which such a training and a workshop will be of great help to them and KEEP's platform to raise their voices to the concerned/unconcerned ones. It was also of great experience sharing about his time in 1980s trekking experience and today's trekking trend. He also en-lighted that, Porters and Guides are the real ambassadors of tourism industry and trekking companies for whom they work for and up-gradation opportunities from Porter to guide/cook higher level. Also, he highlighted the importance of such workshop and courses designed to them for up-gradation.



Another session was followed by Mountain Environment, Trekking Gently in the Environment by Arjun Kumar Limbu. His course majorly focused on the details of Nepal, geography, ethnicity, biodiversity & uniqueness of Nepal, tourism history in Nepal, poverty alleviation through tourism, deforestation by tourism, Mountain Rivers and pollution, solar panel, water purification, Himalayan Formation, Climate change and impacts.

Other session was followed by the Basic First Aid, AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) by Mr. Rajendra Karmacharya. The several stages for the First Aid procedure were sequentially addressed. Also, the AMS were highly explained because when the porters who are from low lying ground work in the thinner air high ground altitude, then, it is highly probable to become a victim of AMS. The two types of AMS have been explained, proper bandaging methods, safety and emergency and preparedness. It was practiced by the volunteers from a group of participants. All the participants too deep interest because they are well aware of its importance in their real life.



It was followed by the Lunch program.

Then, Porters as a Job was followed and conducted by the Ian Wall. He explains the porters' duty, meeting expectations to the need of a company, safety & insurance, also shared his experiences of porters who have been well insured by the companies. It gave high response from porters when he share that some porters two year back were descended with a helicopters when porter was affected by AMS. This example highlighted the real impact and importance of the insurance about porters.

Apart from that all porters work for better economic conditions, for which their rights and issues should be brought in the face of the world outside. He also suggested that every porter should know the companies name, guide/leaders for who they work for, so that just in case they could complain to the organizations like KEEP for any problems.



The other session was followed by the KEEP – PCB and procurement method, the KEEP-PCB history, supporters of PCB, number of clothing sets and procurement method has been discussed with the porters and directors/managers of a trekking companies who attended this session.

One of many feedbacks: Mr. Bipin Lama, Tamang Heritage Trail, Rasuwa, north from ktm valley, suggested more such workshop/programs should be conducted regularly so that they get updated. This workshop has given them new insights. Also, suggested KEEP to take their issues to the Trekking companies' owner to address their issues. All other participants also agreed on his comment, which KEEP has taken seriously.



