

## ITEEN and 25 years of Lord's Faithfulness

ITEEN has crossed its 25 years this year. Here we have some of the major developments during these times.

In 1992, Mr. Peter Bisset, an INF missionary discussed with church leaders regarding the use TEE materials and encouraged churches in Pokhara to use SEAN materials for Group Bible studies as he felt that it will help the church in Nepal.

During that time someone in Tansen had translated Life of Christ Book -1 and had sent it to Kathmandu for printing but it got lost and was untraceable. Mr. Nicanor Tamang brought in printed copies of Bharpur Jeevan (Abundant life) from Darjeeling but were not used much. Also Mr. Loknath Manaen also brought some other TAFTEE materials, but it was not possible to organize the proper use of them over a longer period. These were the pre-historic developments of TEE that we are aware of, before ITEEN.



MAP OF NEPAL

In 1995 Peter discussed with Tanka Subedi regarding the use of these available materials and to take up translation of SEAN materials into Nepali in a contextualized format. Eventually a

committee under the Chairmanship of Elder Prem Rai and Secretary Elder Vedi Subedi was formed and they encouraged the translation team of Tanka Subedi and his wife Rita Subedi with some secretarial help from others. Peter helped with the logistics and the production of books in affiliation and assistance from SEAN.

The revision of Abundant Life and the translation of Abundant Light and Life of Christ 1-6 as well as some other courses were completed by 1998. Printing of most of these courses was done. ITEEN had some groups running in Pokhara before the first full-scale Group Leader's training was organized with over 50 participants from different places at Pokhara in



January 1999 (2055 Magh 12-14). Mr. PA Thomas was one of the facilitators for this training.

A meeting after that training of then committee decided to start up a programme office with Mr. Thomas as Programme Director in Kathmandu with the resource and production management done from Pokhara office with Mr. Tanka Subedi as the Resource Manager. So, from 1999 we started off on nation-wide tutor trainings and groups sprang up in Kanchanpur, Dhangadi, Lumahi, Kohalpur, Nepalgunj, Dang, Butwal, Chitwan, Dharan, Janakpur, Kavre and in many places around Pokhara and Kathmandu. All the major denominations and church groups wholeheartedly endorsed the courses and started running groups.

In 2001, Kathmandu office was amalgamated with the Pokhara office and with a small team of secretarial staff and a travelling tutor trainer the ministry continued to spread and used by many churches. From 2004 all operations were fully moved to Kathmandu with all operations carried out through the national office set up in Kathmandu.

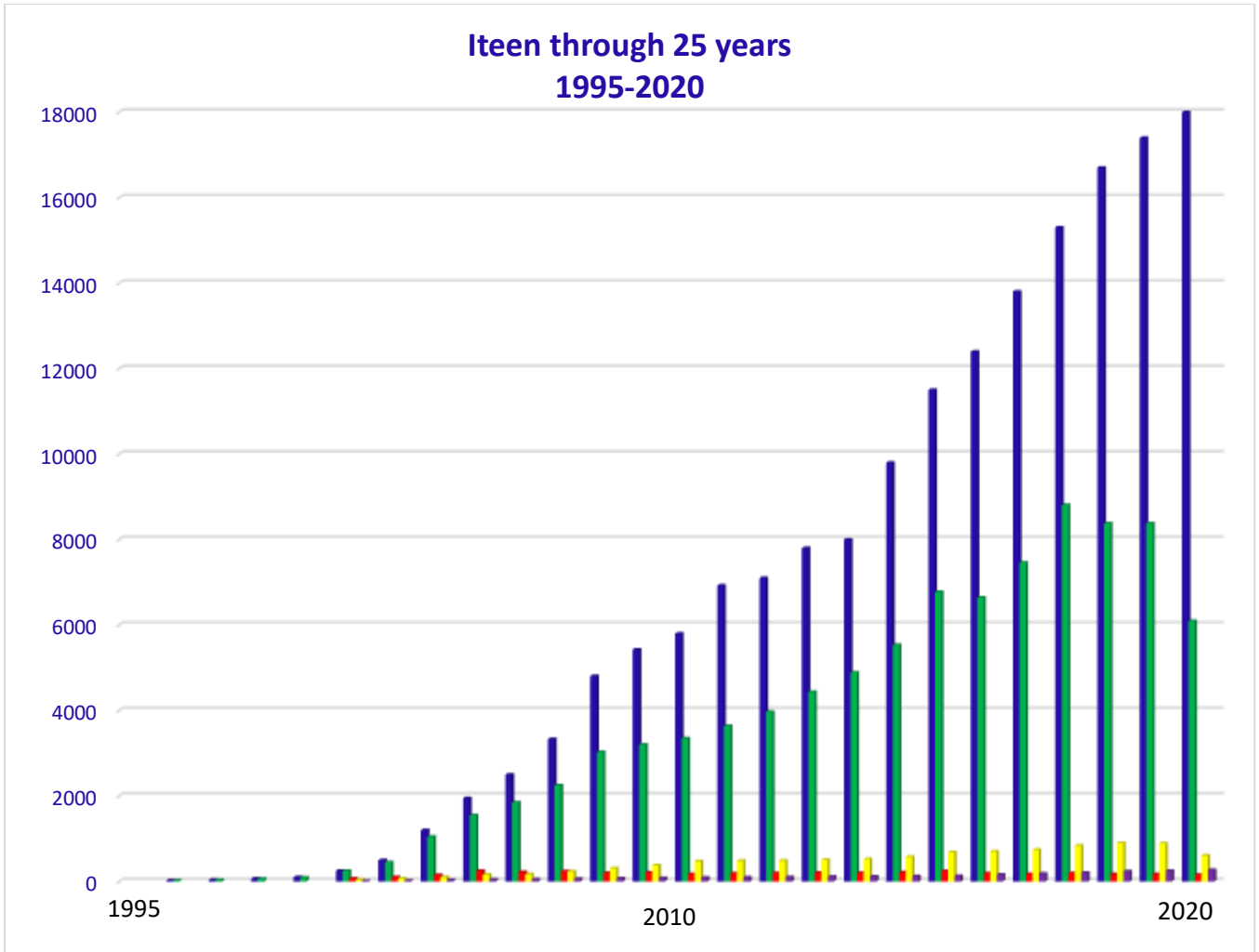
Through the years we have had steady growth and the programme has spread to churches in the remote regions like Humla, Mugu, Mustang, Taplejung, Sankhuwasabha etc. The availability of materials, tutor training and support from the office really helped this growth. Sending the materials through courier services became expensive but easily accessible in most of the places. We have a network of faithful tutors all around the country who promote our courses. We are grateful to our prayer partners and supporters who provided for the printing and promotion as well as the office logistics and personnel. We praise the Lord for His guidance and keeping us safe through difficult times of persecution and then the change to democracy and now the legal restrictions.

