

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT**

**MEDIA MOBILIZATION FOR  
EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA)**

*Submitted to*

**SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY  
KATHMANDU  
NEPAL**

*Submitted by*

**EDUCATION JOURNALISTS' GROUP  
ANAMNAGAR, KATHMANDU  
March 2007**

## PROJECT SUMMARY

S.N	Narrative	Description
	Project Title	Media Mobilization for Education for All (EFA)
	Location	Kathmandu,
	Project Duration	Aug 2006 to Feb. 2007
	Target groups	Officials from MOES, Educational journalists and local radio journalists
	Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ To empower the education journalists through orientation to radio journalists in related issues.</li> <li>♣ To advocate the education issues mobilizing media through the radio reporting/interaction, media fellowships and district level interactions in seven districts in directing the activities towards fulfillment of the EFA</li> <li>♣ To create pressure in policy designs and frameworks attuned to EFA through in-depth investigative reporting, and interactions.</li> </ul>
	Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Education beat reporters in Radio will empowered with abilities to mobilize the resources with the newer ideas developed through the orientation classes.</li> <li>♣ Education stakeholders are advocated in directing the activities towards fulfillment of EFA with the mobilization and empowerment of the journalists.</li> <li>♣ Initiations for policy recommendations internalization is begun by the policy making and implementing agencies.</li> </ul>
	Key Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Orientation to 20 radio journalists on education journalism and EFA to advocate effective teaching learning issues</li> <li>♣ District level interactions for advocacy and input to policy pressure towards achieving EFA</li> <li>♣ Investigative reporting</li> <li>♣ Central level policy pressure interactions</li> </ul>
	Key Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ 20 radio journalists were trained</li> <li>♣ Interactions were held in 7 districts</li> <li>♣ 4 investigative reports were prepared</li> </ul>
9.	Total budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Received Rs. 703350</li> <li>♣ Total expenditure: Rs 557868</li> </ul>



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The project has been accomplished as a result of the contribution made to us for several reasons both professionally and personally. We have received a huge support from Save the Children Norway in terms of financial contribution and in terms of regular guidance to the programme. We at EJG are thankful to resource persons at Radio Journalists Orientation Programme. Our sincere thanks go to all the participants at district level interactions and central level interactions from officials from Ministry of Education and Sports, Teachers Union, Parents Association, education NGOs and INGOs, media persons and all the others.

We at EJG would like to congratulate our team who did all of its best from logistic management to other issues of programme management. Our sincere thanks are also to the journalists who reached different districts and the local level journalists who made efforts to gather more stakeholders at the local and central level programme interventions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS  
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to EJJ.

1.2 Background to the Project

1.3 Rationale of the project

*1.3.1 Foundation on what we work.*

*1.3.2 The success of media work*

*1.3.3 Intervention justification*

CHAPTER II

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF EXPECTED RESULTS

3.1. Achievement of Expected Result 1

*3.1.1 Context and rationale*

*3.1.2 Objectives, methodology and participants*

*3.1.3 Outputs, issues and outcome*

*3.1.4 Remarks and Recommendation*

3.2 Achievement of Expected Result 2

*3.2.1 Backdrop, Objectives and Methodology*

A. Baglung

B. Bardiya

C. Jumla

D. Rukum

E. Udayapur

F. Doti

G. Sindhupalchok

3.3 Achievement of Expected Result

*3.3.1 Interaction on Girls education in Nepal*

*3.3.2 Interaction on School Drop-out*

*3.3.3 Interaction on Resource Mobilization for EFA*

*3.3.4 Interaction on Early Childhood Development*

*3.3.5 Interaction on Education in Mother Language*

*3.3.6 Interaction on Learning with dignity*

3.3.7 Investigative reporting: Issues raised

*A. Access of Scholarship*

*B. Teacher Quota Situation in Nepal*

*C. Budget Allocation in Education*

*D. Foreign Aid in Education*

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Annex 1:

Annex 2:

Annex 3

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction to EJG

Being acquainted with the reality that education is a force to address the issue of poverty through human development measures by enhancing the capacity of the people in terms of appropriate life skills, knowledge, and experiential wisdom to acquire economic and social prosperity, Education Journalists' Group, EJG (*Shiksha Patrakar Samuha*) was established in 2000, as a common forum of over 60 journalists from mainstream Nepali print and electronic media advocating quality education at policy making and implementation levels through a network of media persons and journalists. It is a non-profit making, service-oriented organization registered under the District Administration Office, Kathmandu.

One of the key objectives of EJG is to obtain ideas, experiences of education experts through seminar and interaction program on the type of appropriate educational environment and to carryout media researches and interventions in bringing policy changes at the various levels. Over the last seven years, we have obtained opportunity to work with our donors such as Finish Embassy, World Bank, Action Aid Nepal, UNICEF, UNESCO, Save the Children Alliance and MS Nepal where we have achieved substantial impacts for education advocacy, promotion of dialogue and enhancement of research for education.

The current activities that EJG is undertaking include case study reporting in education, educational interaction at the local and the central levels, high school student orientation in journalism, publication of educational bulletin, radio program ***Shikshako Nalibeli*** development and broadcasting through Radio Sagarmatha, weekly interactions in various issues of education and occasional publications in key areas of work.

With the objective of raising the quality as well as the access to education, EJG undertakes different activities. Specifically, these activities to which EJG engages are classified broadly in three categories namely Knowledge Management, Capacity Building, and Agenda Setting.

#### 1.2 Background to the Project

EJG believes that universalisation of quality education can only be realized with the joint efforts of the government and the general public. We believe that state and people, or the state and private sector can clearly and should clearly devaluate the duties, rights and responsibility. Therefore, media persons were scheduled as part of the project to ensure that such duties and responsibilities are in place. It is better if the state can support the communities in the educational and the physical infrastructure development by allowing them to exercise the full rights. For this, media has a duty to perform in bringing such issues that will substantially assist in fostering these ideas and beliefs. It is to be recognized that commercialization of education should be led to transparency, social transparency through appropriate control, regulation and mapping that can have added value with the media's responsible reporting.

With these principles and beliefs that we tend to promote at EJG, the accomplished project was designed, well managed during implementation and the targeted benefits were attained. Therefore, the proposed program by Education Journalists' Group (EJG) promoted role of media in education and ensuring the quality of education to achieve education for all (EFA) at the national level and at the grass root level as a pilot program. The program intended to

bring media personnel for a common goal of education and a basic workable framework of education journalists at the central level and the district level. Local potential journalists were prepared and made to work to promote education. Radio and interaction programs at the center brought the issues for advocacy and campaigning. Interaction activities at district level provided the lessons that there could be leap and bounds of progress towards achieving the EFA if integrated actions are undertaken from all the stakeholders. Investigative reporting brought out the hidden issues in education that need to be addressed in achieving EFA goals. Further, radio programs also incorporated the local level issues. In fact all these activities collectively contributed to the promotion of child-friendly learning mechanism empowering and motivating all the concerned stakeholders.

### **1.3 Rationale of the project**

#### ***1.3.1 Foundation on what we work***

The situation of education in Nepal is still dismal and target of literacy is still a far cry with dwindling enrolment rate as low as 27.6 percent in higher education up to as high as 46.3 percent in primary region for females. Though the cycle completion rate increased in primary level from 37.2 percent to 50.4 percent between 1995 and 2003, the rate was not progressively increasing between these two years in secondary level. Still, many of the children are out of the school as caused by consequences in economic, social, and environmental facets and inadequate recognition and consideration. Recognizing these problems and in tune with Dakar Framework for Action which has primary purpose of expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, the project was rationalized. It was also on the foundation of belief that in order to identify the vulnerable groups and disadvantaged children, journalists can carry out investigative reporting; they can advocate and pressurize the authorities to provide facilities for increasing the access to complete, free and compulsory education of ethnic minorities and children in difficult circumstances.

#### ***1.3.2 The success of media work***

Warnings carried by the media have worked effectively in many cases; they have raised the awareness on the need to education significantly. Many people elsewhere have yet to appreciate that basic education is the right of all children. In this context, one of the principle tasks of educational organizations is to develop a mechanism to inform stakeholders their rights and obligations to promote access to quality education. They need to be informed about the child-friendly teaching-learning requirements and approaches of effective learning. The importance of educating masses on the advantages of education must be disseminated through media. The program aimed to reduce these failures and implementation barriers in education so that the progress towards EFA will be easier. To achieve these ends, advocacy and policy pressure are very critical aspects and needs and interactions, fellowships, investigative reporting play crucial role. Interaction programs organization is aimed at undertaking dialogues, discussion, and debates among different groups of stakeholders. It is expected that the interaction programs will bring the new issues ahead in different media so that the policymaking and implementing as well as the implementing agencies are informed.

#### ***1.3.3 Intervention justification***

Data shows that still around 46 percent of national population is illiterate in Nepal. The challenges to addressing this issue and decreasing the statistics could be met only with mass awareness through the development of audio/radio programs and broadcasting as organized through this program. Audio programs were comprehended as reliable and important programs to set impact to illiterates, in addition to those literates, which print media cannot do. Audio media was very quick to leave impact with FM radio services which could be

afforded by even poor people. Therefore, EJG planned to engage its resources for the development of the informed citizenry through the radio programs. The radio programs supported in unfolding issues together with active participation of the actors.

## CHAPTER II

### ACCOMPLISHMENT OF EXPECTED RESULTS

The project proposed three expected results at the time of submitting the proposal and at the end of the project; the project interventions are evaluated and reviewed against those targets in expected results.

#### 3.1. Achievement of Expected Result 1

The first expected result of the project was

- Education beat reporters in Radio will be empowered with abilities to mobilize the resources with the newer ideas developed through the orientation classes.

In order to accomplish this expected result, orientation to radio program was conducted.

##### **3.1.1 Context and rationale**

Radio is the most effective mass media and the community radios have a wider reach and popularity in different districts. Radios could play a pivotal role in disseminating programs related to education and associated issues and problems. They could inform and educate the general public about the education issues, on education as being our fundamental right and the need to educate our children. The radio could be an effective means for raising public awareness on the goals of the EFA and about the entire education system of the country. Bearing all these things in mind, EJM organized an orientation to Radio Journalists on Education issues under this programme from 23-25 November, 2006 in Bhaktapur. The overarching purpose of the action was to enhance empowering and sensitizing tools, motivating the journalists for bringing awareness among education stakeholders and promoting sufficient resource mobilization.

##### **3.1.2 Objectives, methodology and participants**

Before the orientation program was organized, objectives were set for the programme. These objectives included:

- ♣ To provide an overview upon education, including the general theory of education, the philosophical and sociological foundation, the political economy of education and the holistic approach on it.
- ♣ To acquaint the radio journalists on the contemporary global context on education and the status of education in Nepal.
- ♣ To acquaint about the government policy, programs and budget in education and its implementation status.
- ♣ To discuss about education issues in Nepal (An overview of the national issues on education especially on restructuring on education related with state restructuring, highlight the major issues on ECD, EFA, policy and implementation aspects).
- ♣ To discuss and identify the role of media in the acquisition of quality education.
- ♣ To discuss the topics for behavioral and attitude change and the role of FM radios and to identify the local educational issues to be raised by the FM radios
- ♣ To discuss about the radio programs and the methods of producing radio programs on education related topics by supporting with effective communication techniques on program quality improvement.
- ♣ To acquaint radio journalists about the importance of planning and follow-up in designing radio programs.

In order to carry achieve specific objectives of the orientation, participatory methods were followed in the program. The following methods were adopted in conducting the different sessions of the orientation program.

- ♣ Warm-up session
- ♣ Group discussion
- ♣ Presentation by the resource persons
- ♣ Group work
- ♣ Recapitulation of the presentation
- ♣ Question-Answer session
- ♣ Idea-sharing among participants

A total of 20 participants from the different selected FM radio stations from within the Kathmandu Valley and 17 Districts outside the Valley actively were oriented on the program. Most of the participants had worked as radio program producers and had journalism background. Majority of the including programs related to education, for their radio stations. Among the participants four were female. The orientation program was held in Bhaktapur Guest House, Bhaktapur.

### **3.1.3 Outputs, issues and outcome**

The immediate outputs of the intervention were the oriented 20 journalists from different parts of the country. However, other outputs included contribution in knowledge management of the journalists, enhanced skills in reporting for education, policy acquaintance, etc.

After the completion of the orientation program, the participants said that they could get supportive knowledge for their program development and learnt how to identify and raise issues and problems at the local and national level. They realized that there is need for total change in school education system. There raised a strong voice that the role of media persons, including the EJM in bringing problems in the education sector to public knowledge and giving out ways of resolving the problems.

Likewise, it was strongly felt in the program that education journalists bear the greater responsibilities of bringing the different anomalies and inconsistencies in the education policies and programs and initiating a public debate on these topics. Similarly education journalists got the opportunity to know how to produce a 'radio magazine' on education related topic along

### **Education Journalism: Knowledge Matters**

- ♣ Without the knowledge of the subject matter of the education journalism, education journalists cannot play an effective role; they can not prioritize the issue and possess inadequate information to present the issue. In this regard, this journalist orientation program made them aware about the subject matter of the education journalism and also made them to identify the prerequisites for producing the issue-based radio programs on education.
- ♣ Radio programs have always played a very important to bring change in the society. Programs related to education also have greater strength in dissemination of the issues. In the orientation program, journalists knew how to design and produce effective radio programs in education and how to prioritize these problems as well. They also achieved the knowledge about how to present different radio programs related to education and manage national and international knowledge on education.
- ♣ The participants became aware of the fact on the watchdog role of the education journalists in bringing to light different issues related to education.

with identifying the different issues on education and socio-economics of education.

The program delivered the conceptual clarity regarding the education issues and policy matters along with new approach to look at various educational issues. A great emphasis was given on research-based journalism and investigative reporting.

During the orientation many issues from different levels were shared that were beneficial to gain insights on the thematic areas of education. On the image and impressions on the journalists at the local level, the professional journalists shared ways and experiences they faced. They expected that the orientation would bring in their possession the skill to synchronize educational issues at the local level.

Interestingly, stories that media could develop were also shared. One of the participants shared that when her radio programme was able to raise and follow up the drinking water issue at the local school, people were able to come up with the support.

The education was explained as a gateway and bundle of knowledge by Mr. Balchandra Luintel. Dr. Tirtha Raj Khaniya presented the global and national context of education linking it with politics, reforms required and quality aspect of education. Participants were able to be informed on various levels of education. To ensure that the participating journalists understand the policy framework in education, Mr. Janardhan Sharma was invited to make presentation where he highlighted the policies, programmes and the activities of MOES. The particular reference in all these presentations was EFA. The specific role of media on education was shared by Secretary of MOES Mr Balananda Poudel. His presentation was an opportunity for the education journalists to raise various questions and seek suitable answers from him.

Dr. Bidhhanath Koirala facilitated one of the sessions to seek response from the participants on their perception on education and the issues which they thought they should raise. There were numerous issues that were raised. The issues raised were made to be discussed in the groups and their way out was also sought.

Mr. Sudarshan Ghimrie, EJJ president, presented the role of education journalists in building pressures and creating awareness as well as informing and educating the duty and responsibility by identifying the problems and constraints. Various aspect were discussed on his presentation.

Padamjung Thapa from SAC shared some critical issues of education where media can start writing. His issues included humiliating punishment, exploitation, power relations, school violence, etc.

#### **Key issues in education raised by participants**

- ♣ Free education up to secondary level
- ♣ Qualified and competent teachers
- ♣ Attractive remuneration to teachers
- ♣ Economic poverty
- ♣ Clearer policies in education
- ♣ Vocational education
- ♣ School drop out
- ♣ Political commitment at school
- ♣ Commercialization of education
- ♣ Scholarship irregularity
- ♣ Centralized education system
- ♣ Text book availability
- ♣ Ineffective adult education
- ♣ Promoton of reading culture
- ♣ Gender discrimination in education
- ♣ Poor facilities at schools
- ♣ Syllabus
- ♣ Teacher-student ratio
- ♣ Examination centered curriculum

Ghamaraj Lunitel, News Director at Sagarmatha FM highlighted different aspects of educational programmes. These included pure educational programs, issue based programs, their design and contents, nature of news items, etc. Raghu Mainali, radio expert also shared different issues in connection with message delivery from the radio programmes.

#### **3.1.4 Remarks and Recommendation**

Participants shared that the orientation gave them an opportunity to become acquainted with many issues in education with new perspectives. They also informed that they obtained skills in presenting the issues to give most effect. Instructors also shared that it was an opportunity to learn and share key issues of education at local level and link them to media.

Participants said that if the following points were considered, the program would be far more useful than that of the program held.

- ♣ More practical exercises could be adopted in the different topics related to the Orientation and bringing about improvements in the management of time and the time allocated for different activities.
- ♣ It would have been better if resource persons with education journalism background or if possible, foreign experts were arranged
- ♣ Establishing a network of radio journalists under the aegis of the Education Journalists' Group.
- ♣ Producing education-related audio-visual programs and disseminating the same through different FM stations in the districts.

Please see the *Annex 1* for information on the participants of the orientation.

## **3.2 Achievement of Expected Result 2**

The second expected result of the project was

- ♣ Education stakeholders are advocated in directing the activities towards fulfillment of EFA with the mobilization and empowerment of the journalists.

### **3.2.1 Backdrop, Objectives and Methodology**

The district level interactions, as mentioned in the proposal document have been held in all the selected districts after the conclusion of the Education Journalism Orientation for Radio Journalists. The objective of the district level interaction is for advocacy and input to policy pressure towards achieving EFA. These interactions were undertaken in Baglung, Bardiya, Udaypur, Sindhupalchok, Jumla and Rukum.

The interaction programs at the district level were designed to identify the critical issues on education for dialogue, debates and discussions at the district level so that the major education issues pertaining to a particular district could be analyzed. The participation of all the stakeholders and civil society in the district level interaction would give a broad representation of the major views in the district regarding the status of education for all in the selected districts.

The specific objectives of the district interactions were

- To assess the effectiveness of the EFA programs in the district.

- To find out how much the stakeholders are aware about the EFA program and how they view it.
- To publicize the EFA program.

The selection of the districts for holding the district-level interactions was done by EJM with the consultation of the Save the Children-Norway/Nepal. Seven different districts were selected for this purpose. The interactions were held by the local participant of the orientation program. The district level interactions were held with the guidance and facilitation of the EJM program management team. DEOs, local NGOs/CBOs, parents, teachers' unions, administrative officers, political parties and their student wings and local intellectuals participated in the interactions.

A local expert/ activist presented papers in the interaction in a majority of the selected districts. The papers mainly focused on actual scenario of effective learning and child-friendly environment, success stories, problems and its causes and the options of way out. The central level representatives visited the District Education Office and at least two schools in the related district in person to collect the relevant information for the interaction.

### **3.2.2 Issues and outcomes**

The district level interactions have contributed to the major goals of the program to create pressure in policy designs and frameworks attuned to EFA at the district level through in-depth investigative reporting and the comprehensive discussions and sharing of views that took place in the interaction on wide range of topics related to the EFA.

From the district level interaction, the role of each stakeholder in connection with the EFA was identified. At the same time the stakeholders committed their responsibilities with respect to the EFA. The major findings of the District Level Interaction in each of the seven selected districts are presented here. The issues and concerns were different in each district or they were presented differently though the essence was somewhat similar. The district wise issues have been presented below:

#### **A. Baglung**

Baglung is a hilly district where status of education is not much satisfactory due to the complex geography and the like. There are four campuses, 18 Higher Secondary Schools, 1,389 Primary Schools, 267 Lower Secondary Schools and 211 Secondary Schools as the community schools in Baglung. There are 18 School Inspection Centers in Baglung District and one High School teacher has been working as the School Inspector at 18 Resource Centers.

In the district with such educational status, interaction was organized. Among the participants, Yukta Prasad Subedi, Acting District Education Officer, Baglung said that fifteen quotas have been sanctioned for the district for the Non-formal Education which would be distributed in April. Three teachers' quotas have been received under the inclusive education stream. Likewise scholarship amount for only 13,000 students out of the total 17,000 eligible students was received last year. This year, the scholarship amount is going to be distributed to 15, 000 students. Scholarship amount for girls is to be distributed to 8,500 students at the rate of Rs. 350 per person.

Mrs. Ratna Shrestha, Principal, Kalika Kanya Secondary School, Baglung grumbled about the teachers' quota and said teachers' quotas have not been added for the district since 2056 B.S. despite the much hype about the Education For All. Only some posts under the relief heading have been sanctioned last year. She stressed on the increase of physical

condition of the schools, and incentive for the people who take active part in the Welcome to School and School Enrollment Week campaigns.

Mrs. Krishna Maya Adhikari, Principal, Dhabi Secondary School, said that condition of the school enrollment campaign was not satisfactory and added state has also not shown necessary interest to provide teachers incentives to work wholeheartedly towards this program. The enrollment campaign is not effective. The Union has made a decision in which one teacher will be required to bring at least one student to school. This decision would come into effect from next year. This means that some 2,300 teachers in the district would now bring as many students to school from next year.