9. Participants Lists : Porters

KEEP Porters' Welfare Workshop 6/3/2011					
Registration and Attendance list					
S.No	Name	Company	E-mail	Contact no.	Signature
1	Somnath Simkhada	Royal Mt. Travel	simkhadasomnath@yahoo.com	9741107599	
2	Ang Dawa sherpa	Thamsrku Treacking	sherpawang@gmail	9841071809	
3	Anil Lal Lama	Swiss-Nepal Family Trekking	fusion_guidenepal@yahoo.com	9849758009	
4	Arjun Lama	Trekking Team Group.com	junrana_rock123@yahoo.com	9803519162	
5	Bhim Bdr. Thapa Magar	Himalayan Glacier Trekking		9803652903	
6	Bibek Bhatta	Royal Mt. Travel	bibekbh@yahoo.com	9841054712	
42	Bijan Shrestha	Trekking Mart	shajibijan@gmail.com	9849218578	
7	Buwan Rai	Thamsrku Treacking	buwand@yahoo.com	9841844624	
8	Damodor Rana	Royal High Mountain Travel	Anup_idopa@yahoo.com	9841745504	
9	Dawa Tamang			9841177449	
10	Deepak Shrestha	Individual		9813412045	
11	Dhan Raj Tamang	Active Holiday Nepal Treks		984188662	
12	Draj Tamang	Individual		981949450	
13	Govinda Ghimire	Highlander			
14	Gyanendra Khadaka	Himalayan Glacier Trekking		4411631	
15	Kabi Rai	Individual		974125460	
16	Kabi Rai Limbu	Absolute Adventure Treks		9721209137	
17	Kashinath Simkhada	Royal Mt. Travel	simkhadakasni@yahoo.com	9841744685	
18	Keshav Amgai	Himalayan Glacier Trekking		9849704934	
19	Lala Tamang	Active Holiday Nepal Treks			
20	Man Bdr. Tamang	Individual		9741215269	
21	Milan Tamang	Individual		014325250	
22	Nigina Dorjee Tamang	Active Holiday Nepal Treks		9741255089	
23	Nirmal Shrestha	Royal Mt. Travel	nirma_kht@hotmail.com	9808979841	
24	Pasang Sherpa	Absolute Adventure Treks		9841575916	
25	Pasang Tamang	Himalayan Unforgettable Adt.	pasang_pt@yahoo.com	9841889361	
26	Pasang Tamang	Active Holiday Nepal Treks			
27	Pasang Tamang Sherpa	Absolute Adventure Treks		9813763881	
28	Puskar Tamang	Individual	puskartamang@yahoo.com	9849465747	
29	Raju Tamang	Royal Mt. Travel	rajuverest@hotmail.com	9849217226	
30	Ram Bdr. Magar	Individual			
31	Ram Dash Tamang	Swiss-Nepal Family Trekking	fusion_guidenepal@yahoo.com	9849012185	
32	Shyam Sundar Tamang	Maya Trekking		9849693019	
33	Som Bdr. Tamang	Individual		974112324	
34	Sudarshon Devkota	Himalayan Glacier Trekking		9841012378	
35	Suvraj Tamang	Individual			
36	Temba Sherpa	Active Holiday Nepal Treks			
37	Tulu Prasad Bhatta	Himalayan Glacier Trekking		9849117672	
38	Vibek Rai	Royal Mt. Travel		9849002173	
39	Vipin Lama	Himalayan Unforgettable Adt.	vipin_lama67@yahoo.com	9741237691	
40	Wasim Anwer		anwer_wasim@yahoo.com	9841877854	
41	Yeshiyalpo Sherpa	Active Holiday Nepal Treks			
43	Dawa Tamang	Himalayan Unforgettable Adt.	wicadawac@gmail.com	9741171358	
44	Kal Dawa Tamang	PERSONAL TRIP	kaldhawaj@yahoo.com	980820200	
45	Lalit + Saru Magar	Event Express Trekking		9841533004	
46	Dwijendra Bdr Tamang	Himalayan	dwijendra_bdr_tamang@gmail.com	9844610496	
47	Ramesh Bdr Tamang	GROUP TRIP		9849401240	
48	Baddhi Bahadur Tamang			9844054930	
49	Puskar Sherpa			9849729206	
50	Kishor Bdr Limbu				

10. Trekking Companies Participants : Management Level

KEEP Porters' Welfare Workshop
6/3/2011
Registration and Attendance list

S.No	Name	Company	E-mail	Contact no.	Signature
1	Molt Pant	Marron Treks	info@marrontreks.com	4441307	<i>[Signature]</i>
2	Akash Adhikari	"	"	"	<i>[Signature]</i>
3	Govinda Ghimire	Highlander Trekking Nepal	info@highlandernepal.com	47005651066	<i>[Signature]</i>
4	Raj Rimal	Mustang Holiday	Prakash@hotmail.com	9841579238	<i>[Signature]</i>
5	Tasang R. Sherpa	Thomson's Trekking	Prakash@hotmail.com	9851868864	<i>[Signature]</i>
6	Rajendra Man Karmacharya	Personal	"	984127040	<i>[Signature]</i>
7	Tapan Rajkumar	Everest Express Trekking	EEPER@everest-express.com	4220755	<i>[Signature]</i>
8	Abbas Babulur Tamang	Three Jewels	ambastg@yahoo.com	4423767	<i>[Signature]</i>
9	Shiva Raj Thapa	Adventure Dreams	shivanirana@gmail.com	4422285	<i>[Signature]</i>
10	Dipak Dalal	Live Nepal Ltd	dip - anjuring	98413029	<i>[Signature]</i>
11	Nagma Tuny	Indivisol	sukeyingind@hotmail.com	984117988	<i>[Signature]</i>
12					

11. Certificate Sample



End