**NRNA TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES PROJECT**

**Background**

Vast majorities of Nepali people do not have access to libraries because Nepal does not have a library system supported by the government. The connection between a nation’s development and opportunity to its citizens to access well stocked active libraries is well established. The lack of access to libraries (and quality education) is one of the primary reasons for the state of our nation.

In keeping with Non- Resident Nepali Association’s (NRNA) mission to participate in Nepal’s socio economic development, in 2007, the Non-Resident Nepali Association publicly declared its intention to assist in the development of public libraries in the country and adopted “ Public Libraries” (here after called the Project) has one of its charity projects. The “Nepal Library Foundation (NLF)”, a charity established by Nepalis in Canada, was appointed to implement the Project. In the last seven years, with NLF’s efforts, the Project has established its footprint in over 35 locations across the country. Nepal’s fist digital library (e-pustakalaya) established under the Project is up and running. Over 26,000 people access e- pustakalaya every month. The Project is one of our most successful Charity projects, yet its performance has never been formally assessed.

NRNA has set up a Task Force (TF) to rectify this situation. The TF is mandated to review the performance of the Project and consider a way forward to enhance its effectiveness. For the purpose of the review the objectives of a library will be considered to be the following:

* Create and strengthen reading habits in children from an early age;

 Support both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels;

 Provide opportunities for personal creative development;

 Stimulate the imagination and creativity of children and young people;

 Promote awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations;

 Provide access to cultural expressions of all performing arts;

 Foster inter-cultural dialogue and favor cultural diversity;

 Support the oral tradition;

 Ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;

 Provide adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups;

 Facilitate the development of information and computer literacy skills;

 Support and participate in literacy activities and programs for all age groups, and initiate such activities if necessary.

(Based on UNESCO, 1994)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Review the progress of the Public Libraries project since its commencement in 2007.
2. Review NRNA’s involvement in the project since its commencement in 2007.
3. Recommend the terms of collaboration between NRNA and NLF and ways to strengthen the collaboration.
4. Recommend the structure of an Advocacy Group to lobby the GON in developing national public libraries policy.
5. Propose Public Libraries action plan (minimum number of libraries NRNA must support to maintain the program) for the year 2014-2015
6. Provide a budget for the year 2014 and 2015 to implement the action plan.

The TOR will submit its report not later than 30 June, 2014.

MEMBERS OF TASK FORCE

Naresh Koirala, Chair

(others to be announced)