Mr. K.B. Ranamagar, DIRDC representative from a non-governmental organization expressed that EFA is only limited to slogan only and nil in action. He opined that the state needs to prepare an authentic data of the people under the absolute poverty line and provide not only free education to their children but also free healthcare, social and other facilities. Likewise, Mr. Rajesh Chandra Bhandari, President, Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ) revealed that the parents allege that the teachers have been misusing the money provided to the students for buying textbooks. How the money sanctioned and released for textbooks is spend should be investigated. Mr. Dilliram Gautam, Secretary, Nepal National Teachers' Organization, expressed his view that the Education for All program should be taken forward in an integrated manner, parents do not send their children to schools due to their very poor economic condition. And the goal of EFA would not be achieved unless the State gives its full attention to poverty reduction. Other speakers in the program shared their opinion and remarks some of which are:

- The State should take full responsibility of providing education to its citizens. Uniformity should be brought about in producing educated and skilled human resources necessary for the country. The entire education system should be restructured. Special programs should be brought for the benefit of women and the Dalit.
- The scholarship fund for the Dalit and 50 percent girl students had to be distributed on an equal share basis due to the shortage of budget for that purpose.
- The District Education Office had not been able to appoint teachers in 58 schools in the district.
- Although the school enrollment campaign and Welcome to School program have been implemented in the district, and a large number of students were enrolled, the retention rate is very low.
- Even the government has announced free education up to the primary level, yet the students are charged fees.
- One of the major causes of girls dropping out from school was lack of toilet.

Therefore, this interaction highlighted the need for coordinated efforts in Baglung in realizing the EFA goals in time.

## **B. Bardiya**

The District interaction on 'Education For All Campaign and Status of Implementation' was organized in Gulariya, the headquarters of Bardiya District on 3 January 2007. There were altogether 24 speakers who put their opinions in the program.

Janak Nepal presented his theme paper entitled 'Education For All Campaign in Bardiya District. In an informal talk program, two senior freed Kamaiya representatives Mrs. Moti Devi Tharu and Mr. Pancharam Chaudhari were asked to take their seats with honor. Similarly, Mr.

Santosh Gupta, representative of the Awadhi community who do not send his children to school, and Mr. Om Prakash Yadav, a teacher who belongs to the same community, were provided the podium with prominence.

After Janak Nepal, central representative of EJJ presented the concept paper, Mr. Govinda Prasad Pandeya, Former Mayor, Gulariya Municipality said that the paper has put a question mark on the efficacy and success of the EFA campaign. In his opinions, effective implementation of EFA is a must. He opined that if the present education system is to remain where it stands at present, then it would prepare ground for another conflict. The present education system has produced two types of citizens. All should get equal access to education.

Likewise, Ganesh Regmi, Headteacher, Bhanubhakta Primary School said that his school launched a campaign for Abadhi community of providing Rs. 500 each to the family enrolling their children for the first time and provided incentives to 12 families last year.

Ms. Durga Chhetri, BASE said it is a very hard job to work in education field amongst the freed Kamaiya community as the freed Kamaiyas frequently move from one place to another, the number of students suddenly decreases. Informal classes should be conducted as an alternative way.

Mr. Mahendra Singh Shrestha, Acting District Education Officer confessed that the education programs in the district are implemented in a haphazard manner. The District Education Office (DEO) is making all efforts towards implementing these programs in a systematic manner. The school is the indicator of the impact of education programs and the awareness level of the society. The increase in the number of students in schools shows that the EFA is heading towards success amid various challenges. At last Janak Nepal, program modulator promised to send the issues that had come in course of the discussion to the agencies concerned in their original form.

These interactions identified certain findings important for the district. It is agreed that the present education system has produced two classes of citizens. Only 10 percent of the students enrolled in Grade 1 complete school cycle. There are many school problems and the major problem in education in this district is that there is no adjustment in the teacher posts in Bardiya. Lack of education in mother tongue has created problem in teaching the students. The district is too far to achieve EFA especially for the freed Kamaiyas. Surprisingly, there is a national policy for providing free education to the children of the freed Kamaiyas, but fee is charged.

There is a clear prevalence of lack of awareness among the parents about the values and importance of education as education is not tied to livelihood and life skills.

### **Education is a second priority for poor**

I live at Ward No. 11 in Pakadiya village, Gularaiya Municipality. I have two daughters who are of school-going age. I have somehow managed to send the elder one of them to school. But I am not able to send the younger one to school. This is because I am poor. People say education is free in school which is nonsense. We have to buy the books, note books, dress and all. People from poor economic strata like us cannot send children to school. Nobody sends children to school taking loans. I am at least sending one of my daughters to school. There are people who do not at all send their daughters and children to school. The government and the non-government organizations have not helped us out.

***Mr. Santosh Gupta, Pakadiya Village***

### **C. Jumla**

The interaction program 'Education For All Campaign and Status of Implementation' was held in Khalanga, the headquarters of Jumla District on January 12, 2007. The interaction was organized by the Education Journalists' Group at the Education Training Centre meeting hall at Chandannath Secondary School. The program was attended by 58 persons. The program was informal and discussion based.

Mr. Umakanta Adhikari, Acting Chief District Officer, Jumla expressed that there is a need to pay attention to the fact that the EFA is not only for the children. It is also for the adults and the old people alike. That is why the informal education has been equally emphasized under the EFA. A special model of education should be devised for the Karnali Zone as it has unique features in terms of geography and climate. There is a need of coordinated approach and synergy among all the stakeholders, including the District Education Office, schools, parents, local bodies and civil society for the success of the EFA. He also insisted that education programs should be planned in such a way that they are appropriate depending on the climate and geographical situation of the place. Students who are not enrolled in schools should be considered as child labourers as is the practice in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Mr. Chudaraj Neupane, Joint Secretary, Free Students Union, Jumla Campus said effectiveness of the program is not felt due to the lack of proper monitoring of the program.

Mr. Birkha Bahadur Shahi, President, All Nepal Teachers' Association said the EFA campaign would not become successful until the education policy is reformed. The lustrum and glow of the EFA is limited in the three VDCs that comprise the District Headquarters alone. For the rest of the 27 VDCs, EFA is an alien concept. This campaign has not reached the schools in each and every village.

Mr. Prakash Chandra Khatri, Station Manager, Karnali F.M. revealed that the implementation aspect of the program is weak. There is no space in the school for accommodating the students who have enrolled after the enrollment campaign. The management aspect has also been neglected. He also raised an important question: EFA is a national campaign and belongs to each one of us, but where is the sense of ownership?

### **D. Rukum**

The district interaction program on Education For All and Status of Implementation in Rukum District was organized in Kahlanga, the district headquarters on 2nd January 2007.

#### **Key Findings from Jumla**

- A majority of children who are out of school are used as child laborers and the parents should be taken action against for using children as laborers.
- Fund for operating 'Book Corner' had been released to all schools but none has opened such 'Book Corner'.
- Acute shortage of school textbooks. The text books reach the District only at the end of the academic session.
- The school enrollment campaign has been launched but there is lack of supportive infrastructure for this. One of the participants described this situation as "Come to school, sit on the dust, become sick and go back home."
- The District president of All Nepal National Free Students' Union (Revolutionary), affiliated to the CPN (Maoist) has not even heard about EFA.
- The scholarship meant for the needy students has been misused and children of only those who are rich and who have influence get the same.

Mr. Binod Kumar Malla, teacher, Ratmata Secondary School, Ratmata said that the State should bring special programs for raising the awareness of parents on the value and importance of education while Mr. Damodar Poudel, Head-teacher, Serigaon Secondary

School expressed his view that the Education For All (EFA) program implemented in Rukum District has not been able to incorporate education in mother tongue. Mr. Bishnu Hari Poudel, Local Development Officer, Rukum stated that education should be made effective, competitive and fruitful. He said the District development Committee (DDC), Rukum has increased investment in the education sector. He said that the DDC allocated Rs. 1,100,000 out of Rs.4, 600,000 under DDC grant in education sector last Fiscal Year.

Mr. Damodar Subedi, District Education Officer, Rukum articulated his opinions a lot of achievements can be made if the programs being implemented under the EFA campaign are made effective and executed in the right way. Since the EFA programs can not become successful without the support from the local community, according to him, full cooperation from all the stakeholders is necessary to that end.

#### Key opinion form stakeholders in Rukum

- ♣ The scholarship fund for the Dalit and 50 percent girl students had to be distributed on an equal share basis due to the shortage of budget for that purpose.
- ♣ The District Education Office releases the amount. But the full amount is not distributed. Up to 15 percent is deducted on the fund released and is misused.
- ♣ The money allocated for school reform and reconstruction is diverted towards salary.
- ♣ The students are admonished, scolded and given light punishment for disciplining them and the parents are informed about this.
- ♣ Most of the school buildings have been damaged in course of the conflict. There is no program for reconstruction of the damaged school infrastructure.

#### E. Udayapur

The interaction on 'Education For All and its Status of Implementation in Udayapur District' was organized in Gaighat, the Headquarters of Udayapur District on 2nd January 2007. Mr. Bhuparaj Khadka, Central Representative of Education Journalists' Group was the program modulator and Mr. Kaushal Chemjong, a local journalist, the facilitator.

After Bhuparaj Khadka, Central Representative, EJM requested the participants and stakeholders to give suggestions as to how EFA could be made more effective in the district. Mr. Brisha Bahadur Tamang, Section Officer looking after EFA, DEO revealed the fact that Gross Enrolment (GER) at 142 as stated in the data provided by the District Education Office itself shows that the data on GER is incorrect. The data filled up by teachers is not correct. The DEO could not carry out the monitoring of the EFA program properly in the district due to the conflict.

#### Key remarks form stakeholders in Udayapur

- ♣ The education data in the district is not based on reality and thus unreliable.
- ♣ The involvement of teachers in politics and contract business is hampering the education.
- ♣ The political parties should not interfere in education but build a culture of collaboration EFA.
- ♣ The distribution of the scholarship amount in the district is highly skewed. A large amount of the scholarship fund is distributed in the hill region of the district than in the plain region irrespective of the number of eligible students. This shows biasness for the hill region.
- ♣ The teachers should have self-confidence and competent. They should also have self-accountability.

Mr. Jhum Prasad Rai, District Education Officer, Udayapur said that such interaction programs would help promote the EFA campaign in the district in the context of complaints that EFA has not been publicized to the extent it should have been. He further said that the

DEO disbursed the amount that was sent by the Department of Education (DOE). He articulated the fact that there was no specific Code of Conduct for its distribution and there is over-enumeration when the schools were asked to give the names of students for the scholarship amount. He concluded that the EFA would be successful only through the joint collaboration and cooperation from all sides.

#### **F. Doti**

A District-level interaction on 'Education For All campaign and Status of its Implementation in Doti District' was organized at the District Education Office meeting hall on 4th January 2007. The interaction was participated in by 51 persons, including education stakeholders, government representatives, the representatives of the local political parties, NGOs and distinguished persons from the district. Extensive discussions were held in the interaction on the topic ' EFA and Status of its Implementation in Doti District'.

At the program, a concept paper incorporating the objective information and the findings from an on-site inspection of three selected schools in the district was presented. The schools selected for that purpose are Balmandir Primary School, Silgadhi; Rampur Secondary School (Proposed), Budar; and Ghanteshwar Secondary School, Laxminagar VDC, Doti. Following the presentation of the concept paper, the participants expressed their views regarding the problems and the challenges they encountered while working in their respective sectors. The interaction was facilitated by District Convener Mr. Shankar Thapa who was assigned by EJJ.

Mr. Prem Ojha, Social Development Centre, Doti expressed his view that a lot of propaganda was there about EFA in the district without any mechanism to appeal for one's education rights if one is deprived of the same. Mr. Shankar Bahadur Kathayat, Headmaster, Kumalikut Lower Secondary School, Kumalikut said that only 50 percent of the scholarship quota under the EFA campaign was released to the school where every single student came from an impoverished family in backward place. Mr. Ramesh Joshi, contact person, Education program, Dipayal Silgadhi Municipality revealed that large number of children is still deprived of education. Therefore, there is need for taking this reality into account while formulating the education policies and plans at the district level.

Likewise, Mr. Jayaraj Sharma, Headmaster, Jhimemalika Secondary School, Bayal forwarded a challenge to make the parents convinced on the benefits of EFA. He further highlighted his opinion that major problem in the success of the EFA was the pervasive problem of poverty in the rural areas. So, unless any

concrete measures for raising the living standards of the people are implemented, the slogan of EFA would remain a slogan. Mr. Jeevan Sharma Poudel, Deputy Director, Department of Education communicated with the participants that they were carrying out evaluation

#### **Key remarks form stakeholders in Doti**

- ♣ Fourteen percent children of the school-going age are out of school.
- ♣ The scholarship money meant for the Dalit, girls and the conflict-affected children is inadequate. The District Education Office releases less amount for this purpose and the teachers are falsely accused by the parents of misusing the fund.
- ♣ The stakeholders are not aware about the government's policy of free and quality education.
- ♣ The parents are not aware that education is a fundamental right and it can help in economic empowerment.
- ♣ The responsibility of management of primary and secondary level schools should be given to the local community.

regarding the outcome and the challenges for the Education For All program and working towards making policy reforms, correction of shortcomings and needs assessment

### **G. Sindhupalchok**

The District Interaction on 'Education For All and Status of its Implementation in Sindhupalchok District' was organized in Chautara, the district headquarters, on 11th January 2007. The interaction was attended by representatives of the major education stakeholders based in the district, teachers, the School Management Committees, local Non-Governmental Organizations, the District Education Officer and the DEO officers. The participation of the local leaders of the political parties was however not as expected. Although representatives of the Nepali Congress and the People's Front Nepal presented the views on behalf of the political parties in the district, CPN (UML), CPN (Maoist), Rastriya Prajatantra Party and Nepali Congress (Democratic) which have a major presence in the district could not attend the program.

The interaction was conducted by Central Representative of EJA: President Mr. Sudarshan Ghimire. At the outset, local correspondent of the *Kantipur* daily and president of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), Sindhupalchok Branch, Mr. Rishiram Poudyal had presented a working paper entitled 'Education For All Campaign and Status of Implementation'. The proceedings of the interaction were conducted based on the working paper. A majority of the speakers expressed their views focused around the working paper.

Mr. Rishiram Poudel, FNJ President, Sindhupalchok said that he realized that there were many topics in education that the journalists had to investigate and report constantly. He focused on the activities and programs conducted by the District Education Office under EFA campaign. Mr. Tulsiman Shrestha, Bandevi Lower Secondary School revealed the fact that there were no adequate teachers' postings in his school, because of which the children have not got quality education. Mr. Krishna Shrestha, Chautara Campus Steering Committee member delivered his opinion that the EFA campaign would not become successful until the policy of compulsory education is implemented. The government would be compelled to make arrangements for the minimum infrastructure when the concept of compulsory education is executed.

Mr. Som Sapkota, President, NGO Federation, Sindhupalchok expressed his outlook that there was lack of coordination between the district-based non-governmental Organizations and the Government Organizations on many topics. There is a tendency among the parents to send their children to boarding schools located in the District Headquarters and in town areas which may be the reason why the number of girl students is more compared to the boys in public schools. Director General of the Department of Education said that DOE cannot allocate teachers posts from its pocket. This shows that there is no indication that the problem would be addressed in the near future. How can the children get quality education in this situation? Mr. Hari Shrestha, Kamaladevi Secondary School, Pipara said that he was running classes up to the secondary level, but

#### **Key remarks form stakeholders in Sindhupalchowk**

- ♣ Discrimination between boys and girls in school education exists. The investment in education has not produced the desired results.
- ♣ The NGOs run educational programs in the district but do not inform about this to the DEO.
- ♣ Transparency in the evaluation of students and other levels is needed.
- ♣ There is lack of teacher's postings.
- ♣ ECD has a positive impact.
- ♣ DDC should play the role as a coordinator and facilitator in education planning.
- ♣ No adequate promotional activities undertaken in the district in connection with EFA.

the government has only allocated four teachers' quotas at the primary level and only one for the lower secondary level.

### **3.3 Achievement of Expected Result 3**

The third expected result of the project was

- Initiations for policy recommendations internalization is begun by the policy making and implementing agencies.

In order to accomplish the result, seven central level interactions were organized.

#### **3.3.1 Interaction on Girls education in Nepal**

Girl education is an important component to fulfill the objectives of the EFA. At present education up to the secondary level has been made free and declared as the fundamental right of the people by the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007. The Interim Constitution has paid special attention to women and the disadvantaged groups and for their equal opportunity and right to get the state facilities. But the pace at which the programs have been implemented is lethargic.

In this context, Education Journalists' Group (EJG) organized a discussion/interaction on "Challenges of girls' education from Dalit and excluded community of Nepal" at the EJG Hall in Anamnagar, Kathmandu on 26th January 2007. The discussion was organized in connection with making an assessment of the status of the girl education in the country. The Government has made commitments for Education For All (EFA) by 2015.

The interaction aimed to

- Take stock of the girls education at present in Nepal,
- Discuss the implementation status of the girls education,
- Find out the problems and challenges in girls education,
- Find ways of tackling the challenges, and
- Suggest measures for the effectiveness of girls' education to meet the EFA goals.

The interaction was held at the EJG Meeting Hall in Anamnagar. The Interaction was mainly discussion-based and held in an informal manner. It elicited wider participation from the audience and the participants. The issues raised in course of discussion were explained by the program facilitator and the responsible officials. Participants in the program included education experts, teachers unions, and representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations, lady teachers, Education Department officials and media persons.

Mr. Rajan Sharma, Coordinator for media mobilization for girls education at EJG presented some previous findings and highlighted the benefits of media coverage. Sharam Maharjan from Concern Nepal stressed the need of giving priority to flexible education and incentive to promote girls education. Mrs. Jalpa Pradhan from World Foundation stressed the need of giving emphasis to raising awareness of the parents and the social community on the need of educating girls. Mrs. Sanu Kumari Nepal stressed the need of eliminating gender discriminations in the society to promote girls education. Dr. Nancy Barker, EJG advisor, pointed out the need for recognizing the responsibility by all for girls education. Mohan Gyanali, president of Nepal Teacher's Union highlighted the role of teachers and the need of maintaining the positive discrimination attitude to foster girls education. He insisted media to work further.

After holding discussions on the issues related to Girls Education raised in course of the interaction and the sharing of views, the meeting came up with the following findings.

- That the overall picture of Girls Education is not satisfactory. There still remained much to be done.
- Lack of public awareness on the need of educating girls.
- The problems of child marriage, poverty, discrimination, social attitude, family values and many cultural factors are hindering the girls' education.
- Lack of effectiveness in the implementation of different programs meant for increasing the Girls Education.
- Lack of incentives and physical facilities for the girl education.

The participants of the interaction came up with the following findings also-

- The programs implemented by the government aimed at promoting and enhancing Girls Education have had made a positive impact to a certain extent, but these incentive packages were far from adequate.
- Incentive programs for increasing Girl Education should be implemented in an effective manner and they should be expanded.

Following the discussion session, the participants came up with the following list of suggestions for making the Girls' Education Program more effective and result-oriented.

- ♣ Need for registration and follow-up of girls' enrollment program and provide micro credit facilities or loan for girls' education.
- ♣ Run adult literacy campaign for mothers, awareness at the grassroots level along with effective coordination among all the stakeholders and undertaking programs in a synchronized manner.
- ♣ Increase the active participation of women teachers in the Girls' Education program and increase the number of women teachers in schools.
- ♣ Make the physical facilities in school child-friendly, especially for the girls.
- ♣ Move ahead the different programs for promoting Girls' Education being undertaken by the donor agencies in an integrated manner.
- ♣ Fix responsibility of local bodies, community-based organizations, schools, parents, teachers' unions and the district level education agencies in girls' education.
- ♣ Establish girls' hostels in schools and form mothers' groups to promote girls' education along with increment of scholarship for girls.

### **3.3.2 Interaction on School Drop-out**

Though school drop out is a universal phenomenon, the condition of Nepal in this affair is very miserable. In this background, a cursory analysis of the data of dropout rate at the Primary Level shows that the rate of school dropout is a big challenge in meeting the goals of Education For All. There is no let-up in the dropout rate. The Department of Education has implemented new programs to check the dropout rate. Realizing the gravity of the problem of school dropout and the consequences it would have on the overall goal of meeting the goals of Education For All program, Education Journalists' Group (EJG) organized an interaction at the EJG Meeting Hall on 2nd February 2007 to discuss the problem with the stakeholders concerned and to find out the solution to address this problem.

The objectives of the Interaction on 'School Drop-out: Problem and Solution' organized by the EJG as a part of its Media Mobilization for Education For All (EFA) program is to-

- Find out why students abort studies
- Identify measures for retaining students in school
- Find out why students could not be retained in school
- Discuss the status of incentive programs implemented to address the problem
- Identify what could be done to effectively address the problem

The interaction was mainly discussion-based. Representatives of the teachers' unions, ethnic communities, marginalized groups, Dalit community and other stakeholders shared their views on the problem of school dropout. They identified the weaknesses and strengths of the programs undertaken by the Government for addressing the problem. The participants also suggested some measures from their respective sides for addressing the problem. The interaction also sometimes took a question-answer mode wherein the participants raised queries and the Government officials from the Department of Education, the District Education Office and the Non-formal Education Center responded to the queries and explained the different measures taken to that end.

Mr. Dhan Bahadur Majhi, vice president of Nepal Majhi Uplift Society, Bal bahadur Pariyar of Nepal National Oppressed Students Organization, Rudrahari Adhikari of DEO, Suprabhat Bhandari of Guardian Association of Nepal, Laxman Khanl from non-formal education center and other stakeholders presented the challenges and way outs for the school drop outs. On the basis of the discussions and what transpired in the interaction, different causes were identified by the participants with regard to the dropout problem of school children (see box).