Abundant Life and Abundant Light have been used greatly but taking up and continuing with the Life of Christ courses are not always easy for the village groups. It demands longer periods of disciplined study and the numbers went down as they progressed from one book to the next. But we praise God for the hundreds who have completed up to Life of Christ–1 and received the certificate for An Introduction to Biblical Studies - very useful for the village church leaders.

We praise God for the many church leaders engaged in effective pastoral ministry after completing to that level and have encouraged others to do the same. We are providing a Bible School at home for many thousands who have been deprived of any Biblical training. We offer Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Diplomas in Pastoral Theology with the (translated) SEAN courses.



**Chart showing the numbers of enrolled students, active students, active groups and number of group leaders**



**Enrolled Students    Active Students    Group Leaders    Active groups**

As a founding member of INCREASE, we have been able to promote the TEE program into many other countries and allowing our trainers to help others. We started with translations of SEAN courses and now we have been able to write new courses geared to the needs of the fast-growing young Church in Nepal with the help of Increase course writers training.



Our practical courses on preaching, leading services and caring for children etc. are taken by many and have proved very meaningful in their ministries. As the church grew, some other TEE programs started and were promoted in the churches. But still ITEEN provides the basic materials easily available for all to study themselves and run with the addition of very practical, down to earth group dynamics. The need for tailor-made courses for the real needs of the growing Nepali church was a challenge taken up by our Curriculum Development Department. We felt the need to address the disconnect between the Teens/youth with the present church situation as urgent matter and have developed a two-part Teens course. The first book is printed and is in use. Through this very reflective course many teens have come to new reality of Christ in their lives. The second part is ready to print. Then the need for a clear Biblical understanding of the Christian Family and its Biblical commitment was felt urgent. So a comprehensive course is being made in the Nepali context of multi-cultural religious pluralism and the socio-moral struggles of a first generation Christian family. It is in the final evaluation and revision stage and will be available soon. We plan to serve the church with such relevant courses in the days to come. The need of the Church and congregation being involved in the holistic ministry holistically is taken up in the courses. Some emphasis was given to take account of the more deprived people in the church to have equal presence in the church such as disabled people, orphans, poor etc.



PICTURE AFTER GRADUATION CEREMONY

With the Corona lock down, most of our groups became dis-functional due to the impossibility of meeting together and transporting the materials. But we are glad that we have many video conferencing and online groups now inside the country as well as in the Nepali diaspora.



**Table showing the growth of the number of students, group leaders and groups**

Year	No. of students	Active Students	Groups	Trained Group Leaders
1999	250	250	40	10
2000	500	450	70	20
2001	1200	1049	100	35
2002	1950	1550	162	47
2003	2500	1850	170	53
2004	3330	2250	230	62
2005	4804	3025	310	74
2006	5426	3200	380	81
2007	5800	3350	473	90
2008	6927	3636	480	98
2009	7100	4200	490	104
2010	7800	4438	504	112
2011	8000	4888	525	117
2012	9800	5535	574	121
2013	11500	6777	684	129
2014	12400	6646	699	160
2015	13800	7459	745	185
2016	15300	8810	838	205
2017	16700	8380	898	238
2018	17400	8379	893	250
2019	18000	6094	609	270

The online availability of the course material is something we thought years back. With the new situation of Covid-19 lockdown we have given more emphasis on it and are putting all course in online format and encouraging groups to use them either on mobile devices or computers.

Once again, we as the ITEEN family are grateful to our God and all our partners and friends for being with us on this Journey.