<b>Factors behind School Dropout</b>
1. Poor economic condition of the parents
2. Lack of awareness among the parents
3. Existence of discrimination on the basis of caste, gender and class in school
4. Lack of effective incentive measures
5. Lack of child-friendly environment in schools
6. Use of corporal punishment in schools
7. Failure to tie education with life-skills
8. Lack of flexible school hours
9. Schools being situated far from the villages
10. Unscientific examination system

**3.3.3 Interaction on Resource Mobilization for EFA**

The World Education Forum on Education for All (EFA), held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 to review the achievements of EFA campaigns in 1990 realised the difficulties of countries like Nepal. Accordingly the Forum adopted the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. The Dakar Framework for Action lists six major EFA goals to be achieved by 2015. It also lists strategies for achieving the goals. The focus of the framework is on collective commitments nationally as well as internationally to ensure that no country is left behind because of a lack of technical capacity or resources.

This international commitment comes both as an inspiration as well as a support for the development of basic and primary education in Nepal. And the country has adapted continued EFA campaign as the core strategy of educational development. It has adopted the goals of EFA as the goals of educational development in the country. The time line and the strategies outlined by the world forum have also been adapted. A National Plan of Action for achieving the goals of EFA has been prepared as a national priority.

The objectives of the interaction on Resource Mobilization for Achieving EFA Goals were to:

- Have an overview of the present scenario of resource mobilization in EFA

- Learn about the major components of the EFA and how resources are being mobilized in each of those components
- Discuss the problems and challenges in mobilization of resources for achieving EFA goals

The interaction was held at the Education Journalists' Group (EJG) Meeting Hall. The interaction was discussion-based and interactive. Participants in the interaction included representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Department of Education, donor agencies, civil society and media persons. The program modulator Mr. Prakash Silwal welcomed all the participants and opened the interaction by giving a brief overview of the EFA and the resource mobilization status for the same. He explained the objectives of the interaction and the importance of it in the context of Nepal.

- The national EFA campaign is on course as regards the resources. The resource allocation as per the core document has been followed strictly.
- Looking at the increase in the student enrolment and the estimated cost of 50 US Dollars per child, there will be a gap of about 60 million US Dollars and the government should bring programs for bridging this resource gap.
- Ninety-three percent of the budget allocated for the EFA is spent.
- There is a 24.23 billion budget ceiling for next Fiscal Year.
- Of the total budget earmarked for EFA, nearly 57-58 percent is spent in Primary School Education.
- The expenditure per student is nearly 44 US Dollars per head as calculated on the basis of total budget expenditure and the number of students.
- As a result of the EFA, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) and the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) have increased.
- Still 13 per cent of children of school-going age group or nearly 550,000 school-age children remain out of school. The challenge is how to bring them into school.
- Still there is a large number of drop out which also needs to be tackled effectively.
- Looking at the current enrolment rate, the total number of students and the cost per student at US Dollars 50 per head, there seems to be a gap of 6 billion US Dollars. The Ministry is discussing this issue with the donors.
- On the basis of the expenditure and the increase in the number of students as a result, Education For All (EFA) is a successful program.

### ***3.3.4 Interaction on Early Childhood Development***

The Interaction on Early Childhood Development (ECD) was a part of the regular interaction programs that the EJG has been organizing in connection with its Media Mobilization for "Education For All" (EFA) Program that it is currently undertaking. One of the major goals of the Education For All Movement adopted in 1990 in Jomtein, Thailand and reaffirmed by World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in the year 2000, is to expand early childhood care and education. It was in this context that the interaction on early childhood development was organized. The interaction also augmented to the regular weekly interactions that the EJG has been holding on pertinent educational topics, bringing together stakeholders, policy-makers and experts on related topics.

The objectives of the interaction on 'Early Childhood Development (ECD) Center is-

- To discuss the present situation of ECD in Nepal,
- To discuss the qualitative aspects of the ECD program in the country,
- To discuss the policy matters related to ECD,

- To discuss the needs and problems of the ECD sector, and
- To discuss the linkage of ECD and primary education.

The interaction was organized at the EJD meeting hall. It was held in an informal manner. The mode of the interaction was mainly discussion-based and it was participatory in nature. Some of the difficult topics that came up during the discussion were explained by the program facilitator.

Participants in the program included media persons, M. Phil. students from Tribhuvan University, ECD center managers, Education Department official and other stakeholders.

After holding discussions on the views expressed by the speakers in the program, the interaction came up with the following findings.

- A majority of the participants agreed that the situation of the Early Childhood Development program in the country was not satisfactory and there was much that needed to be done.
- There are certain points in the policy document regarding the ECDs that are not clear and which need to be explained out.
- A majority of the ECD centers that are being operated in the country lack proper physical facilities like furniture, classrooms and other amenities.
- There is no regular monitoring regarding the quality of the ECD programs and hence, such programs are not run in a systematic manner.
- There is a general lack of coordination among the different Government Ministries and the line agencies regarding the policy and operation of the ECDs.

Similarly, the participants also differed in certain topics like the management of the ECDs, the level of their effectiveness and their quality of service, with some (mainly the research students) saying that the ECDs currently being run are far below the standard goals based on these standards while ECD managers and the Government official saying that although not all of these standards have been met, still the level of progress was satisfactory given the short history of the ECD concept in Nepal.

On the basis of what transpired during the interaction, it can be concluded that the overall situation of the Early Childhood Development and Education Program in Nepal is not very satisfactory. The existing status of the ECDs on the basis of their management and expansion was also not up to the desired extent. Similarly, there is a lack of clarity in terms of the concept of the program, and the monitoring aspects. Government's support, both financial and technical, was very insignificant and the community support was also lacking due to confusions at the policy level.

In the light of the problems and the challenges, the prospects for the ECD Program in Nepal were outlined and discussed in the interaction. The conclusions that were drawn and it is recommended that in the first place the Government should formulate a clear policy guideline outlining the concept of the ECD centers, their management, monitoring and expansion, and coordination at different levels of operation from the Centre to the community-level. Similarly, it is recommended that the ECD centers that are in operation in the country should be provided with adequate financial and technical assistance for enhancing their effectiveness and service delivery. Moreover, the community and the general public should be sensitized regarding the significance of the ECD program and how it is going to benefit them in the long-run.

### **3.3.5 Interaction on Education in Mother Language**

It has been many years since education in the mother tongue has been introduced at the school level. Primary school level students have got the opportunity to carry out their studies in their respective mother tongues like in the Rai, Limbu, Gurung and Maithili languages. The Curriculum Development Center has been preparing the curriculum on mother tongues on the basis of the population. The work of preparing the textbooks for mother tongue has been obstructed after controversies regarding the textbook on the Magar (Kham) language surfaced.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal has guaranteed the right to get education in one's mother tongue and accordingly it has been followed in designing the school level curriculum. The political parties and the civil society are also wholly agreed that education in mother tongue should be promoted and developed in order to achieve the goals of Education For All and quality education.

However, the pace of promotion of education in the mother tongue is not moving ahead in a speedy manner. The stakeholders are also complaining that although the State has made provisions for education in mother tongue, it has not allocated enough resources for the same. Moreover there are many practical problems and challenges that have to be tackled to make the policy on education in mother tongue fully operational.

- The objectives of the interaction on mother tongue is to-
- Make a general assessment of the present status of the policy of education in mother tongue.
  - Identify the problems and shortcomings in the implementation of the policy on education in mother tongue.
  - Discuss about the ways of moving ahead the policy of education in mother tongue as a national campaign.
  - Find out the views of the people of the linguistic communities concerned regarding this policy.
  - Identify the general impact the policy has in EFA goals after its implementation.

The interaction was mainly discussion-based. Representatives from different linguistic groups, ethnic communities, curriculum experts, students' organizations and textbook writers participated in the interaction. At the program, the participants shared their views about the concept of education for all. They threw light on different aspects of the policy on education in mother tongue. The participants also suggested measures from their respective sides for making the policy effective. The interaction also took a question-answer form wherein the participants raised queries and sought explanation on certain issues related to education in mother tongue.

On the basis of the discussions and what transpired in the interaction, the following major points were identified by the participants with regard to the education in mother tongue policy.

- There is a strong realization of the lack of adequate resources for the education in mother tongue and lack of trained teachers
- No standard curriculum, lack of incentives for students studying in their mother language, lack of textbooks
- Original textbooks on mother languages should be prepared as translation of books from the original Nepali into different mother tongues does not become effective.
- The education in mother tongues should be taken ahead as a national campaign
- Teaching and learning should be in the medium of mother languages.

- Education in mother tongues should be provided in all the mother languages without any discrimination.
- The textbook distribution system is not effective. Textbooks on mother tongues do not reach to the remote districts on time.
- The textbooks on mother tongues are not standard. There are a lot of factual and language mistakes.
- Education in the Tamang language is going ahead in a satisfactory manner at some schools in Dolakha, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchok districts.
- Textbooks have been prepared in 12 different mother languages.
- Education in mother languages should be moved ahead as a medium of teaching and as a separate subject also.
- Textbooks on different mother languages from Grade 1-5 have been prepared and still more in the process of being prepared.
- Controversy over the issue of whether to use Kham or Pam in case of the Magar language has stalled the task of textbook preparation.
- Preparations are being made for designing textbooks in the Rajbanshi and Sunuwar languages.
- The permission for education in mother tongues is given on the basis of the density of population and the demands of a particular linguistic community.
- Lack of script and written literature in many mother languages is hampering the task of preparing textbooks on mother languages.
- Need to prepare textbooks in mother languages in accordance with the modern-day needs.
- The State should make commitment and devise concrete plans for promoting education in mother tongues.
- Need to conduct education in mother tongue as a national campaign.

From the views expressed by the speakers, it can be said that different linguistic groups in the country have gradually become aware of the need of starting education in mother tongue. As a result, some of the linguistic communities have also started community schools offering courses in mother tongue on their own.

The government has also adopted the policy of promoting education in mother tongue. Accordingly, it has started preparing syllabus and textbooks on education on mother tongue. Similarly, it has made the necessary budgetary allocations for implementation of this policy. On the basis of this the appointment and arrangements of teachers' placements has also been adjusted or is in the process of being adjusted. Special subsidies are being given to schools running classes in mother tongue.

On the basis of the discussions, the overall situation of education in mother tongue is not progressing ahead as per the desired extent. According to the educationists, this is because of the lack of awareness on the part of the communities concerned regarding the value of education in mother tongue, the government's lackluster attitude in promoting education in mother tongue and the growing tendency among the parents to educate their children in English medium schools.

- There is a need to promote education in mother tongue as a national campaign.
- Need to raise awareness at the community level on the importance of education in mother tongue.
- Allocating adequate resources for promoting education in mother tongue as a national campaign.
- Improve upon the syllabus and textbooks in mother tongue.

- Prepare qualified teachers to teach in mother tongue.

### **3.3.6 Interaction on Learning with dignity**

Acquiring education with out any fear and alarm is a right of all the students. Violence is practiced as a matter of routine across cultural, religious, ethnic, geographical and income groups in South Asia. Tragically, it is inflicted by the very people who are charged with their care and safety. Violence against children breaches human rights, in particular, the right of every person to human dignity and physical integrity, and thus to equal protection from all forms of violence, upheld in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Violence against girls and boys is a key issue that must be addressed if we are to seriously uphold children's rights and improve the lives of the children in our country.

According to the report 'Mapping Save the Children's Response to Violence Against Children in South Asia', corporal/physical and humiliating/degrading punishment is widely practiced in homes, schools, workplace and institutions in Nepal. A UNICEF Nepal study carried out in 2000 states that even very young children are not spared physical punishment. Parents generally resort to threats, intimidation and, in some cases, deprivation of food as ways of ensuring compliance and good behavior. The study said for the most part, parents did recognize that beating is not the best way to discipline children and that they should maintain their composure when correcting child misbehaviour. Yet, they still practice, particularly with older, school-aged children.

The same study said corporal/physical and humiliating/degrading punishment has often forced girls and boys to drop out of schools in Nepal. According to one report, 14 percent of school drop out is attributed to fear of the teacher. It is the general belief in our country, as in other countries of the region, that children must be punished for offences. Although physical punishment is banned in many private schools in Kathmandu it continues to be practised. In Government schools, there is no such ban and corporal punishment is routine.

Given the seriousness of the issue and the impact it is having on the overall education system and attainment of the objective of Education for All, Education Journalists' Group organized an interaction on Learning with Dignity as part of its Media Mobilization for Education For All program.

#### **The objective of the interaction on Learning with Dignity is to-**

- Identify the real issues related to learning with dignity in Nepal's context
- Assess the present situation of teaching-learning environment in schools with respect to learning with dignity.
- Identify measures being taken to promote learning with dignity in schools
- Discuss the problems and challenges faced in promoting learning with dignity
- Suggest and recommend ways of enhancing learning with dignity.

The interaction was discussion-based and elicited a lot of response from the participants. Representatives of the teachers' unions, school headmasters, ethnic communities, Dalit community, marginalized groups, educationists and media people shared their views on the topic of the interaction. The officials from the Department of Education and the District Education Offices explained policies relating to Learning with Dignity. Besides sharing their views on different aspects of Learning with Dignity, the participants suggested different ways of promoting child-friendly teaching and learning environment at schools. The interaction also

sometimes took a question-answer form as the participants sought to clarify topics which were not clear to them.

On the basis of the discussions and what transpired in the interaction, the following major points were identified by the participants with regard to the overall scenario of Learning with Dignity in Nepal's context. The summary of the findings also identifies the different problems related to the interaction topic and the areas of improvement and related policy matters.

- The social milieu of Nepal with traditional thinking that emphasizes more on disciplining the children.
- Lack of awareness among the parents that children could be made to read and write without punishment
- Lack of awareness among the teachers and failure on their part to adopt Learning with Dignity principles in classrooms
- Lack of child-friendly social, family and school environment
- Lack of proper training to teachers on the concept of Learning with Dignity
- Lack of input from the Government side in promoting Education with Dignity.

### 3.3.7 Investigative reporting: Issues raised

Journalists were involved in investigative reports to identify the critical issues related to the project accomplished. Journalists visited different parts of the country in collecting the issues. They undertook in-depth search, interviewed the stakeholders involved and analyzed the information. Altogether four investigative reports were prepared on the following issues as part of the project.

- I Access of Scholarship
- II Teacher Quota Situation in Nepal
- III Budget Allocation in Education
- IV Foreign Aid in Education

A brief analysis of the investigative reports is presented in the succeeding paragraphs.

#### **A. Access of Scholarship**

Distribution of the scholarship in education has often become a controversial matter in Nepal time and again. The government has provided different kinds of scholarship programs to the disadvantaged groups but their access has still become a far cry due to the numerous reasons. The main scholarship programs delivered by the government include scholarship for Dalits and girls, scholarship for the children of martyr, scholarship for the girls' students in Karnali zone upto secondary level, scholarship for girls for hostel expenditure and scholarship for the students of the Himalayan region as well. Further, the

#### **Box; Key findings from Investigative reporting in Scholarship issue**

- Some schools have not distributed the scholarship to the students though they have received cash from District Education Office (DEO).
- In some cases, full amount was received from the DEO but only certain amount was found distributed.
- Corruption and financial irregularities remained the major factors as the hindrances of the distribution of scholarship.
- The government is not able to increase the fund for the scholarship to meet the increased number of the targeted group.
- Government has failed to release the full amount to the District Education Offices and DEO doesn't deliver the demanded amount to school and consequently the schools show their apathy for the distribution of the scholarship to the targeted group.

government has the policy to provide scholarship to all the Dalit students who have come to the primary levels and 50 percent scholarship to the girls in the same level. The major aim of providing all these sorts of scholarship incentive is to motivate the children of disadvantaged groups so as to bring them in the mainstream education so that it will help in nation building eliminating the gender and social discrimination. Unfortunately, the implementation aspect has a very poor result on it. In some cases, the fake name of the scholarship achiever has been prepared while in many no scholarship has been distributed. These scholarship programs have also aimed to tempt children to school. Yet, as indicated above, these programs have hardly reached to the target groups.

Bearing this sorry state of affair, Education journalist's Group conducted a field based investigation on *Effectiveness of the Scholarship in School Level*. This report has been successful in providing the insights to the pitfalls in scholarship. Particularly, the reports have clearly indicated the failure of the state mechanism on the monitoring aspects of scholarship provisions and incentives. The report has further indicated that many schools have failed in appropriating the allocated scholarship incentives to the needy and the targets. Despite receiving the funds for the same from the District Education Office (DEO), the funds have been either misutilized or kept dormant. The report also pointed that some of the schools have received the amount, made some decisions regarding the receipt of the scholarship funds in public in ensuring the transparency, but have failed to distribute in total. Identified risks from the report suggest that unless the instinct of corruption is eliminated, the situation was not going to be out and about. Corruption and financial irregularities have remained the obstacles in trickling the funds for the purpose they were aimed for.

These were not the only factors responsible for bringing the issues into concern. The problem of scholarship distribution has also been hindered by the apathy of the government agencies at the district level (DEO) in releasing the funds. The report has suggested effective monitoring in place for the appropriate mobilization of scholarship funds and incentives. It has also identified the precautionary role of different stakeholders in evaluating the progress of such provisions.

### ***B. Teacher Quota Situation in Nepal***

Presence of reasonable number of teachers to meet the demand of schools as compared to the number of the students has always become a difficult task of implementation in Nepal. Excess number of teachers in the schools where the pressure of the students is very low and very small number of the teachers in the schools where the pressure of the students is very dense are both the common phenomenon in the schools. In some places there are no subject teachers where assigned teachers teach the subject on which he/she has no knowledge about. This kind of situation has directly hit the education sector.

According to the official data of the Ministry of Education and Sports, there are about 6 million students and approximately 110,000 teachers in nearly 25,000 public schools throughout the nation. The student-teacher ratio is 40:1, 45:1 and 50:1 in mountain, hilly and Terai regions

#### **Key Findings on Teacher's Quota**

- Government has not allocated sufficient budget for the public schools especially schools situated in the rural areas.
- Teachers seem much unwilling to go to the rural areas to teach.
- Since teachers have been the tool of the political parties, the later transfer the first to their convenient places.
- General human tendency of teachers to be in the places full of physical facilities
- About 63 thousand teachers' vacancy in the schools all over the country.

respectively but the ratio of the distribution is quite discriminatory. The schools of the city areas more specifically Kathmandu have large number of teachers who have the responsibility of taking about 14 periods a week, while in the village they have to take more than 30 periods in a week.

Our studies have exhibited that student-teacher ratio seems more than as much as necessary in the urban areas while in the rural areas, the situation is quite dismal. In this context, the investigative reports have clearly identified the need of the government of Nepal to ensure sufficient budget allocation for the public school. In addition, it has also identified that the qualified teachers have the tendency to escape to move out of the schools in the rural area. When they have better opportunity at the urban areas, it seemed obvious for the same cause. Casual analysis has also indicated that such spirits of instinct has been developed as a result of multiple facts of which the important one is the political one. Since the teachers have the biases on some political parties, these groups transfer the teachers to the convenient places and this has been identified as the reason for many of the potential unfolded for the teachers as well as the parents.

### **C. Budget Allocation in Education**

Financial arrangement plays the vital role for every development work. Lack of sufficient financial allocation can not achieve the anticipated aim of the planned project and even if sufficient money is allocated the targeted aim fails in the absence of strong check and balance, proper monitoring mechanism and candid and sincere implementation.

The red books of the Finance Minister allocate larger amount of budget for the education sector every year making lots of promises targeting the public schools in Nepal but as compared to the monetary allocation, output is very discouraging. Experts often reveal the fact that Nepal invests probably largest percentage of its annual budget in education sector in South Asia. Though the percentage is, high amount comes to be low as the size of the total budget of this small country is also little. But the productivity is far less than that of the anticipated results.

The investigated report has identified that the large portion of the budget has been spent in the quantity rather than the quality aspect of the educations sector. The teacher's salary and other expenses for the staff and the officials have taken such a large share that little is left for the school quality improvement in terms of facilities and resources availability. The report also identified the impact of conflict in use of the funds. The schools were the worst hit of the conflict and the ease in reaching the money to the schools and teachers was difficult.

#### **Key issues related to budget allocation in education**

- Government's budget, which is never delivered in time, allocated for the education sector has been largely invested for the staff and the officials.
- Since this investigation was conducted at the time of conflict, there was a great difficulty for the government or the DEO to reach money in time as teacher were the main victim of conflict and schools remained the major places of political activities
- During the time of conflict, large amount of teacher's salary used to be taken by the insurgents as a levy or in the name of donation that finally created the mental pressure to the teacher.
- Resource persons and school inspectors have not visited the schools rather they remain in the district headquarters.

The report has also explained that the teachers were mentally and physically targeted when it was the matter of donation from the teachers to the Maoists. Part of the salary of the teachers was taken by the rebels and this created reluctance of the teachers in effective teaching at the schools as well.

In order to trace out the budget allocation, there is a responsibility for the DEO officials to regularly monitor the progress in this aspect. Resource persons and school inspectors at different levels have the full responsibility to visit the schools and check the status of budget allocation.

#### ***D. Foreign Aid in Education***

Foreign aid in education sector is one of the burning issues at present. The poverty stricken countries like Nepal where larger part of the total annual budget is expected to have come from the foreign aid can hardly spend money in the education sector. Education has yet to become a fundamental right in the constitution of Nepal so expenditure in education from the government level has still become an elective affair.

Nepal receives large amount of monetary assistance from the international community in the pretext of poverty elimination and in this turn a small percentage of funds comes to the education sector as well.

To take a general account of the history, the World Bank initiated Rasuwas-Nuwakot Unified Development Plan, Village Development Project 2036 B.S., Mahakali Unified Village Development Project, Koshi Hilly Region Village Development funded by Britain, Seti Zone Unified Village Development Project funded by Asian Development Bank and the like.

After the political change in 2046 B.S. some ambitious educational plans like Basic and Primary Education Project were introduced by the government. Initiated in 1992, this project had aimed to increase the quality in education, enlarge the access, and bring out the reforms in education management.

The investigative report has analyzed the stock of the concerned programmes and institutions in education sector and investing resources for the sector (see box). It has also explained that there is no identification of the problems. The need of the schools, teachers and other stakeholders is something but the donor community spends money for something else. Likewise, trainings and motivation programs conducted by donors have hardly been implemented. Money spent in education sector especially through donors is less transparent and more controversial.

#### ***Concerned programs and institutions engaged in education***

- Education For All
- Secondary Education Aid program
- Physical facilities Extension Project
- School hand over and encouragement Program
- Food for education Program
- Teacher Teaching Program
- Informal Education and National Literacy campaign
- Curriculum Development center
- Office of the Controller of Examination

The investigative report has also expressed that some NGOs have often received money from outside without any notice of the government. Even MOE also makes direct agreement with the donors without incorporating it in the annual budget which is mandatory. The government's rule and policy to receive money from the donor agencies is more process oriented than result oriented. The report opines that the donors have always put their vested interest for each program where their conditions should

be followed by the receiver by all means. There is a lack of coordination among the government, donor agencies, and stakeholders.

Though there are several programmes for education in Nepal (see box), these have not worked effectively in mobilizing the foreign aid and resources. Sustainability is overlooked by the funded programmes.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project has been able to attain the objectives set in the project and the subsequent results of the projects have been important inputs for our further planning as well as the advocacy and lobby works at different levels. EJJ will build its future interventions based on the findings. These findings have also been extensively shared with different stakeholders and as a result, there have been positive comments both from government and non-government sectors.

The first anticipated result of the project was related with orientation to radio journalists. As a result of the intervention, education beat reporters in Radio were empowered with abilities to mobilize the resources with the newer ideas developed through the orientation classes. In a workshop method, they were oriented on various issues of education and media by eminent personalities in these areas. Participants were provided with an overview upon education, including the general theory of education, the philosophical and sociological foundation, the political economy of education and the holistic approach on it. Radio journalists were also acquainted on the contemporary global context on education and the status of education in Nepal, on government policy, programs and budget in education and its implementation status. There were many discussions about education issues in Nepal and the role of media in the acquisition of quality education. Further, the orientation was successful in discussing the topics for behavioral and attitude change and the role of FM radios and to identify the local educational issues to be raised by the FM radios. Participants were able to interact freely on methods of producing radio programs on education related topics by supporting with effective communication techniques on program quality improvement.

The second result of the project expected to advocate with education stakeholders in directing the activities towards fulfillment of EFA with the mobilization and empowerment of the journalists. For this purpose, district level interactions were organized. These interactions in 7 districts were able to bring up the local level educational issues. These issues were also broadcasted through the radio program and discussed on the central interaction EJJ undertook. Thus, there has been effective follow up of the local level issues. The participation from different education interest groups in these meetings was effective to imply and make conclusion that there are many things still yet to be done to ensure that the EFA is achieved. The interactions also identified the need of publicizing the aims and progress of EFA at local level and prepare the infrastructure for the same.

The district level interactions have contributed to the major goals of the program to create pressure in policy designs and frameworks attuned to EFA at the district level through in-depth investigative reporting and the comprehensive discussions and sharing of views that took place in the interaction on wide range of topics related to the EFA.

The third result expected by the project was that the initiations for policy recommendations internalization is begun by the policy making and implementing agencies. For this two types of activities were carried out i.e. 6 central level interactions and 4 investigative reports. The policy makers have been sensitized in issues such as girls education, school drop outs, resource mobilization for EFA, early childhood development, education in mother languages and Learning with dignity. All of these interactions were participated by the concerned policy making representatives as well as other concerned stakeholders such as teachers and students, parents and guardians and NGO and INGO representatives.

Likewise, the journalists were involved in investigative reports to identify the critical issues related to the project accomplished. Journalists visited different parts of the country in collecting the issues. They undertook in-depth search, interviewed the stakeholders involved and analyzed the information. Altogether four investigative reports were prepared on different issues such as access of scholarship, teacher quota in schools, and budget allocation in education and foreign aid in education. All these investigative reports have provided interesting facts, figures and causes in relation to promoting education in Nepal and meeting the EFA within the time. They have highlighted the challenges faced and the way ahead.

However, there are few areas where EJM and similar activities further need to carry out the action:

- ♣ Media orientation as one-off events is not sufficient to adequately motivate and empower the radio journalists. These programs need to be the part of the overall project cycle in any similar projects. EJM with the help of support agencies are to continue to organize such events time and again.
- ♣ We are dedicated to follow up the activities. However, many a time, once the events are accomplished, the project interventions do not leave any impact. Therefore, a suitable exit strategy needs to be developed.
- ♣ Since the district level interactions were able to involve only a few people, such sorts of interactions are needed in the community level as well.
- ♣ There is widespread need felt by local stakeholders on publicizing of the EFA goals, targets and achievements.
- ♣ Central level interactions should be able to involve more journalists and ensure their active participation in presenting the issues and sharing with the stakeholders.
- ♣ Investigative reporting can bring hidden issues. Therefore, it is recommended that such interventions are promoted at the local level by developing the cadre of journalists with research skills.

## **Annex 1:**

### **Proceedings of the Orientation to Radio Journalists on Education Issues (23-25 Nov 2006)**

#### **First Session**

##### *Introduction and opening session (10 a.m.)*

- At first, the participants (20 in all) were led to the meeting hall of Bhaktapur Guest House and asked to introduce themselves one by one. They were also asked to give a brief introduction of the radio station they worked for, their job and the radio programs they produced.
- The session started off with the orientation modulator, Mr. Bhupa Raj Khadka, explaining the objectives of the orientation and the general methodology that would be followed throughout the orientation.
- Mr. Arjun Khadka, orientation program coordinator, gave a brief introduction of the orientation, its rationale and importance.
- The participants were then given a questionnaire (see Annex) to fill up, outlining their expectations from the orientation, their general perception regarding education and the main issues on education that they think they should raise as radio journalists.
- Idea-sharing from among the participants:

##### *Shakeel Ahmad Khan (Radio Bheri Awaz F.M., Nepalgunj, Banke)-*

Shakeel shared his ideas on producing education-related radio programs. He said he produces programs in the Abadhi language, the language spoken by a majority of the population in Western Terai Region of Nepal. He said at first when he joined as a radio journalist, the local Muslim community, of which he is a member, and his family was not very optimistic about his job. He said his family and the community wrote him off as 'just another voice' on the radio.

Shakeel stated that the local community did not see any rationale whatever in what he was doing and at one time his father even asked him to give up the idea of working in radio and instead concentrate in his studies. He said this 'negative' image about radio that is evident among the local community is due to the illiteracy and ignorance. He also dwelt on the socio-economic condition of the local community to highlight the fact that the members of the community are so preoccupied with their livelihood that they even do not have the time to listen to the radio programs.

Regarding his expectations from the orientation program, Shakeel said that the orientation should be more focused on the education issues that the community radio need to highlight and raise. He added that the orientation should give ideas to the participants regarding how they could synchronize the educational issues in the local context.

##### *Indira Aryal (Lumbini F.M., Butwal)*

Indira said that she had been a teacher prior to joining Lumbini F.M. radio and so she has a fairly good idea of what education was and the related issues. She said that she has been producing a radio program on education, working together with a professor. The program is mainly related to school education and allied topics. She stated that her program raised one issue related to drinking water problem in one of the schools in Rupandehi District. Once the problem about the lack of drinking water facility at the primary school was reported in the radio program, one generous gentleman contacted the school and offered to supply the drinking water.

In addition to the education program, she also produces special tutorial programs for students preparing for the School Leaving Certificate examinations. Likewise, her radio has been broadcasting programs on women's issues and community awareness.

Regarding her expectations from the orientation, Indira said she hoped to get new insights into the education issues and the body of knowledge that is education and how to link these in radio programs. She added that she hoped to gain knowledge and skills of producing more effective radio programs on education.

*Dr. Balchandra Luitel, educationist*

In his brief statement, Dr. Luitel explained to the participants about what is understood by the term education. He said education is simply not reading and writing on what he called a piece of paper. It is a broad discipline that incorporated the entire field of learning and knowledge and was related to different aspects of human life. He said education is also about gaining practical knowledge and it was tied to our feelings.

Dr. Luitel stressed that the media has a strong role to play in bringing to the fore the strengths and weaknesses of our education system and raising public awareness on the importance of quality education in national development. He said this is the age of information technology and the media is ever expanding. It is high time, he said, that we draw up a strategy of how to use the information and technology for promoting quality education. He also underlined the need for a close coordination and collaboration between the media and education for the cause of making Education for All attainable.

He said he did not like to use the term 'training' as such and in lighter vein stated that we train dogs and horses. He said any training should be based on debates, discussion and interaction. It should incorporate the wider participation of the participants. Dr. Luitel stressed that the training should be two-way traffic.

*Dr. Bidhyanath Koirala, Educationist*

Dr. Bidhyanath Koirala said education and media were the two most important components of human civilization and that collaboration between the media and education was necessary for the advancement of human civilization. He said the media is like a two-way border crossing in that it raises public issues and brings them to the notice of the authorities and it also disseminates the government's plans and programs to the general public. It plays the role of a watchdog.

He said radio journalists should take into account the people's reaction to the issues raised by the media. He urged the participating radio journalists to inform and aware the state authorities regarding the access of the local community in Education for All program. He also suggested that the media could raise some of the traditional system of education prevalent in different communities and how that could be reformed to suit our purposes. As an example he mentioned about the Bheja system practiced by the Magar community and the Dalan system of the Mushahar community.

Dr. Koirala said as the community was the main source of knowledge, the media should bring the best practices of the community to the fore. In this connection he dwelt on the importance of education in mother tongue.

*Sudarshan Ghimire, President, EJG*

In his opening remarks, Mr. Ghimire spoke on the need to tie up indigenous knowledge with education. He said we should use our indigenous knowledge base for promoting education and vice versa. In this connection, Mr. Ghimire also spoke on the need of systematic and scientific documentation of the indigenous knowledge.

He said the orientation would help the radio journalists to identify the pertinent education issues and raise them through radio programs for creating public awareness on these issues and taking them to the authorities concerned for drawing their attention to these issues. In this way, he said, the EJG would also be benefited.

Mr. Ghimire also urged the participants to make the most out of the orientation. He called on them to take active part in the discussion and workshop sessions to make the orientation lively, fruitful and worthwhile.

### **Presentation by Mr. Balchandra Luitel**

Before making his presentation, Mr. Luitel asked the participants what education is, and think and come up with ideas to define the term. He put on a large sheet of paper on the board and wrote on it the points said by the participants. After hearing all the points said by the participants, Mr. Luitel compressed them to arrive at the following list:

What is Education?

- book knowledge
- gateway of awareness
- all kind of knowledge
- Subjective knowledge
- Bundle of experiences
- learning knowledge
- Expression of the innate capacity

Mr. Luitel conducted the presentation in three phases. First, he made an overview of education. In this phase, he discussed with the participants about what education is, its different dimensions, forms and classification. He also dwelt on the philosophical and sociological aspects of education. The participants were constantly encouraged to come up with their own ideas on different topics related to education. In this connection, the participants were also asked to share their experiences on their school and higher education, if any, with fellow participants. The participants raised the issue of commercialization of education and a majority of them were opposed to the commercialization of education.

Thereafter, Mr. Luitel made his presentation on PowerPoint. In this section, he discussed and explained the different topics related to education- contrasting philosophies, sustainable education and contextualizing, i.e. the future course of education.

Then, in the **question-answer session**, Mr. Luitel fielded queries and clarifications from the participants. One question related to the gap between home and school education and another pertained to the difficulty involved in the inter-generational transfer of knowledge.

### **Comments on the presentation by Dr. Koirala**

In his statement, Dr. Koirala tried to establish a link between the major topics and points that came up during the presentation to the overall education scenario and the role of media. He said, the media could perhaps raise the following topics-

- Relation between the State and education and the role of the state.
- Looking at education from different perspectives, giving up idiosyncrasies.
- Question on the product and process of education and contextualization of the same.
- Raise issues where radical transformation is required in education and its sustainability.
- What the parents are learning from the children who go to school.
- Looking at education from the post-modern perspective.
- Compare the global and local trends in education.

---

## Second Session

*Presentation by Dr. Tirtha Raj Khaniya, educationist*

Dr. Khaniya began his presentation by making an overview of the scenario of education in Nepal and the global education scenario. In taking forward his discussion, Dr. Khaniya shared an anecdote with the participants. The anecdote:

*Suppose a boy of 13 years reading in class four in a public school in Nepal was lifted straightaway from his school and taken by helicopter to a big city like Lucknow and left in the middle of a crowded street. What would be his reaction?*

*Similarly, a girl of 13 years from the United States was lifted straightaway from her school and taken by helicopter to New Delhi and left in the middle of a crowded street. What would be her reaction?*

In the first instance, Dr. Khaniya said, the boy from Nepal would start crying. He would cry for quite a while until a kind person comes for his help. But, in the second instance, the girl from America would ask the people the location of the nearest police station or call center, the name of the city, the country it is located in etc. She would then go to the call center and make a call home for help.

Dr. Khaniya referred to this anecdote to highlight the differences between the education system in Nepal and the United States and the kind of products that these two sets of education system produce.

In this background, Dr. Khaniya stressed that the context of education has changed and with it the objectives and the methods of education. He said it is different from what it used to be in the past. He stressed that the concept of life-long education is the 'in-thing' in education now. He stressed that the world keeps on changing and so do education and the knowledge. Similarly, the context of learning, process of learning and the learners also keep on changing.

Dr. Khaniya, in his presentation, discussed the following topics-

- The global context of education and the status of education in Nepal.

In this topic, Dr. Khaniya discussed the changing dynamics of education in the global context and the near-about stagnant education system in Nepal. He stressed the need for reforming and revising our education system, curriculum and methodology of teaching/learning process.

- Education and politics

Under this topic, Dr. Khaniya discussed the relation between education and politics. He said that education and the state and politics were so closely interrelated that one could not be separated from the other. In fact, he said, all these disciplines complement each other. He however cautioned against politicization of education.

#### - Reforms in education

Under this topic, Dr. Khaniya underpinned on reforms in education. He said the education system of a country should be reformed in conformity with the changing circumstances and needs of society. He also stated that although the talk of bringing about big change in the education policy and system of Nepal are mentioned by the authorities from time to time, these are seldom put into practice. Even if the plans and policies for change are implemented, they are not to the desired extent.

#### - Quality of education

Under this topic, Dr. Khaniya discussed about the quality aspects of education. He said although there is no common consensus on the definition of what constitutes quality and how to measure it, different countries have a working definition and have set up country-specific standards for measuring quality in education. Generally speaking, quality education pertains to whether specific objectives have been met or not. According to him, the objective of education is to enhance cognitive skills, social skills and subject-specific skills.

Regarding the quality of education in Nepal, Dr. Khaniya observed that the standard of education in our country is at a par with that of the other developing countries, if not better. But what we are lacking in is that we have not been able to use technology and innovation in our classrooms and educational institutions. He added that we lack in the learning process and the cognitive aspect. The goal of education is to learning to think and learning to learn, which is utterly lacking in our context. He says this lack on our part is decreasing the quality of education.

#### - School education

Under this topic, Dr Khaniya dwelt on the overall situation of school education in Nepal. In this connection, he also compared the school education system in Nepal with the school education system in the developed countries. He stressed on the need of infusing more resources to the school education as it is the foundation to higher education. He argued that the more we invest in the school education system, the more productive would be the higher education. Dr Khaniya noted that although the school level curriculum and textbooks in Nepal are of the same standard of the curriculum and textbook in other developing countries, if not to that of the developed countries, what we are lacking is in the process of learning. We lack in procedural knowledge. There is immense source of knowledge around us and in our community, but we have not been able to identify and take the knowledge that we need. Similarly, he said we are far behind in basic learning and activities like classroom management and the teaching-learning process. He said our teachers lack in tapping the creativity in children. He added that we should work towards creating a transformation of knowledge. He also pointed out the need of

#### - Higher education

Under this topic, Dr. Khaniya elucidated on the objectives of higher education. He said the three main objectives of higher education are the generation and transformation of knowledge, group formation and particularization, and production and application of knowledge. Dr. Khaniya added that the latest discourse on higher education is that it should work and move ahead towards development. Higher education should play the role of the catalyst of development, both physical and academic. Dr. Khaniya lamented that this very part was missing in the higher education sector of Nepal. He added that another function of higher education is collaboration and resource generation. Dr. Khaniya stated that the creativity factor was missing from the higher education of

Nepal. He lamented that the higher education sector in Nepal has become more of a routine than creative.

- Special education

Under this topic, Dr. Khaniya highlighted the need for the education of the people with special needs. He said the goal of Education for All program would be hard to attain if the section of society which presently does not have access to education was not brought to the mainstream of education. Dr. Khaniya said the disabled persons, illiterate adults, marginalized groups and the deprived sections of society fall under this category. He said it is the duty of the State to devise special policies, strategies and programs to cater to this section of the population.

**Question-Answer session**

In this session, Dr. Khaniya responded to the different queries raised by participants in course of the discussions. The questions mainly concerned about the quality of education in Nepal and the tardy implementation of the education policies.

Responding to the queries, Dr. Khaniya said the main reason for the lack of quality of education in the country was due to the lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of educational policies. He added that although Nepal's curriculum was at a par with that of the other South Asian countries, there is a lack of well-trained teachers, physical facilities, shortage of educational materials and textbooks, and lack of school inspection mechanism.

**Comments by Dr. Koirala**

Based on the discussions and presentation by Dr Khaniya, Dr Koirala said the media, more so the local F.M. stations, should try to explore and see the relations between the following topics.

- What could be the best evaluation system for schools, normative or formative?
- How to make the teaching and learning process at schools more child-friendly?
- How to bridge the gap between the knowledge of the older generation and the new generation, or how to establish a linkage between the knowledge of the school, children and the parents.
- Investigate the school culture and the culture of the children, teachers and community.
- Investigate the learning style and the process of learning.
- How to use technology in the school and classroom.
- What if the concept of flexible school hour/weekend school, and open school is incorporated in the school academic calendar.
- How much of life skill education is imparted to our children.
- The need for analyzing the pedagogical process.

**Third Session**

**Presentation by Mr. Janardan Sharma (Director General, Dept. of Education)**

In his presentation, Mr. Sharma highlighted the policies, programs and the activities being carried out by the Department of Education. He said the Department of Education is looking after the school education and teacher management.

Mr. Sharma enumerated the following programs implemented by the Department and elucidated them.

Education for All program- Under this program, Mr. Sharma said, the Department has prepared the EFA Plan of Action which was currently under implementation phase. Similarly, he

said the Department is running the Secondary School Support Program in ten Districts on an intensive basis. He also referred to the Higher Secondary Education Project, the Community Managed School Program and the Early Childhood Development Program. He informed that the Higher Secondary Education Project is in the pipeline and it is being undertaken with the loan assistance from the Asian Development Bank. The goals of this program are to increase accessibility of education, to improve the quality and delivery aspects and to enhance the capacity-building.

Mr. Sharma said that the Department was implementing the School Mapping Program. Under this program, he said, the area and households to be covered by the school would be surveyed. He added that the Department was thinking of introducing the Child Tracking Program. He said under this program, the schools would be provided with a form which would include all information regarding the students enrolled in the school. The schools would submit the form to the District education Officers concerned after filling it up.

Likewise, Mr. Sharma said plans are afoot to undertake a Special Education Program and the School Outreach Program. Under this program, the children would be taught in the village itself. He added that the Department will also implement Out of School Program. The child education program and the Shikshya Sadan programs are the extension of the Out of School Program. The objective of this program is to teach the children at their homes or in the community itself. Similarly, Mr. Sharma mentioned about the Back to School Program, the aim of which, is to send the school drop-outs back to school. He also stated that the Department has started special school for the disabled. Under this program, special classes have been started for 3,400 disabled people and 34 special schools are in operation. Mr. Sharma added that there is a program of extending the special schools. Likewise, mention should be made of the Madarasa, Gomba and Gurukul Education Program.

Mr. Sharma said, besides the above regular programs, the Department of Education was working to bring about gender parity in education through the inclusive education program for meeting the EFA goals. He said the Ministry of Education also planned to meet the education needs of all through the Village Education Committee. The Department is also working to improve the quality of education on all sectors. In this connection it is preparing local curriculum and conducting short-term and long-term teacher training. Its objective is to train 6,000 teachers. He added that the Department has a plan of implementing the Intensive Program for the remote Mountainous Districts like Humla, Jumla and Mugu.

Under the sector-wise approach, he said, the Department would conduct the School Assessment Program

### **Question-Answer Session**

After the presentation by Mr. Sharma, the participants raised a number of questions regarding the different programs run by the Department of Education and the status of their implementation in the Districts.

The participants mainly raised questions regarding the shortage of textbooks in the mountainous districts, the plight of community appointed teachers, the misuse of scholarship funds meant for students of the Dalit and disadvantaged communities and the girls, the shortage of teachers' posts in rural areas and the problem in connection with the adult literacy classes and non-formal education.

Replying to these queries, Mr. Sharma acknowledged that there were practical problems in the implementation and the efficacy of the different programs conducted by the Department of Education. He said the Department was aware of the problems raised by the participants and it was sincerely working to solve those problems. He said one of the major stumbling blocks in the smooth implementation of the programs is the political instability in the country and the political interference at the centre and the district level. He said the education sector should not be politicized.

### **Comments by Dr. Koirala**

On the basis of the discussions and the question-answer session on the presentation by Mr. Sharma, Dr. Koirala came up with the following list of topics that the media could investigate and report on.

- How has the access of all the communities been addressed in the Education for All program.
- The need for investigating the effectiveness of the multilingual education or the education in the mother tongue.
- The need for carrying out investigative reporting on the status of the community managed schools.

---

2nd Day (November 24)

### **First Session**

#### **Presentation by Mr. Balananda Poudel, Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports**

The Education Secretary, Mr. Poudel, began his presentation by discussing in short how the media could work for promoting the Education for All program. He explained the main areas of focus under this program and the role of media in analyzing the implementation aspects of the program.

Mr. Poudel also said that the Ministry of Education and Sports was thinking of holding regular interactions on how the media could focus on the education programs. He added the Ministry would share information with the media regarding the different policies, programs and projects being undertaken by it as well as the budgetary allocations made to the District Education Offices under the education head.

After the short talk, Mr. Poudel asked the participants to share the different education-related problems in the districts. In this connection, **Keshav Bhattarai from Kanchanjangha F.M., Jhapa District**, said that because of the problem of unemployment and the illiteracy among the parents and the extreme poverty prevalent among the majority of the population in the district, the drop out rate is high in the district and the government should devise ways of addressing this problem so as to reduce the drop out rate.

**Arjun Mani Poudel of the Synergy F.M., Chitwan District**, raised the issue of the education policies and programs not reflecting the changing times and catering the national needs. He said the education policies should be constantly updated and revised.

**Indira Aryal of Radio Lumbini F.M., Rupandehi District**, raised the problem of teacher-student ratio. She said that the number of students at many of the schools in the rural parts of the District was very small compared to the number of teachers. She said this was because a majority of the population took their children to the boarding schools in the urban centers. She said that the scholarship meant for the disabled students was also cut.

**Madhav Aryal of Muktinath F.M., Palpa District**, raised the problem of the lack of proper monitoring in the school enrollment. He said that at the beginning of the academic session when the admissions are open, there is a high pressure of children for enrolment, but as the academic session progresses the number of students starts to decrease sharply. Mr. Aryal also said that the District Education Offices lack much information and there is a lack of coordination between the different sections at the DEO. Moreover, he said the DEO, refuse to provide information to the journalists on most of the occasions. He also complained about the misuse of funds.

**Bikram Niraula of Koshi F.M., Morang District**, raised the issue of the misuse of the students scholarship fund. He said the scholarship fund meant for students from the Dalit, backward, indigenous, minority and deprived communities, the underprivileged children, disabled children and girls has been misused.

**Keshav Lamichhane from the Pokhara F.M., Kaski District**, said the scholarship meant for the students at the country's only school for the deaf has not been distributed to the students. He added that the only school for the deaf in the country was facing a crunch in funds. He said the students were made to pay for the teachers appointed through the private resources.

**Govindra Mahat from Karnali F.M., Jumla District**, shedding light on the status of education in Jumla District, said that the literacy rate for the district was very low compared to other districts. As a result of this, the awareness level of the people of the district was also low. The people of the district did not send their children to school as a result of the poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness. Among the major issues he raised, one related to the lack of textbooks for children, delay in distribution of the scholarship funds. He also said the students were to carry loads of firewood while coming to school to make money for giving to the community-resource teachers.

**Sarad Adhikari from Swargadwari F.M., Dang District**, said the government should come up with a comprehensive policy for the education of the underprivileged children who are out of school due to various reasons to meet the goals of Education for All by 2015. He observed that unless a pragmatic education policy to address the many shortcomings in the present education system of the country were devised, it would be hard to attain the EFA goals. He said special plans should be brought to include the street children, child workers, orphans and the conflict-affected children.

**Purushottam Subedi from EJG/ Radio Sagarmatha, Kathmandu**, said the government's education policy should lay stress on the quality of education, making it inclusive and accessible. He said emphasis should also be given to vocational and technical education. Similarly, Mr. Subedi underlined the need for promoting non-formal education in the context of meeting the EFA goals.

After hearing the views of the participants, Mr. Poudel said the issues raised by the participants have provided him with the opportunity to know about the problems related to the education sector in the districts. He said although he has been taking information through his own channel, it would be more effective to take information from the media. He said the media is the 'ear and nose' of the communication process. He added that media played the role of bridge between the society and the government. This process in turn helped make the authorities more accountable and responsible to the public. He also admitted that although a system of

accountability has not been established in government business, it is high time that such a system is established sooner rather than later in the changed Loktantrik context.

The Education Secretary gave out the information that the Ministry was in the process of preparing a communications strategy. He said the work of the media was also difficult in that it is hard to get the required information. At the same time, the Education Secretary called on the journalists to become professional.

He said that the Ministry of Education kept all public information in its Website so that it would be easy for the journalists to access any information regarding the educational topics. He added that the Ministry is also working to update its data in the light of complaints that educational data was not updated. Mr. Poudel admitted that the problem of drop-out was serious and that there was mismanagement in the education sector at the local level. He said the teacher-student ration is also much skewed as schools had been opened in the past without having the school mapping done and evaluating the coverage area.

The Education Secretary stated that the Ministry is thinking of increasing the budget and investment in the education sector. Similarly, he said there is a policy to prioritize education and enhance efficiency. The Education Secretary stated that it is the right of every qualified person to compete for the teaching position and the right of every student to be taught by a competent teacher. Regarding the distribution of the scholarship money, he said a team would be formed which would directly go to the schools and distribute the scholarship to the bona-fide students. He said the journalists would also be involved in this process. Likewise, the school inspectorate system would be activated, he said.

In connection with the education of students with special needs, he said there was a debate going on regarding the schooling of the children with disabilities. The debate revolved around the segregation versus integration model. In Nepal's case, he said the concept of providing education to children with disabilities from the integration model has not become successful mainly due to the lack of adequate facilities. Similarly, he said the outcome would not be satisfactory if the teaching-learning activities in the classroom were not effective.

He said that the government was in favor of giving the responsibility of management of the schools to the local communities. He said the government's role was that of a facilitator in the education sector, adding that there is no option than to empower the School Management Committees. He stressed that the School Management Committees should be more inclusive in nature. They should not only be the forums of the village elite, he said. He added that the government should adopt the decentralization policy in the school administration. It should play the role of a facilitator and provide the funds but it should not be directly involved in running schools.

Regarding the Education for All program, the Education Secretary said there was no intensive campaigning for the EFA. He underpinned the need of promoting the vocational education. He said more investment is needed in this sector. The Education Secretary noted that there is an urgent need to put in place transparency in the process of distribution of the scholarship funds. He said the Ministry was working to check misuse in the distribution of the scholarship. It was thinking of increasing the scholarship to girls from the economically vulnerable sections in remote areas.

**Comments by Dr. Koirala**

On the basis of the discussions and the presentation made by the Education Secretary, Dr. Koirala came up with the following suggestions regarding the role of the media on some of the major points that came up during the discussions.

- What is the common acceptable benchmark for measuring quality education and who decides what quality education is. He said perhaps the media could decide the standards for measuring the quality of education in Nepal's context.
- In the present context, the Early Childhood Development Centers are confined to the cities and urban areas. They should be expanded to the rural areas as well. How it could be extended to the grassroots level and to the minority and marginalized communities.
- What measures are to be taken to increase the school enrolment and how could the school mapping be done.
- The child tracking should not be done by the Ministry from the centre. Arrangement should be made for doing child tracking in the districts by the schools themselves.
- There is a need to discourage the system of appointing teachers through the quota system as this would compromise the quality of education.
- The need for giving preference to the differently able students in school.
- A comparative study should be made of the budget that is spent in education. Whether the goals for which the budget is spent are being achieved etc.
- The media should suggest alternative ways of teaching and learning. For instance, the local F.M. radios could make arrangements for keeping radio transistors in the classrooms and broadcast appropriate educational programs during break or free time. The media should also focus on the positive impact of the education. They should not always highlight the negative aspects only.
- The role of media in promoting education in mother tongue and increasing the teachers' competencies in teaching in the mother languages.
- Promoting the reading habits among the students, teachers and the community at large by initiating the library movement and expanding its outreach.
- Making the Village Education Program effective. Who takes the responsibility for the management of the school- Government or the local community?
- The need to build up a resourceful database of schools and strengthening the inspection and surveillance system.
- How could the students be motivated to come to school? May be by providing snacks and other incentives.

## **Second Session**

### **Presentation by Dr. Bidhyanath Koirala**

Dr. Koirala conducted a workshop to elicit response from the participants regarding their perception on education and the issues in education which they thought they should raise. For this, Dr. Koirala conducted group work. He divided the participants into six groups of three persons each. Each group was asked to write down on large wallpaper the points identified by the group regarding the different educational issues and problems. The wallpaper of each group was put up on the wall and one person from each group was then asked to read out the points from his/her respective group. The points written by each group in Nepali have been given here after translating from Nepali into English.

### **Group 1 (Keshab Bhattarai, Jhapa; Khem Bolakhe, Hetauda and Keshav Sharan Lamichhane, Pokhara)**

1. Education up to the Secondary Level not free in practice.
2. Lack of qualified teachers.
3. Remuneration not attractive to attract the qualified human resources.
4. Lack of educational awareness among the parents.
5. Poverty
6. Lack of competent teachers with adequate knowledge for teaching in the mother language.
7. Lack of clear policies on education for Sanskrit schools, Madarasas, Buddhist monasteries and discrimination in the education in these bodies.
8. Lack of special schools for people with special needs.
9. Lack of awareness of target group regarding the education policies.
10. Inappropriate system of evaluation of student's competency and qualification.
11. Lack of clear policy on compulsory education.
12. Curriculum not consistent with the local geographical and cultural environment.
13. Lack of scientific education system.
14. Long teacher retirement period.

-----  
**Group 2 (Shankar Prasad Pandey, Bhairahawa; Tribhuvan Poudel, Pokhara and Bikram Niraula, Biratnagar)**

1. Lack of practical, vocational and employment-oriented education.
2. Lack of adequate teaching posts, physical infrastructures and textbooks.
3. Problem of school drop-out.
4. Communication problem between students and teachers due to language barrier.
5. Incoherency in the curriculum of the private boarding schools and the community schools.
6. One teacher teaching in many schools.
7. Political activities in schools.
8. Lack of monitoring and inspection at schools.
9. Impractical system of examination.
10. Lack of coordination among the parents, students and the teachers.
11. Commercialization of education.
12. Irregularity in the distribution of scholarship money.
13. Lack of subject teachers.
14. Poor people lack access to technical education.
15. Schools far from village.
16. People advocating for practical education in place of the bourgeoisie education not coming up with well-defined model on education.
17. Charging fees as against the provision of free education.
18. Lack of encouragement to teachers, inadequate facilities.
19. Teaching not as per the child psychology.
20. Centralized education system.
21. No choice of subjects.
22. Lack of restructuring in the education system.

**Group 3 (Purushottam Subedi, Kathmandu; Mohan Maya Dhakal, Surkhet and Govindra Mahat, Jumla)**

1. A large number of children of the school-going age remain out of school.
2. Lack of trained teachers.
3. Classroom management not consistent with the number of students.
4. Lack of annual plan of action (no specific schedule for course completion)

5. Academic sessions not suitable to the different geographical regions (same academic session in all the geographical regions).
6. No system of reward and punishment for teachers.
7. Carelessness of lady teachers in primary schools.
8. Weak inspection system.
9. Political interference in the education system (in appointment and transfers of teachers and formation of the School Management Committees).
10. Lack of textbooks and scholarship facilities.
11. The discriminatory attitude of society and the government to the teaching profession. (Teaching profession considered to be lowly and mediocre)
12. Widespread poverty (parents can not afford for their children's education).
13. Discrimination against girls in education (Social attitude that girls should not be educated etc.).
14. Scattered settlements, schools located far. (No provision for providing education at home or village)
15. Lack of opportunities for qualified local people in the teaching posts.
16. Parents do not carry out regular monitoring and inspection of schools. (Lack of programs meant for the parents)
17. Inadequate facilities for running pre-primary classes.
18. Lack of leadership qualities in the head teachers. (Headmasters not issuing clear-cut instructions to teachers regarding pedagogical topics).
19. Lack of skill-oriented education.
20. Ineffective adult education.
21. Lack of practical education.

**Group 4 (Indira Aryal, Rupandehi; Bishnu Sharma, Baglung and Shakeel Khan, Banke)**  
**Education issues-**

1. Restructuring of the education sector.
2. Poverty alleviation
3. Determination of syllabus for life-skill education.
4. Emphasis on practical education.
5. Need for implementation of education policies and regulations in letter and spirit.
6. Need for decentralized education policy.
7. Availability and use of educational materials.
8. Promotion of reading culture.
9. Linguistic diversity.
10. Need for regular interaction among education agencies, school management committee and teachers.
11. Systematic monitoring and alternative ways.
12. Success stories
13. Management of teacher training and supervision.
14. Transparency in the distribution of scholarships.
15. Problems arising after the enrolment campaign and ways of resolving the problems.
16. Management of teaching hours and academic calendar.
17. Reforms in the examination and evaluation system.

**Group 5 (Sarad Adhikari, Dang; Binu Subedi, Kathmandu and Rajesh Shrestha, Makwanpur)**

## **Education issues**

### **1. Pertaining to the family**

- Lack of educational awareness among the parents.
- Lack of relation between the curriculum and the practical life.
- Poor economic condition and lack of money for investing in the children's education and educational needs.
- Gender discrimination.
- Poverty
- Differences in the teaching methods at home and at school.
- Indifference of the parents to their children's education.

### **2 Pertaining to society**

- Feudalistic structure of society.
- Negligence of school activities.
- Tendency of looking up to the government for all educational needs.
- Lack of concern regarding the condition of the academic environment and the physical facilities at schools.
- Ethnic composition
- Child marriage
- Way of viewing the private boarding schools and the public schools.

### **3. Pertaining to school**

- Lack of student-friendly environment at schools
- Lack of physical infrastructure
  - a) Library
  - b) Classrooms
  - c) Toilet
  - d) Drinking water
  - e) Playground
  - f) Games equipment
- Stringent rules and regulations
- Lack of facilities for hearing into complaints.
- Lack of interaction among the students, teachers and parents.
- Discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity.
- Lack of extra-curricular activities
- Lack of annual working plan.

### **4. Pertaining to classroom**

- Size of classroom not in proportion to the number of students.
- Lack of teaching skills of teachers.
- Lack of subjective knowledge.
- Corporal punishment.
- Students' sensitivities and feelings are not recognized.
- Lack of educational materials.
- Traditional teaching methods and system.
- Language problem
- Lack of furniture.

### **5. Pertaining to the curriculum**

- Reading by force
- Incoherent syllabus between the private boarding schools and the government schools.
- No adequate attention given to child psychology.
- Emphasis only on theoretical knowledge.
- Local subjects and topics not included in classroom teaching.
- Lack of curriculum in the mother/local languages.
- Traditional syllabus
- Lack of vocational education.

#### **6. Pertaining to the government authorities**

- Lack of detailed information on the status of education in schools and colleges.
- Lack of coordination at the policy-making and implementation level.
- Presence of bureaucratic red tape.
- Power politics.
- Impractical examination system.
- Lack of transparency.
- Lack of accountability.

#### **Group 6 (Anuka Bhandari, Kathmandu; Arjun Poudel, Baglung and Madhav Aryal, Palpa)**

##### **Issues and problems related to education to be raised by the media.**

1. Sending children to school not in the priority of the parents in the rural setting.
2. Ethnic diversity in students and language problem.
3. Tendency to look up only to the government for everything.
4. Teachers not pragmatic and practical.
5. Skewed teacher-student ratio.
6. Lack of practical curriculum
7. Poverty and ignorance of parents.
8. Lack of expertise in specific subjects.
9. Teachers not committed to their profession.
10. Lack of access to education of underprivileged children, street children and domestic help.
11. Lack of physical facilities at school.
12. Inadequate salary, facilities and allowances for teachers.
13. Lack of physical facilities in schools.
14. Teacher-centered learning approach.
15. Examination-centered curriculum.
16. Ineffective teacher training.
17. Differences in value system (Cultural differences in what students learn at school and in the social and family setting).
18. Lack of effective and practical education policies.
19. Students' aptitude.

-----

After listing down the points pertaining to the problems and issues on education, one person from each group was asked to read out the points listed by the group. Based on the different points listed by each of the groups, Dr. Koirala made a brief survey on the major issues that the media, in particular the F.M. radios, could raise to draw the attention of the authorities and the general public. Dr Koirala suggested the following in that connection.

- The appropriate syllabus and mode of education in Madarasas and Sanskrit schools as well as the education provided at the Buddhist monasteries. How to bridge the education curriculum at the Madarasas and schools? He said currently a study is on in that connection.
- The topics related to special education. Whether separate schools need to be established for special education or it could be integrated in the schools themselves. If there are any separate schools for providing the special education, then how the children with special education needs are to be adjusted and integrated. If the special education is being provided at the schools, then how the students needing special education are given special treatment?
- Examination system. If there is a public consensus that the current education system is not scientific and impractical, then what could be the measures for making it more scientific and practical? What could be an effective student evaluation strategy? How the students with special educational needs be evaluated?
- Fusion of local and global contexts in education. For example, taking examples from the local context and extending them with global context. (E.g. uses of maize for different purposes in Nepal)
- How to stop the politicization of education and how to synchronize education with the state system.
- The impact of poverty and conflict on education of children.
- The topic of individualized education and the issue of multiple universities.
- The topic of preparing a calendar of operation for schools.
- How to enhance the morale of the teachers. How teaching profession could be established as a respected profession? The qualification of teachers and the way the society views the teachers.
- The issue of decentralization in the education system of Nepal and the concept of conducting community public hearing on education issues.
- The process of formulation of education policies. Whether education policies are inclusive in nature or not? Who prepares the education policies? How could these be made more participatory and inclusive? The need to remove the top-down approach in the formulation of education policies in Nepal.
- How could traditional values be synchronized with modern values in education?
- Relation between the teacher's salary and performance, and the ways of enhancing the teachers' salary.
- The status of education in the context of Nepal becoming the member of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

-----

### **Third Session**

#### **Presentation by Sudarshan Ghimire, President, EJJ**

#### **Topic: F.M. and Our Role**

Mr. Ghimire began his presentation by asking the participants their views regarding the role of the media, especially the F.M. radios, in promoting Education for All (EFA) goals. In this connection, the participants came up with their ideas on the role of the media. The majority of the points suggested by the participants fell under the following two major categories.

1. To build pressure and create awareness
2. Inform and educate - Duty and responsibility
  - Identification of problems and their resolution.

In his discussion, Mr. Ghimire stressed that the media should look into the education issues at a deeper level. It should investigate in an objective manner the different aspects related to education and present the different problems and also give suggestion for their solution.

Moreover, he said the media has an important role to shape the public opinion and relate the same to the authorities.

In this connection, Mr. Ghimire said, the media could build pressure for bringing about policy reforms in the education sector. It could play the role of a watchdog in the implementation of different government policies and programs. It could also raise public awareness on different topics related to the education, including the success of the EFA.

Mr. Ghimire then made an overview of the present role of the media in education. He said the media has been giving a lot of coverage to the topics related to education. He said if we look at the news published in the newspapers, news on education and related topics occupies a significant percentage of the total news coverage.

He also stated that the media should follow-up on the topics covered by it and that it should not generalize the issues. He stated that the media should now penetrate into the classroom and monitor the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. He underlined that the role of the media was important to change public perception on education.

After having discussed the role of the media in education, Mr. Ghimire underlined the need of the media to identify the priority issues in the education sector, that of access to education for all. He said the objective of Education for All should be extended to the level of the parents by incorporating the concepts of Village Schools, Mobile Schools and the Provision of Snacks at the schools.

Mr. Ghimire underlined the need of making the education practical and research based. At this point the education model of China and the United States were taken as the role models. Regarding the quality of education, the participants concurred by quality education is meant the education that is easily learnt by the learner, it is easily translated into practice and it should be taken to the desired extent.

The next issue raised by Mr. Ghimire in the discussion was the problem of school drop-out. After discussions on this topic the participants agreed that widespread poverty in the Nepalese society was the main reason for the high drop-out rate. Similarly, Mr. Ghimire raised the issue of the irregularities in the education sector, In this connection, he discussed the irregularities pertaining to the inefficient management of schools, textbooks not reaching the remote areas in time, the lack of transparency as there is no public audit system and the many shortcomings in the teacher appointment process as well as the teachers' performance.

### **Comments by Dr. Koirala**

Based on the discussions held in course of Mr. Ghimire's presentation, Dr. Koirala came up with the following points which the media could raise up. They are-

- The media could monitor the teacher appointment process and it could also look into the teachers' performance. As an example, Dr. Koirala said the mainstream media has missed on the Government's decision to automatically make the temporary teachers permanent.
- The media should carry out research on the critical role of the local civil society and the intellectuals in enhancing the quality of education and making Education for All successful.
- The media should also bring out the success stories in the education sector. It should give coverage to the positive changes that our education system has established despite the different difficulties.

- The media should verify whatever the issues it covers on education in depth. It should do objective reporting.
- The media should carry out constant follow up on the education-related policies and programs of the government and point out any lacunae in their implementation.

-----

#### **Fourth Session**

#### **Presentation by Padmajung Thapa, (Representative, Save the Children, Norway).**

**Topic-** Physical and humiliating punishment at schools.

In his multi-media presentation, Mr. Thapa mainly discussed about corporal punishment of children in schools. In this connection, Mr. Thapa focused his discussion on the following main topics-

- Humiliating punishment
- The theory of exploitation
- Physical punishment
- Social structure and power relations
- Other forms of exploitation
- An overview of violence at schools and at home
- The effects of punishment on children
  - Physical/bodily effects
  - Mental effects (aggression, depression)
  - Social withdrawal
  - Economic consequences
- Alternative ways of keeping children in discipline and enhancing their learning progress

(Note- The handout of the presentation is included in Annex.....)

-----

THIRD DAY (25 November)

#### **Presentation by Mr. Ghamaraj Luitel, (News Director, Radio Sagarmatha F.M.)**

Mr. Luitel, in his presentation, discussed about Radio program production and presentation. He defined the term communication, the channel and media of communications, the communication process and the communication system as well as the feedback system.

Similarly, Mr. Luitel discussed about the various radio programs and their characteristic features. Mr. Luitel explained the following topics in that connection.

#### Radio programs on education

##### **1. Educational Programs**

- Program on education
- Distance education program
- Curriculum program
- Guide program (radio tuition/English by Radio Program)
- Social education program

## **2. Issue Based Programs**

- Magazine
- Interview
- Interaction/discussion

## **3. Contents of Issue Based Radio Programs**

- Policies
- Practices
- Experience
- Problem
- Feelings
- Solution
- Case Study
- Different issues on different level of education

## **4. Designing Educational Radio Programs**

### Major Factors

- Target audience
- Budget
- Human resources
- Skill
- Technical support
- Time: broadcast/time duration
- Theme/ nature of program

## **5. Different programs on education (Program format)**

- Magazine
- Feature/reportage
- Discussion/interaction
- Drama
- Musical
- Documentary
- Montage
- Quiz
- Commentary/spot description etc.

## **6. Effective format for issue based radio program on education**

### **Magazine**

- News items
- Feature/report
- Spot description
- Interview
- Vox-pop (voice of the people on the street)
- Drama
- Commentary/opinion
- Song

### **Discussion**

### **Feature**

### **Documentary**

### **Drama/soap-opera**

After making his presentation, Mr. Luitel asked the participants to share their views and experience regarding the types of education programs they produce, the main areas of focus and the practical problems they face while designing the programs.

In this connection, the participant from Hetauda F.M. said Hetauda F.M., which is on air from 6 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. daily has been broadcasting reports on educational activities in Makwanpur District, interaction on contemporary educational issues and discussion forums. The participant from Pokhara F.M., Kaski said Pokhara F.M. has been broadcasting programs on education being mainly focused on news related to education and special reports. The participant from Communications Corner, Kathmandu said the Corner has been producing radio reports on education. The participant from Muktinath F.M., Palpa said the Muktinath F.M. has been broadcasting a special education program entitled 'Shikshya Chautaro' on a daily basis. He said radio reports, news, interviews and panel discussions are covered by this program. The participant from Koshi F.M., Morang stated that the Koshi F.M., Morang, has been broadcasting radio program on different educational activities.

Likewise, the participant from Radio Lumbini F.M. said that her F.M. has been broadcasting radio program on education entitled 'Saichhik Jagat' and it covered interviews, reports and educational activities. The participant from Radio Palung, Makwanpur said Radio Palung has been broadcasting news and views on education based on interviews, discussions and interaction. The participant from the Synergy F.M., Chitwan said Synergy F.M., Chitwan, said Synergy F.M. has been broadcasting a program on education entitled 'Shikshya Dabali' which covered topics on contemporary educational activities, interaction, and news and views on education. Participant from Dhaulagiri F.M., Baglung said that although Dhaulagiri F.M. is not broadcasting a separate program on education, it has been broadcasting news on educational activities and reports related to education.

The participant from Bheri Aawaj F.M., Banke said Bheri Aawaj has no specific program on education, but topics related to education are given coverage in the news and other related programs. Participant from Nepal F.M., Kathmandu said Nepal F.M. did not have a separate program dedicated to education, but it has been giving coverage to topics related to education regularly in the form of news and interviews. The participant from Swargadwari F.M., Dang said Swargadwari F.M. has been giving coverage to topics related to education by reading out the articles and topical issues related to education published in newspapers and journals. The participant from EJG/Sagarmatha F.M., Kathmandu said the EJG, in partnership with Sagarmatha F.M., has been broadcasting a radio program called 'Shikshyako Nalibeli' which covered news, reports, discussions and interviews related to education. Special feature on education are also broadcast in this program.

The participant from Radio Karnali, Jumla said that Radio Karnali F.M. has been broadcasting a program on education entitled 'Shikshyako Chutharo' which covered news on educational; activities in the district, reports, discussion with the District Education Office and articles on education. The participant from Bulbule F.M., Surkhet said Bulbule F.M. did not have any separate program on education but it has been broadcasting news and special reports on topics related to education from time to time. She said the program entitled 'Mahilako Awaj' mainly covered topics on education by means of reports, case study etc.

The participant from Annapurna F.M., Kaski stated that Annapurna F.M. has been broadcasting a program called 'Radio Teaching' in which educational programs targeted to Class ten students are broadcast. The participant from Rupandehi F.M., Rupandehi said Rupandehi F.M. has been broadcasting a program called 'Shaichhik Chaupari' which covered news, reports and discussion forums on education activities happening in Kapilbastu District. He said Rupandehi F.M. also has a program called Learning by Radio in which various tips on education are given

targeted to the school children. The participant from Kanchanjunga F.M., Jhapa said although Kanchanjunga F.M. has no separate program on education, the topics related to education are covered in a program entitled 'Paribartanka Paila'. The programs cover report presentation, interviews, success stories and feature reports.

After experience sharing session, Mr. Luitel discussed different issues concerning the radio education program production. Elaborating on those topics, he said besides providing information, one of the functions of the media is to educate the public also. He said in one way or the other, the media the participants were representing, dealt with educational issues and they were related to education.

Following this discussion, Mr. Luitel explained about the effective radio program production techniques and the factors determining this. In this connection, he expounded on the following topics-

- Identification of the target audience
- The budget allocated for the program
- Available resources, including human resources
- Technical support
- Time duration
- Nature of the program

After discussing these topics, Mr. Luitel said radio magazine would be the most suitable program when dealing with a particular issue as this could incorporate the voices of all. He stressed that the magazine format program incorporated voice as well as the feelings. He suggested that another radio program on education would be discussion-oriented program where in a certain pertinent education topic could be discussed at length with the experts concerned. He suggested that radio drama would be another effective program for dealing with education issues. Similarly, he said we could present educational issues through quiz. Another effective method to raise and cover education issues is through live description or on-the-spot description. Likewise, mini-feature, montage and monologue could also be produced for preparing a documentary on education. He said experience teaches a person how best to present a particular issue. He said format was not the primary, but the important thing is to have a knack for education issues and pursue it to a point of conclusion.

### **Comments by Dr. Koirala**

Based on Mr. Luitel's presentation and discussions that took place in that connection, Dr. Koirala summarized the topic and suggested the participants to look for the following things in their radio presentation. Dr. Koirala urged the participants to particularly take into account the following-

- Impact of the program they produce, for example the output and the outcome
- The journalists should monitor the effectiveness and the impact of the school and college phase-in and phase-out programs.
- Generalization, i.e., theoretical and contextual
- Documentation of the programs broadcast
- Review the learning process and its effectiveness

(See handouts in Annex----)

-----  
**Second Session**

## **Presentation by Mr. Raghu Mainali, Media Expert**

At the start of his presentation, senior journalist Mainali explained about the topic of prioritization of programs by radio journalists. Mr. Mainali underlined the need for the radio journalists to carry out thorough research on the main issue of the program. In this connection, Mr. Mainali compared radio program production with the principles of marketing. He said as much as a producer has to take into account different factors before marketing the products, so should the radio journalists before producing any program. He said that the radio programs should be guided by the principle of need of the audience for every radio program sustains on the audience. Therefore, every program should take into account the needs of the audience. He said the audience should also be given the opportunity for choice.

He stressed that the objectives of the program should be clearly set before producing the program and the radio journalist should think about the following in that connection.

- For whom? - The audience
- Why? - The type of message
- At what time? - Time factors
- Who are involved? - The people involved in program production
- From what? - The media involved (in this case the F.M. radio)

### **Goals of the message**

- To inform
- To make aware
- To prompt the people to adopt new technology
- To remind
- To educate

### **Effectiveness of the message**

After discussing about the goals of the message, Mr. Mainali dwelt on the topic of effectiveness of the message. He said effectiveness of the message depended on various factors such as how the message has been packaged, the delivery of the message and the production process. He said that the message should be related in accordance with the situation and it should be timely. At this point Mr. Mainali asked the participants to analyze the different radio programs being broadcast by our radios from the point of view of their time and context.

In this context, Mr. Mainali explained about the context of the incident and the message. He gave the example of an advertisement to explain about the appeal aspect in a message. He said that there are three appeals in any message. They are- rational appeal, emotional appeal (negative appeal, positive appeal) and moral appeal.

Regarding the packaging of the message, he said the content and the purpose of the message determined how the message would be disseminated. According to him, it could be of the type of giving conclusion and giving impression. He underlined that the impression of the message should be effective.

### **COMMENTS BY DR. KOIRALA**

Based on the presentation by Mr. Mainali and the subsequent discussions on the different topics covered during the presentation, Dr. Koirala came up with the following suggestions for the radio journalists.

1. Regarding collection of facts, he said a radio journalist should first carry out a thorough survey of the program audience. He said the survey could be taken by employing any one of these tools, viz., interview, focus group discussion (PRA and RRA). He underlined that the focused group discussion should be done through the stratified method.

2. He said the journalists should bring about a change in the approach in conducting research and investigation on any topic. He called on the participants to devise and conceptualize innovative and effective methods of collecting facts and reporting.

3. Peace education. The last point that Dr. Koirala emphasized was the promotion of peace education. He said the media has a pivotal role in the promotion of peace education since it is the overriding concern of all the Nepalese.

-----  
**CLOSING SESSION**

The participants were asked to fill up a survey form regarding their expectations from the seminar, the outcome of the seminar and the aspects that they thought needed to be improved.

Thereafter, two persons from among the participants were asked to share their views about the orientation.

**Keshab Bhattarai (Jhapa):**

Mr. Bhattarai said that the orientation gave him an opportunity to become acquainted with many issues related to the education and the media. He said he learnt to see the different educational issues in new perspectives. He stated that the orientation provided him with the opportunity to reconceptualize issues and topics on education. He also learnt new radio techniques. He suggested that the Education Journalists' Group organize more of these kinds of programs in future so as to enlighten and empower the journalists. Mr. Bhattarai also urged the EJG to extend continuous support to educational programs.

**Ms. Mohan Maya Dhakal (Surkhet)**

Ms. Dhakal said that the orientation program helped her in identifying the issues and topics related to education. She said she learnt how to present the different problems concerning education in radio programs. It also helped clear many misconceptions she had regarding different aspects of educational issues. Ms. Dhakal underlined the importance of such orientation programs in keeping the journalists abreast of the different information on education policies and programs. She said the effectiveness of any program depended upon how it is put into practice.

**Dr. Bidhyanath Koirala (instructor)**

Dr. Koirala noted that the orientation is an opportunity to learn and share ideas and experiences on radio program production. Dr. Koirala said that he was interested to listen to the different programs produced by the participants, but could not do so because of the time constraints. He said that the main concern of the radio journalists was how to reach the programs to the local level. He suggested that the Education Journalists' Group should strive towards

devising more effective training and orientation session for informing and updating the journalists about different topics related to education.

### **Valedictory remarks by Sudarshan Ghimire**

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Ghimire said the orientation for radio journalists was an effort by the Education Journalists' Group at familiarizing the radio journalists, especially from the community radio stations, on the educational issues and how to incorporate education related topics in different radio programs. He said it was also aimed at raising the awareness of the radio journalists on many educational issues so that they could be better empowered in their profession. Mr. Ghimire hoped that although a lot of activities could not be included in the orientation due to time constraint, the participants benefited with whatever could be covered in the three days of rigorous discussion sessions. He said that he learnt a great deal about the local level problems from the orientation.

Lastly, Mr. Ghimire called on the participants to put into practice whatever they learnt in course of the orientation. Mr. Ghimire said although learning is a continuous process, the orientation was a small effort on the part of the EJG to reach to the journalists working in the community radios, one of the most effective forms of mass communications. He said this program has been organized with the hope that the education issues and related topics should be understood by the journalists first in order to identify the real issues and problems in this sector. Only after properly identifying the genuine issues of concern could the radio journalists could disseminate valuable information on education. He expressed hearty thanks to all the participants for their valuable suggestions and taking out time from their busy schedule to attend the orientation. He also thanked the resource persons for their cooperation and valuable presentations. Mr. Ghimire said the EJG would make efforts toward organizing such programs in future also in a bid to empowering the journalists, one of the main objectives of the Group.

## **Annex 2: District-level Interaction Report**

### **1. Background**

The District level interactions, as mentioned in the proposal document have been held in all the selected districts after the conclusion of the Education Journalism Orientation for Radio Journalists. The objective of the District level interaction is for advocacy and input to policy pressure towards achieving EFA. The district level interaction is one of the major activities listed in the EJJ-SCN partnership for Education For All.

The interaction programs at the district level were designed to identify the critical issues on education for dialogue, debates and discussions at the district level so that the major education issues pertaining to a particular district could be analyzed. The participation of all the stakeholders and civil society in the district level interaction would give a broad representation of the major views in the district regarding the status of education for all in the selected districts.

Moreover, the district level interactions have contributed to the major goals of the program to create pressure in policy designs and frameworks attuned to EFA at the district level through in-depth investigative reporting and the comprehensive discussions and sharing of views that took place in the interaction on wide range of topics related to the EFA.

### **Objectives**

- The general objective of the District level Interaction is to -
- Make an overview of the overall education scenario in the selected district.
  - Find out the main topics of priority in education concerning education in the selected districts.
  - Identify the problems related to education in the district
  - Discuss the education issues among the stakeholders and the civil society
  - Suggest ways of addressing the education problems in relation to EFA.

The specific objectives of the District Interaction was-

- To assess the effectiveness of the EFA programs in the district.
- To find out how much the stakeholders are aware about the EFA program and how they view it.
- To publicize the EFA program.

### **Methodology**

The selection of the districts for holding the district-level interactions was done by EJJ with the consent of the Save the Children-Norway/Nepal. Seven different districts were selected for this purpose. The interactions were held by the local participant of the orientation program.

The District level Interactions were held with the guidance and facilitation of the EJJ program management team. DEOs, local NGOs/CBOs, parents, teachers' unions, administrative officers, political parties and their student wings and local intellectuals participated in the interactions.

A local expert/ activist presented papers in the interaction in a majority of the selected districts. The papers mainly focused on actual scenario of effective learning and child-friendly environment, success stories, problems and its causes and the options of way out.

The central level representatives visited the District Education Office and at least two schools in the related district in person to collect the relevant information for the interaction.

The central representatives were asked to collect information on the following topics in the current and previous Fiscal Year.

1. What programs are being run under EFA in the school?
2. Did the amount allocated by the District Education Office and stated in the particulars reach the schools? If yes when was it received by the school?
3. What is the volume of the amount received in grant for infrastructure development?
4. What is the teacher-student ratio? Is it up to the level fixed by the government? What is the state of teacher management?
5. What is the status of the teachers posts sanctioned under the relief quota and the situation of the temporary sheds?
6. Are the classrooms and school environment child-friendly?
7. Has the local community assisted in the management of the schools?
8. What views do the stakeholders have regarding equal access to education for all and quality education and how this is possible?
9. How much of the scholarship amount was released and how many students got it? What was the process of scholarship distribution?

### **3. Findings**

From the district level interaction, the role of each stakeholder in connection with the EFA was identified. At the same time the stakeholders committed their responsibilities with respect to the EFA. The major findings of the District Level Interaction in each of the seven selected districts are presented here.

#### **Baglung District**

##### **Findings**

- The scholarship fund for the Dalit and 50 percent girl students had to be distributed on an equal share basis due to the shortage of budget for that purpose.
- The District Education Office had not been able to appoint teachers in 58 schools in the district.
- Although the school enrollment campaign and Welcome to School program have been implemented in the district, and a large number of students were enrolled, the retention rate is very low.
- Even the government has announced free education up to the primary level, but still the students are charged fees.
- One of the major causes of girls dropping out from school was lack of toilet.

##### **Detailed views of the participants**

###### **1) Mr. Yukta Prasad Subedi, Acting District Education Officer, Baglung**

- There are 18 School Inspection Centers in Baglung District. One High School teacher has been working as the School Inspector at 18 Resource Centres
- There are four campuses, 18 Higher Secondary Schools, 1,389 Primary Schools, 267 Lower Secondary Schools and 211 Secondary Schools under the community schools group in the district.
- Fifteen quotas have been sanctioned for the district for the Non-formal Education which would be distributed in April. Three teachers' quotas have been received under the inclusive education stream.
- Scholarship amount for only 13,000 students out of the total 17,000 eligible students was received last year. This year, the scholarship amount is going to be distributed to 15,000 students. Scholarship amount for girls is to be distributed to 8,500 students at the rate of Rs. 350 per person.
- Similarly, the amount for textbooks is to be distributed to a total of 55,000 students at the rate of Rs. 350 per student in the district this year.
- Not a single teacher has been provided to 58 schools that had received permission.
- New classrooms would be constructed in 27 schools of the district this year.

**2) Mrs. Ratna Shrestha, Principal, Kalika Kanya Secondary School, Baglung**

- Teachers' quotas have not been added for the district since 2056 B.S. despite the much hype about the Education For All. Only some posts under the relief heading have been sanctioned last year.
- The physical condition of the schools should also be strong. At least there should be enough classrooms to accommodate the students enrolled in the school.
- There should also be enough teachers to teach the students.
- There is no incentive for the people who take active part in the Welcome to School and School Enrollment Week campaigns. There should be attractive incentives for the teachers involved in this campaign. Similarly, there should be incentives for the schools showing good performance.

**3) Mrs. Krishna Maya Adhikari, Principal, Dhabi Secondary School, Baglung**

- The condition of the school enrollment campaign is not satisfactory.
- We enrolled 14 children of school-going age from the local Bus Park area but they dropped out after a month. We could not retain them in school.
- There is not enough budget for the school.
- At the end of the day, the School Enrollment Campaign has remained only as a formality and the State has also not shown necessary interest to provide teachers incentives to work wholeheartedly towards this program.

**4) Mrs. Shakuntala Sharma, Vice President, Nepal Teachers' Union, Baglung**

- The enrollment campaign is not effective. All sides should be committed to bring the children to school.
- The Union has made a decision in which one teacher will be required to bring at least one student to school. This decision would come into effect from next year. This means that some 2,300 teachers in the district would now bring as many students to school from next year.

- There are many problems in connection with bringing the children who are out of school into the schools. Some of the parents did not send their children to school even though dress was provided to the children.
- There is a need for conducting a parent education program to raise awareness among the parents regarding the need of sending children to school. On the other hand, the parents seem reluctant to send their children to schools as even the educated youths are also unemployed and they also seem to be behaving the same way as the uneducated people.
- Therefore, it is necessary to make our education system more practical, skill-based and useful in life.

**5) Mr. K.B. Ranamagar, DIRDC (a non-governmental organization), Baglung**

- EFA is only limited to slogan only. It is literally nil in action.
- Children will not come to school unless arrangements for providing free meals are made.
- The State needs to prepare an authentic data of the people under the absolute poverty line and provide not only free education to their children but also free healthcare, social and other facilities.

**6) Mr. Rajesh Chandra Bhandari, President, Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), Baglung**

- I have a book shop. I also sell school textbooks. Now-a-days, the parents have stopped asking for bills for buying the textbooks.
- The parents allege that the teachers have been misusing the money provided to the students for buying textbooks. How the money sanctioned and released for textbooks is spend should be investigated.

**7) Mr. Yam Prasad Kandel, Program Coordinator, Gaja Youth Club, Baglung**

- The school enrolment campaign has been launched but there are not enough teachers in schools.
- There are no adequate physical facilities for the students at schools.
- Our youth club has been providing teachers to 40 schools in 19 Village Development Committees (VDCs) in the district. There is a big problem of adjustment in teachers' postings.

**8) Mr. Dilliram Gautam, Secretary, Nepal National Teachers' Organization, Baglung**

- The Education For All program should be taken forward in an integrated manner.
- Parents do not send their children to schools due to their very poor economic condition. The goal of EFA would not be achieved unless the State gives its full attention to poverty reduction.
- The amount to be distributed to the students as scholarship and for buying textbooks is inadequate and whatever the amount received has to be given to all the students. This means that the amount received by each of the student is far less than the amount he/she is entitled to get. This situation puts the teachers in the false position and allegations of misuse of fund are levelled against them.

**9) Mr. Devilal, Self-reliance Development Forum, Baglung**

- EFA is only confined to slogans. But it is not that the situation has not improved.
- Although the government has declared that education up to class 8 would be free, it is not so. The students have to pay for buying books.
- The government should show interest in resolving these problems.

**10) Mr. Sujan Pandit, Coordinator, Four Stars Youth Club, Baglung**

- Children from the underprivileged and marginalized communities do not come to school. Similarly, child labourers also do not come to school. The main reason for these communities not sending their children to school is because of their poor economic condition.
- The problem of school drop out is also serious in the district. There is a need for bringing a special program for checking the dropout rate and bringing children who are out of school back into school.

**11) Ms. Laxmi G.C. Karki, Women Development Officer, Baglung**

- The government has not been able to provide adequate teachers' quotas. Only 40 out of the 90 quotas asked for the Bal Shikshya (Child Education) programs were sanctioned.
- We have not been able to reach to the targeted groups from the Dalit, women and indigenous communities too.
- To achieve the EFA goal is a challenge because of the hand-to-mouth problem also.
- There is a shortage of 275 teachers in the Primary Schools, 242 in the Lower Secondary Schools and 202 in the Secondary Schools in Baglung District. No such problem exists in the neighbouring Tanahun District. This may be because there are many influential leaders there. The State should resolve such problems.
- The school environment should also be child-friendly. Why do girls drop out studies? Many of the girls do so for lack of separate toilet for girls.
- Provisions should be made for putting in place adequate physical infrastructure by keeping in view these problems.
- It would be difficult to attain the goals of Education for All without increasing the number of women teachers. Thirty-three percent of the total posts of teachers should be provided to women.

**12) Mr. Yogendra Milan Chhantyal, Reporter, Educational Pages**

- There is too much political interference in education. It is not fair. The situation has not improved as the scholarships, teachers' quotas and appointments are made on the basis of one's ideological inclinations.
- Moreover, there is utter lack of follow-up.

**13) Mr. Mohan Lal Sharma, Former Vice President, Member, DDC Baglung**

- There is an immediate need for 770 teachers' posts for Baglung District. It is necessary to appoint teachers promptly for making programs like EFA successful.
- Parents do not send their children to school because of poor economic condition. Programs should be formulated by taking the people at the lowest strata of society into consideration.
- The ongoing programs in education should also be properly monitored.

**14) Mr. Jagdish Chandra Upadhyaya, Joint Secretary Nepali Congress District Committee**

- There is need for raising awareness level of the parents and the community. An awareness campaign should be launched for that purpose.
- There should be child-friendly teaching-learning environment at schools.
- The notion of 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. school time should be removed. The concept of flexible school hours should be adopted to suit the local context. A campaign of child-to-child teaching could also be started.
- Extra-curricular activities should also be conducted from time to time in school.
- Arrangements should be made for locally-suitable textbooks and reference materials.

**15) Mr. Anil, District Member, CPN (Maoist)**

- The State should take full responsibility of providing education to its citizens. Uniformity should be brought about in producing educated and skilled human resources necessary for the country. The entire education system should be restructured. Special programs should be brought for the benefit of women and the Dalit.

**16) Mr. Bhimsen Wan, President, ANNFSU (Unified), Baglung**

- EFA is limited to only slogan. The stakeholders are not well-informed about the program. Children would come to school only if there are extra incentives to the children and their parents in addition to the 'free' education. The State should invest more in education sector for better results. Education should be made employment-based. Technical and vocational education should be provided.

**17) Mr. Umesh Gautam, Nepal Students' Union, Baglung**

- Regular discussions should be held with the stakeholders. There should be effective monitoring.

**18) Ms. Lata Sharma, student**

- There should be adequate number of subject teachers.

**19) Mr. Govinda Nepali, Dalit Empowerment Center, a District-based NGO**

- The government has abolished the practice of 'untouchability'. But it should be put into practice in society and in schools also. It is hard for students of the Dalit community to rent rooms to live. There are many instances of the Dalit students not getting rooms on rent and as a result aborting studies.
- The number of teachers' posts at the Prajatantra Primary School established at local Narayansthan is very low. This school has not got facilities at a par with other schools. May be because a majority of the students at the school are from the Dalit community. The parents of these students have no connections with 'higher-ups' or powerful people in the government.
- The goal of Education For All would be elusive unless such problems persist.

**20) Mr. Bhesh Raj Sharma, Acting Local Development Officer, Baglung**

- The District Development Committee has been providing necessary cooperation to the schools. It is necessary to make it well-managed and effective. All sides should extend cooperation for making the EFA successful.

**21) Mr. Mahesh Chandra Devkota, Program Officer, Save the Children Norway, Baglung**

- The teaching-learning environment in the schools should be effective and child-friendly. It should also be qualitative. Teachers and students should be motivated. The reason why children drop out even after coming to school should be properly identified and resolved. There should be necessary follow-up on the program.

**22) Mr. Mahesh Chandra Pradhan, PABSON**

- The State should now implement the concept of mobile school also. It should pay attention to making proper adjustments in the teachers' quota and in putting in place adequate physical infrastructure.

**23) Mr. Rajib Ghimire, District President, ANNFSU (Revolutionary)**

- The implementation aspect of all the programs is not encouraging. It is weak. The programs have failed to reach to the targeted groups. The policy of privatization of education should end.

**The role of the stakeholders for the success of EFA**

**1) State/Government/ District Education Office**

- Put in more investment in education
- Provide incentives to the schools, teachers and NGOs demonstrating good performance.
- Pay special attention to the target community
- The State should make provision for providing all facilities, including food and clothes, to students up to the Grade possible.
- Emphasize on vocational and technical education
- Hold discussion with the stakeholders at the grassroots level
- Become alert so that there is no duplication of programs
- Carry out an effective monitoring of programs
- Make provisions for reward and punishment in an impartial manner
- Remain free from political inclinations or undue influences

**2) Teachers**

- Play the role of motivator in raising awareness of the parents on education issues.
- Show active involvement in the School Enrollment Campaign
- Pay attention to creating a child-friendly environment in the classroom and while teaching.
- Become active in providing the amount received from the State to be distributed as scholarship and for buying textbooks to students in time.

**3) Political parties**

- Make education as the main issues
- Show more interest and concern in educational issues
- Do not look at education and schools from the political lens

**4) Non-Governmental Organizations**

- Do not implement programs which are in duplication to programs implemented by other NGOs.

- Constantly put pressure on stakeholders about their responsibilities
- Carry out works towards raising awareness in community and among the parents
- Carry out works by sharing experiences amongst the NGOs working in education sector.

#### **5) Parents**

- Send own children to school
- Take interest in the studies of own children and the school where they study
- Encourage relatives, neighbours and other parents to send their children to school

#### **6) Local bodies**

- Increase the investment in education as much as is possible
- Prepare education plans independent from political interference
- Propagate good practices of one village to another village

#### **7) Media people**

- Point out the weaknesses and shortcomings in education sector
- Prioritize education-related news
- Give place to success stories related to education
- Bring the success stories related to education in discussion forums and programs.

---

### **Bardiya District**

The District Interaction on 'Education For All Campaign and Status of Implementation' was organized in Gulariya, the headquarters of Bardiya District on 3 January 2007. The interaction which started at 1:30 p.m. lasted till 5:15 p.m. and extensive discussions were held on the theme of the interaction on the occasion.

At the start, District Coordinator of the program, Mr. Kamal Panthi welcomed all the participants to the program and shed light on its objectives. The participants introduced themselves amongst each other and gave out the information of the organization they were affiliated with.

Thereafter, Mr. Panthi asked Central Representative Janak Nepal to present his theme paper entitled 'Education For All Campaign in Bardiya District.' The program started off in an informal ambience. There was neither the chair of the program nor the chief guest. However, two senior freed Kamaiya representatives Mrs. Moti Devi Tharu and Mr. Pancharam Chaudhari were asked to take their seats with honour. Similarly, Mr. Santosh Gupta, representative of the Awadhi community who do not send their children to school, and Mr. Om Prakash Yadav, a teacher who belongs to the same community, were provided the podium with prominence.

#### **The major findings of the interaction**

- The present education system has produced two classes of citizens.
- The major problem in education in the district is that there is no adjustment in the teacher posts in Bardiya.
- Lack of education in mother tongue, which has created problem in teaching the students.
- The EFA program has not even touched the freed Kamaiya community children.
- There is a national policy for providing free education to the children of the freed Kamaiyas, but fees is charged.

- Lack of awareness among the parents about the values and importance of education as education is not tied to livelihood and life skills.
- Only 10 percent of the students enrolled in Grade 1 complete school cycle.

### **Detailed views of the speakers**

#### **1) Mr. Govinda Prasad Pandeya, Former Mayor, Gulariya Municipality**

- The concept paper has once again made us aware about our position regarding the EFA. Two thousand and seven hundred children of school-going age remaining out of school in the Municipality area alone is a big challenge for the Department of Education, the conscious citizens and the NGOs and INGOs working in the education sector. This has put a question mark on the efficacy and success of the EFA campaign.
- The concept paper which has come as a brief document has incorporated the main topics related to EFA except the issues of the freed Kamaiyas. The freed Kamaiyas, who shift their sheds four times in three months are so impoverished they do not even bother to send their children to school. The situation of the landless squatters is also the same. The agencies concerned should formulate practical and effective programs on increasing the access of these communities to education.
- We have plans and documents ready. But what we lack is their effective implementation. This is what has happened to most of the programs in the education sector. The same is the case with the EFA.
- Some of the NGOs have also done a good job in augmenting the EFA. But still, there are NGOs which have carried out works in reports only. The programs launched by the different NGOs are not carried out in a coordinated manner. The District Education Office does not monitor these programs.
- We can agree to some extent that the education sector has been adversely affected by the armed conflict. But conflict is not the only reason for all the problems besetting the education sector. The education in Nepal has been stratified in accordance with the economic status. It has a feudalistic structure and there is a need for restructuring in education.
- If the situation is to remain where it stands at present, then it would prepare ground for another conflict. The present education system has produced two types of citizens.
- All should get equal access to education.

#### **2) Mr. Santosh Gupta, a man from Pakadiya Village who has not send daughter to school**

- I live at Ward No. 11 in Pakadiya village, Gularaiya Municipality. I have two daughters who are of school-going age. I have somehow managed to send the elder one of them to school. But I am not able to send the younger one to school. This is because I am poor. They say all is free in school which is nonsense. We have to buy the books, note books, dress and all. People from poor economic strata like us cannot send children to school. Nobody sends children to school taking loans. I am at least sending one of my daughters to school. There are people who do not at all send their daughters and children to school. The government and the non-government organizations have not helped us out.

#### **3) Ganesh Regmi, Headteacher, Bhanubhakta Primary School (located near Pakadiya village)**

- We tried a lot to bring the out of school children from the local Awadhi community in school. We also launched a campaign of providing Rs. 500 each to the family

enrolling their children for the first time. We also provided incentives to 12 families last year.

- It is not that the students have not been coming to school. This year also, 408 students enrolled in our school, but still half of them do not come to school. Majority of the families have sent their children to school only to get the incentives. Last year, some 100 children had enrolled in Class 1. We were elated. But at the end of the school year, 68 of them had dropped out.
- We have appointed an Awadhi language speaking teacher with the amount that we received for each student under the Education For All campaign. But all the teachers should be able to speak the Awadhi language to be able to teach the students well. I agree to the suggestion that a separate program should be brought for incorporating the Awadhi community in the Education For All program.

#### **4) Ms. Durga Chhetri, BASE**

- Our educational programs under the EFA campaign are focused to the children of the freed Kamaiyas and the marginalized communities. We have implemented programs conducting training on child-friendly teaching, construction of school buildings and classrooms and running Early Childhood Development centres.
- It is a very hard job to work in education field amongst the freed Kamaiya community. As the freed Kamaiyas frequently move from one place to another, the number of students suddenly decreases. Informal classes should be conducted as an alternative way.
- It is true that we have not been able to incorporate the children from the Awadhi community into our educational programs. This is a challenge for us all. There have been little bit of efforts in this direction. It is understood that many children from this community do not come to study due to the language problem.
- Physical infrastructure of the schools is improving gradually but the quality of education has had to be sacrificed due to the high number of students. We have also submitted a memorandum to the government for making adjustments in the teachers' postings. It is not possible to increase the quality of education without making adjustments in the teachers' postings.
- The district education office does not carry out regular monitoring and supervision of the programs. I feel that the District Education Office should carry out regular monitoring. The schools can not consider the people from the NGOs as the official representatives, so the DEO should carry out regular monitoring of educational programs.
- Education For All program has helped raise a lot of awareness. The parents are more aware and active in the present than previously. They come to offer their voluntary assistance in construction of the school building. Coordination with the District Education Office is necessary for every program.

#### **5) Mr. Mahendra Singh Shrestha, Acting District Education Officer**

- The education programs in the district are implemented in a haphazard manner. The District Education Office (DEO) is effortful towards implementing these programs in a systematic manner. The school is the indicator of the impact of education programs and the awareness level of the society. The increase in the number of students in schools shows that the EFA is heading towards success.
- The main issue is how to make the education programs systematic and effective. This relates to the policy-level problems. There is the problem of duplication. Many NGOs are carrying out similar types of programs. The District Education Office is mulling ways to allocate different organizations to carry out separate components of the EFA campaign. In this way it would be easier for us to work and the works would also be

result-oriented. We will also assign a 'focal person' to oversee the different components of the EFA program.

- We have been sending the memorandums submitted by the teachers, parents and organizations to the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education.
- One of the reasons for the amount sanctioned to schools not getting to the schools on time may be because of the weakness on the part of the schools too. The money might have been deposited in the school's account in the Bank but the school might not be aware of the same because the amount is sent to the schools through the resource persons.
- We are trying to identify the problems of the school. It is generally accepted that implementing different programs targeted to different communities and local conditions would produce effective results. The NGOs should officially inform the DEO about any programs.

**6) Mr. Tirtha Raj Shahi, Secretary, Daulatpur VDC**

- Schools are far from the settlements. But the schools are not shifted. It is equally difficult to sanction quota for a new school. The role of the local bodies in education has been reduced. If the role of the local bodies is to be increased in the education sector, it would be easier to achieve better results. The local bodies should also be given a certain amount of subsidy for investing in the education sector.

**7) Mrs. Motidevi Tharu, women leader of the freed Kamaiyas**

- The slogan Education For All is in everyone's lips but it is a sham. It is only a show-piece. Works under the program are not carried out earnestly.
- Frankly speaking we the freed Kamaiyas are not well aware about the different programs and rules and regulations related to education. We express our view from our experiences in life. We often hear that organizations like BASE, Plan International, RRN, Dalit Sewa Sangh, Tharu Women's Center implementing big-budget programs. But these programs have not reached the children of the freed Kamaiyas.
- Still, many Tharu children are working as domestic workers. Those freed Kamaiyas who want to send their children also have not been able to do so due to their poor economic condition. The parents are compelled to pay fees for their children's education. The genuine freed-Kamaiyas have received very little assistance.
- Often, there is a blame game going on between the District Education Office and the different organizations working in the education sector. The DEO blames the NGOs and vice-versa. Who is to take care of our children's education? We are not at all satisfied.
- There is lack of transparency even in the different works carried out by the Non-Government Organizations.
- Nobody has the right to take undue advantage of the innocence of the Tharu community. The budget meant for the freed Kamaiyas has been spent on the education of the rich farmers. I am against this practice.

**8) Mr. Balram Kafle, leader (CPN-Maoist)**

- We should be clear about the slogan itself. Whether it is Education For All or Universal Literacy? I prefer the latter. The present system of education is more of a traditional kind. We are blindly following it. We should take it forward in a new way.
- The government's policy is not realistic. We have the School Enrolment Campaign, but there is a lack of physical infrastructures like classrooms, desks and benches etc. There is also a lack of teachers. It would be very hard to move ahead any of the education programs and campaigns without making arrangements for proper

infrastructure and adequate number of teachers. The District Education Office also should prepare plans by thinking ahead and with the proper identification of the problems.

- We people in the district are like 'switch', i.e. we just do what the upper echelons of the bureaucracy direct us to do. They push the button and we in the districts turn up doing just that. Now Loktantra has been introduced in the country. The planning should be based on the bottom-up approach and not the top-down approach. We should forsake the habit of looking up to higher authorities for taking decisions.
- Now, let's take the case of the construction of the temporary bamboo shed. We have the sand and the stone pebbles in abundance. The parents are willing to contribute by way of voluntary labour. A cement and concrete building can be built with the Rs. 90,000 that has been allocated for the same. But it is mentioned in the plan document that shed made of bamboo would be constructed. People are having a tough time looking for bamboo as bamboo is not readily available in our locality. Why not handover the amount directly to the school?
- Just making much noise about the Education For All campaign will not do. It should be implemented in a practical and effective manner.
- I being a political worker see that the problem exists at the level of our governance system. Truly speaking this sugar-coated slogan 'Education For All' would be possible only if there is socialism in the country. It is not possible without socialism.
- BASE, an NGO, has brought the concept of mobile teacher. This is not operational. It takes time for a teacher to become familiarized with the students. There should be a close affinity between the teacher and the students. How far is it practicable for an NGO to bring a plan which does not match with that of the government plans?
- The Education Office should coordinate well. Otherwise, the plans would not be successful no matter how good they are.

#### **9) Mr. Deepak Sharma, journalist**

- Education is poor in Bardiya District compared to other districts. The Education Office, NGOs and INGOs have all invested in education. But the investment has become the proverbial 'pouring water in the sand'.
- One of the major problems regarding the Education For All campaign is the language aspect. As the teaching in our schools takes place only in the Nepali language, it is very difficult for children from non-Nepali speaking groups to understand the lessons. So, there should be provisions for teaching in the different mother tongues. Therefore, the problem concerning language should be resolved first for achieving the goal of Education For All.
- Similarly, there is the problem of uneven Student-Teacher Ratio. I have heard that it is 50: 1 in the Terai districts. This problem of Student-Teacher Ratio should also be resolved.
- Long-term plans should be formulated and the necessary infrastructure should be put in place for any education plans to be successful.

#### **10) Prem K.C., Plan Nepal**

- Plan International has been working in the education sector in Bardiya District since the last one year. Our programs are targeted towards the freed Kamaiyas. But we do not work directly. We work with collaboration with the freed Kamaiyas. Our programs are centered in four Village Development Committees (VDCs).
- Our programs are implemented with coordination with the District Education Office. A total of 1,120 children study in 43 Child Development Centers in six VDCs. We have provided assistance in educating at least 560 families. Programs of income-

generation are also tied to these programs. Plan has also been providing assistance for teacher assistance and school building construction.

- There is a need for maximum coordination so as to avoid duplication of programs. The District Education Office should carry out regular monitoring regarding the effectiveness of the programs.

#### **11) Mr. Chakrapani Gautam, Shree Bangalamukhi Secondary School**

- The campaign has increased the level of interest among the people towards education. A large number of students came to school as a result of the same. But there is the problem of adjustment of teachers' quotas. This is hampering the quality education.
- The media should put pressure on the sides concerned regarding the different problems seen in the education sector. All programs are being implemented through the school. I think the programs should be implemented through the community. This provides support in the community's development also. A separate program should be brought for the Awadhi community.
- The State should pay attention to providing economic incentives to the parents in order to encourage them to send their children to school.

#### **12) Mr. Mukti Prasad Regmi, Nepali Congress**

- We have understood this as a campaign for spreading the light of education to all people. Programs like Education For All should create an environment in which educationists like us would also be able to fulfill some responsibility. The Nepali Congress would always support any programs directed towards the development of education in the country.

#### **13) Mr. Hari Gyawali, CPN (UML)**

- Discussions on the topic of EFA campaign have been taking place in the district since 2002. The objective of the program to increase the access to education to the deprived section is laudable. Many programs of school reforms have been held. The number of school enrollment has increased. Awareness on education has increased. Overall, this is a package program.
- When I was the Mayor, many schools had no buildings and classes were taken under the open sky. To address this problem, the Municipality had to start a campaign called 'Education under the roof'. There has been a lot of change compared to that situation. School blocks have been constructed. The number of buildings might not be adequate, but a lot of physical development has taken place at the basic level.
- The problem of school dropout is huge. Only ten per cent of the children who are enrolled continue studies up to Class ten. The number of girl students from the Tharu community is large in the Primary Level, but it is found to be decreasing as the classes progress. Therefore, the problem of school dropout needs to be addressed properly for the success of EFA.
- The District Education Office is not working properly in a planned way. The education data are not systematic.
- The 'Education for Freedom' launched by BASE is a very promising program and campaign. Annually, 12,000,000 is being earmarked for this program.

#### **14. Mr. Nutan Pokharel, RRN**

- RRN has been providing assistance in the sector of physical reconstruction. RRN constructed ten school blocks last year. We also provided 650 pieces of furniture for 32 schools. The problem of school drop out is a big problem in Bardiya District.

**15. Mr. Pancharam Tharu, representative of freed Kamaiyas**

- The investments made for the uplift of the education of the freed Kamaiya children are not transparent. Our children have not got the opportunity to study as most of the schools are located far away from the Kamaiya settlements. The Education Office needs to look into this matter. Small children cannot walk to school. It would be better if schools were established near the villages.

**16. Tara Bhandari, CEPEV**

- Education For All program is effective. We have provided scholarships to 301 students under this program. CEPEV has also provided them with school uniform and stationery. We have implemented programs in the freed Kamaiya settlements. The parents have now understood the importance of education. A campaign should be taken at the people's level promoting education as the weapon against poverty.

**17. Mrs. Subhadra Sharma, Principal, Himali Primary School, Chaugurji**

- The program is effective in areas settled by the marginalized communities. We have constructed new school blocks and bought furniture. We also appointed new teachers. We also bought a mat. Only the work of constructing a fence around the school remains. There is difficulty in the distribution of the scholarship amount. It is difficult to select the students from similar backgrounds, especially in the case of girl students. Therefore, I feel that either scholarship should be given to all or not given at all. We also have the problem of the budget not being released on time.

**18. Mr. Omprakash Yadav, Headmaster, Saraswati Lower Secondary School, Baniyabhar**

- There are very few dropouts in my school. But the problem is providing quality education especially when we are faced with the situation of keeping up to 100 students in a single classroom due to the lack of adequate classrooms. We are running the classes in morning and day shift. It is hard to manage when the days are short in winter. The student-teacher ratio should be 30: 1. There should be provision of compulsory education in mother language up to class 3.

**19. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhusal, officer, District Development Committee**

- Education is for development. Nepal has selected Education For All program in the Human Development Startegy. The State should decide what kind of education system to adopt which the District Education Office or the Department of Education have not done. The plans and programs of the different organizations have been approved and implemented as they are planned by the organizations concerned. Their reporting is very weak.

**20. Mr. Durgadatta Adhikari, representative, People's Front Nepal**

- Most of the programs are being launched targeting only the freed Kamaiya children. There are other marginalized communities which are as impoverished as the freed Kamaiyas. Programs should be targeted to these communities as well. There is the problem of language. We have the problem of NGOs and INGOs working in areas

where there is already the government's presence while nobody goes to areas where the government has not also reached.

**21. Ms. Archana Chaudhari, representative, Tharu Women Upliftment**

- A lot of things have come up during then discussions. There is a need of a separate program for girls as the girls are married off at a younger age. There is need for long-term education programs for the ex-Kamaiya children.

**22. Mr. Nanda Raj Subedi, Headmaster, Sunrise Secondary School**

- Education programs should be approved through the one-door policy. Programs should be categorized into short-term and long-term programs and implemented accordingly. Similarly, the monitoring aspect should also be expedited and streamlined.

**23. Mr. Mahendra Singh Shrestha, District Education Office**

- The District Development Committee is the agency through which all the programs in the district are carried out. But it is not in practice. I will take up the main issues raised in this discussion to the District Education Office. We will sit together and discuss on these issues. Any allegations of corruption and misuse of funds would be looked into and departmental action would be initiated if anybody is found guilty. I agree that there are many problems in the Mathura Haridwar area which is predominantly settled by Awadhi-speaking community. Action research is necessary as to how to tackle the different problems in the education sector.

**24. Mr. Janak Nepal, program modulator**

- I promise to send the issues that have come in course of the discussion to the agencies concerned in their original form. Thank you all for participating and attending the program.

-----  
**Jumla District**  
**Introduction**

An interaction entitled 'Education For All Campaign and Status of Implementation' was held in Khalanga, the headquarters of Jumla District on January 12, 2007. The interaction was organized by the Education Journalists' Group at the Education Training Centre meeting hall at Chandannath Secondary School. The program was attended by 58 persons. The program was informal and discussion based.

**Major findings**

- A majority of children who are out of school are used as child laborers and the parents should be taken action against for using children as laborers.
- Fund for operating 'Book Corner' had been released to all schools but none has opened such 'Book Corner'.
- Acute shortage of school textbooks. The text books reach the District only at the end of the academic session.
- The school enrollment campaign has been launched but there is lack of supportive infrastructure for this. One of the participants described this situation as "Come to school, sit on the dust, become sick and go back home."

- The District president of All Nepal National Free Students' Union (Revolutionary), affiliated to the CPN (Maoist) has not even heard about EFA.
- The scholarship meant for the needy students has been misused and children of only those who are rich and who have influence get the same.

### **Proceedings of the interaction**

#### **1. Mr. Jeevan Bahadur Bhandari, Acting District Education Officer, Jumla**

- Education programs should be planned in such a way that they are appropriate depending on the climate and geographical situation of the place. Students who are not enrolled in schools should be considered as child labourers as is the practice in Andhra Pradesh, India. The same should be applied in case of Nepal also. There is a lack of political willpower in our country. All the programs under the Education For All campaign are under implementation in Jumla district. The number of scholarships has increased this year compared to the previous year. Follow-up and monitoring has not been carried out due to the conflict. The District Education Office granted Rs. 15,000 to every school in the district for the purpose of setting up 'Book Corner', a kind of library, but it has not been implemented.

#### **2. Mr. Chhetra Bahadur Budhthapa, Acting Local Development Officer, Jumla**

- Since the documents related to the release of funds to the schools and the related bank documents got burnt in the Maoist attack on the town, we are not aware as to how much fund was released to each school and how the amount was spent. Therefore, we are not in the position to tell whether the amount released under the Education For All was utilized or not.

#### **3. Mr. Sharpananda Hamal, President, District Red Cross Society and former president, School Management Committee, Chandannath Secondary School.**

- The textbooks do not reach on time. So, the students are left to do without the textbooks almost up to the term-end. There is lack of quality education. The physical infrastructure of the schools should be improved to make them student-friendly.

#### **4. Mr. Bhuswan Singh Sejuwal, DFID representative, Jumla**

- There is lack of physical infrastructure in most of the schools. The classrooms are small in size. The environment is also not healthy for the pupils as they have to sit in the dusty floor. There is lack of public awareness about the Education For All program among the masses.

#### **5. Mr. Chudaraj Neupane, Joint Secretary, Free Students Union, Jumla Campus**

- Effectiveness of the program is not felt due to the lack of proper monitoring of the program. Villages adjoining the District Headquarters were not affected by the conflict, but follow-up and monitoring of the program was not carried out even in these villages. I have come to the conclusion that the Education For All is just a slogan at that.

#### **6. Mr. Amarsingh Budhthapa, President, School Management Committee, Karnali Secondary School, Jumla**

- The state should take the responsibility of ensuring education to all the citizens. It seems that EFA is only for the haves and not for the have-nots. Education should be

totally free. The number of teachers is also not adequate. We have asked for permission to upgrade the classes in our school, but it is not approved.

**7. Mr. Khem Bahadur Singh, President, ANNFSU (Revolutionary), Jumla**

- This is the first time that I have heard about the Education For All campaign. This is completely new topic for me. May be because I was involved in the Maoist People's War and not in the district headquarters. I think the campaign would not be successful just by constructing one or two buildings or distributing paltry amount as scholarship. 'Unequal facilities and equal access to education' is the greatest challenge.

**8. Mr. Mahendra Bahadur Mahat, Central member, People's Front Nepal**

- There should be equality in the standard of education provided in schools in Kathmandu and Karnali. It is the government's shortcoming if it can not make education accessible to all. The scholarship amount is also provided to the children of the rich people as they are more privileged and are good in studies compared to the children of the impoverished sections.

**9. Mr. Birkha Bahadur Shahi, President, All Nepal Teachers' Association**

- The EFA campaign would not become successful until the education policy is reformed. The lusture and glow of the EFA is limited in the three VDCs that comprise the District Headquarters alone. For the rest of the 27 VDCs EFA is an alien concept. This campaign has not reached the schools in each and every village.

**10. Mr. Raj Kumar Shahi, Chief of Town, CPN (Maoist)**

- The allocation of resources under the EFA have not been carried out in a proper way. Similarly, the major problems relating to the EFA campaign have not been identified. The assistance has not been provided to the needy schools. There are many discrepancies with regard to allocatopn of teacher quota, grants and resources.

**11. Mr. Mahesh Devkota, Section Officer, District Education Office, Dolpa**

- There is a lack of ownership over the EFA program. The parents, teachers and students alike have not got the ownership over the program. The political parties should also contribute and make commitment for making EFA successful.

**12. K.B. Jumli, journalist**

- It is easy to change the physical world but it is equally difficult to change people's attitude. What is the number of students who are not able to attend school? the District Education Office knows not. The general public still not aware about the Education For All program.

**13. Ms. Rita Shahi, Vice President, ANNFSU (Revolutionary), Jumla**

- There are parents with two kinds of thinking in the district. One category knows the value of education and they send their children to school while the next category does not know the values of education and send their children to school just for scholarship. The parents are still living with the traditional mindset that daughters marry and go to her boy's house, so there is no need to educate daughters.

**14. Mr. Prakash Chandra Khatri, Station Manager, Karnali F.M.**

- The implementation aspect of the program is weak. There is no space in the school for accommodating the students who have enrolled after the enrollment campaign.

The management aspect has also been neglected. EFA is a national campaign and belongs to each one of us. But where is the sense of ownership?

**15. Mr. Min Bahadur Khatri, President, Kotesanghu Primary School Management Committee**

- The EFA has not touched the far-flung schools in the district. The District Education Office has also not made the schools aware of the EFA. There should be a rethinking about the unequal education which pits a student from Jumla against a student from a boarding school in Kathmandu.

**16. Mr. Umakanta Adhikari, Acting Chief District Officer, Jumla**

- We should pay attention to the fact that the EFA is not only for the children. It is also for the adults and the old people alike. That is why the informal education has been equally emphasized under the EFA. A special model of education should be devised for the Karnali Zone as it has a unique features in terms of geography and climate. There is a need of coordinated approach and synergy among all the stakeholders, including the District Education Office, schools, parents, local bodies and civil society for the success of the EFA.

-----  
**Rukum District**

**Introduction**

The District Interaction on Education For All and Status of Implementation in Rukum District was organized in Rukum District in Kahlanga, the District Headquarters on on 2nd January 2007. The interaction was organized by Education Journalists' Group as a part of its Media Mobilization for Education For All program conducted with support from the Save the Children Norway-Nepal.

At the outset, the district coordinator of the interaction program, Mr. Prem Prakash K.C. welcomed all the invitees to the program and asked them to take their respective seats around a round-table. Then the participants were asked to introduce themselves and the organizations and offices they represented. They were also asked to mention in one sentence about any contribution they have made towards the enrichment of education sector in the district. Interestingly, almost all of the participants mentioned about the works carried out in that connection by the organizations they are affiliated with rather than their own contribution.

Thereafter, Central Representative of EJJ, Mr. Sudarshan Rijal spoke on the objectives of the program. In order to make the program more focused, Mr. Rijal shed light on the State's commitment on the EFA campaign and about the programs carried out to that end last fiscal year and programs to be carried out this year by District Education Office, Rukum. He also presented a base paper on the EFA programs carried out last year and their status of implementation in Pashupati Secondary School Ratamata and Yamuna Jana Namuna Secondary School, Serigaon, two far-flung villages from the district headquarters.

**Findings**

- The scholarship fund for the Dalit and 50 percent girl students had to be distributed on an equal share basis due to the shortage of budget for that purpose.
- The District Education Office releases the amount. But the full amount is not distributed. Up to 15 percent is deducted on the fund released and is misused.
- The money allocated for school reform and reconstruction is diverted towards salary.

- The students are admonished, scolded and given light punishment for disciplining them and the parents are informed about this.
- Most of the school buildings have been damaged in course of the conflict. There is no program for reconstruction of the damaged school infrastructure.

### **Proceedings of interaction**

- The structure of the State itself is to be blamed for the present state of education in the country and by the same token the poor performance of the Education For All program in the district. Such interaction and discussion forums should be organized at the district and the central level.

**- (Those expressing the above views were District President of all Nepal National Teachers' Organization (ANNTO) Ganesh K.C., Mr. Dhanman Pun, District President, ANNFSU (Revolutionary) and Mr. Dhruba B.C., District President of All Nepal Revolutionary Journalists' Association).**

- The education policy for the District should be formulated and planned at the district level itself. Education For All campaign has not materialized as the plans have been made at the centre and implemented in the district without taking into consideration the needs and the problems of the district.

**(Those expressing these views are Mr. Bishwanath Gyawali, Campus Chief, Khalanga Multiple Campus, Musikot; Mr. Hari Bishnu Oli, Lecturer and Mr. Prajit Rawal, teacher, Tribhuvan Janata Higher Secondary School).**

- **Mr. Binod Kumar Malla, teacher, Ratmata Secondary School, Ratmata**

The State should bring special programs for raising the awareness of parents on the value and importance of education.

- **Mr. Damodar Poudel, Head-teacher, Serigaon Secondary School,**

The Education For All (EFA) program implemented in Rukum District has not been able to incorporate education in mother tongue.

- **Mrs. Bishwamaya Sharma, Women Development Officer, Rukum**

The EFA program has not included the disabled and people living in special circumstances.

- **Mrs. Devi Oli, leader, Communist Party of Nepal (UML)**

The debates and forums on educational issues should be taken to every village and nook and corner of the country to check whether or not EFA has been successful and to find out any weaknesses.

- The programs implemented under the Education For All campaign are not likely to meet their targets in the stipulated time. The community, civil society and the intelligentsia should extend the necessary cooperation to the State in achieving the goals of EFA.

(Those expressing the above views are Mr. Siddha Raj Paneru, District Coordinator, CWIN, Rukum; Mr. Bishnu Gautam, DEPROSC, Rukum; Mr. Bijaya Raj Panta, Development Project Service Center, Rukum; Mr. Narendra K.C., World Food Program and Mr. Damodar Gautam, HURED, Rukum).

▪ **Mr. Bishnu Hari Poudel, Local Development Officer, Rukum**

Education should be made effective, competitive and fruitful. He said the District development Committee (DDC), Rukum has increased investment in the education sector. He said the DDC allocated Rs. 1,100,000 out of Rs.4,600,000 under DDC grant in education sector last Fiscal Year. Similarly, it allocated Rs. 5,600,000 out of Rs. 10,000,000 under a separate heading and Rs. 150,000 under the Rural Water Supply grant in the education sector.

▪ **Mr. Damodar Subedi, District Education Officer, Rukum**

A lot of achievements can be made if the programs being implemented under the EFA campaign are made effective and executed in the right way. Since the EFA programs can not become successful without the support from the local community, full cooperation from all the stakeholders is necessary to that end.

▪ **Mr. Sudarshan Rijal, Central Representative, EJG**

**Excerpts from the base paper entitled 'Education For All Program and Status of Implementation in Rukum District'**

- The present literacy rate in Rukum District is 37 percent (source: District Education Office). It is 39.83 according to the Jamarko, a souvenir magazine.

- There are 32 Secondary Schools, 81 Lower Secondary Schools, including 48 approved and 311 Primary Schools in Rukum District. The number of students is 3,655 in the Secondary Level, 9,947 in the Lower Secondary Level and 48,044 in the Primary level.

- There are only 98 teachers' posts in Secondary Level, 286 teachers in the Lower Secondary and 733 teachers posts in the Primary Level as against the Government's benchmark of 132 teachers' posts in the Secondary Level, 286 posts at the Lower Secondary Level and 1069 at the Primary Level. This data shows that the a total of 526 teachers' posts are not fulfilled in the district.

- The Student-Teacher Ratio in the district is 1: 70 as against the STR of 1:45 calculated on the basis of the existing number of teachers and students.

- The District Education Office states that there is no baseline on the physical infrastructure of the schools as micro-planning of schools has not been carried out so far.

-----  
**Udayapur District**

**Introduction**

The interaction on 'Education For All and its Status of Implementation in Udayapur District' was organized in Gaighat, the Headquarters of Udayapur District on 2nd January 2007. Mr. Bhuparaj Khadka, Central Representative of Education Journalists' Group was the program modulator and Mr. Kaushal Chemjong , a local journalist, the facilitator. The interaction was organized by Education Journalists' Group (EJG) as apart of its Media Mobilization for Education For All project with support from Save the Children Norway/Nepal.

**Findings of the interaction**

- The education data in the district is not based on reality and thus unreliable.
- The involvement of teachers in politics and contract business is hampering the education.
- The political parties should not interfere in education but build a culture of collaboration EFA.
- The distribution of the scholarship amount in the district is highly skewed. A large amount of the scholarship fund is distributed in the hill region of the district than in the plain region irrespective of the number of eligible students. This shows biasness for the hill region.
- The teachers should have self-confidence and competent. They should also have self-accountability.

## **Proceedings of the interaction**

### **1. Mr. Bhuparaj Khadka, Central Representative, EJG**

- I welcome all of you to the interaction on 'Education For All and Status of its Implementation in Udayapur District' organized for the first time in the District by EJG since its inception. We will start the program with the introduction of the participants. We will discuss the EFA and its implementation status in Udayapur district in today's interaction. I would like to request all the speakers to express their views focusing on the topic of the interaction. I would like to request the stakeholders and the speakers alike to give suggestions as to how EFA could be made more effective in the district.

### **2. Mr. Kaushal Chemjong, journalist**

- I have prepared a theme paper based on the study of three schools situated in the periphery of Triyuga Municipality. I think this paper will give you a glimpse of the situation of EFA and the overall education scenario in Udayapur District. This is not a working paper but only a paper prepared with the objective of facilitating the discussion on the topic of the interaction.

### **3. Mr. Brisha Bahadur Tamang, Section Officer looking after EFA, DEO**

- Our journalist friends have made an attempt to present the whole picture on the existing education scenario in the district. The District Education Office had felt the need for such an interaction since long. The data on the Gross Enrolment Rate is factually incorrect. Actually, GER at 142 as stated in the data provided by the District Education Office itself shows that the data on GER is incorrect. The data filled up by teachers is not correct. The DEO could not carry out the monitoring of the EFA program properly in the district due to the conflict.

### **4. Mr. Bhimchandra Rai, representative, Nepali Congress (Democratic)**

- The political parties are ready to extend the necessary cooperation for the success of the EFA. There is a need of making arrangements for building a system in which teachers' redeployment and transfers would be carried out in consultation with the teachers' unions. The Nepali Congress (Democratic) is fully opposed to any kind of interference by the political parties and political leaders in teacher management and related education issues. It is a matter of concern for us all that the standard of education is decreasing despite the huge investment made in this sector.

### **5. Mr. Shiva Narayan Chaudhari, Representative, Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Anandidevi)**

- All should take up the responsibility for the present sorry state of public education in the district. The District Education Office is of the mentality that it can carry out almost all the activities related to education in the district. Rather than blaming each other,

we should express our commitment for the success of the program. We should also pay attention to improving the physical facilities of the schools for the success of the EFA.

**6. Ms. Pramila Rai, Representative, Nepali Congress**

- It is a good practice to hold discussion on the overall performance of the Education For All (EFA) program in the district. We should examine all aspects of the program including the budgetary allocations and its expenditure, the distribution of scholarship amount and the general situation of school enrolment in the district in the light of evaluating the EFA. In the past we had asked the District Education Office to organize such programs. But the DEO took our suggestions as interference by the political parties.

**7. Ms. Sabita Tamang, Representative, People's Front Nepal**

- The District Education Office has made discrimination in the allocation of amount for the schools situated outside the District Headquarters, apportioning inadequate amount to these schools as compared to the amount allocated for the schools in the Headquarters. Similarly, there is discrepancy in the distribution of money for scholarship. It is necessary to carry out joint monitoring by the journalists, the civil society and the political parties. An effective publicity on EFA campaign has not been conducted to raise awareness among the parents at the grassroots level. The political parties should also take this program as their own. There are complaints about the misuse of funds meant for textbooks and scholarship, and the District Education Office should give an explanation on this.

**8. Mr. Maniraj Upadhyay, Representative, CPN (UML)**

- Political parties should take moral responsibility for the deterioration of public education. This is due to the erroneous policies formulated by the political parties. I think the problem has been aggravated since we have failed to link our education with life skills. The major blame for the erroneous policies should be taken by the Centre as most of the policies are formulated by the Centre. The evaluation of the teachers has also not been carried out scientifically. This has encouraged the tendency of negligence among the teachers. EFA should become the common agenda of all for its success.

**9. Mr. Parameshwar Ghimire, Central Member, ANNFSU**

- The District Education Office has given out the information that it is running a school for the street children also. But there are about 30 street children loitering around the bus park area in Gaighat. The government has announced that education is free, but the parents are having to pay fees for textbooks and other headings. It is necessary to evaluate all the physical facilities prior to giving permission for opening new schools. Similarly, the physical facilities at schools should be improved and made child-friendly. The District Education Office should devise plans for checking the dropout problem.

**10. Mr. Shankar Bahadur Thapa, former President, Nepal National teachers' Organization, Udayapur**

- Majority of the speakers in this interaction blamed the teachers for being negligent in their profession. But I think the most important topic is whether or not they have fulfilled their responsibilities as teachers in the classroom. If the teacher has fulfilled

that responsibility well in the school time, then it is not a matter of great concern whether he works as a farmer or carpenter in his free time. There is also problem in the teacher evaluation process. There should be a free and fair evaluation process.

**11. Mr. Jhum Prasad Rai, District Education Officer, Udayapur**

- Interaction programs like this one would help promote the Education For All campaign in the district in the context of complaints that EFA has not been publicized to the extent it should have been. I welcome the concern shown by the political parties regarding the working style and the performance of the District Education Office. There is a shortage of fund for the scholarship amount. The District Education Office disburses the amount that is sent by the Department of Education. The problem of the scholarship amount not being adequate is because there is no specific code of conduct for its distribution. Another aspect to this problem is that there is over-enumeration when the schools are asked to give the names of students for the scholarship amount. Regarding the topic of teacher evaluation, it is a matter of one's conscience and understanding. I personally feel that there is no need for evaluating teachers. Teachers should be themselves responsible and sincere toward their profession and performance. The EFA would be successful only through the joint collaboration and cooperation from all sides.
- 

**Doti District**

**Introduction**

A District-level interaction on 'Education For All campaign and Status of its Implementation in Doti District' was organized at the District Education Office meeting hall on 4th January 2007. The interaction was organized by Education Journalists' Group. The interaction was participated in by 51 persons, including education stakeholders, government representatives, the representatives of the local political parties, NGOs and distinguished persons from the district. Extensive discussions were held in the interaction on the topic ' EFA and Status of its Implementation in Doti District'.

At the program, a concept paper incorporating the objective information and the findings from an on-site inspection of three selected schools in the district was presented. The schools selected for that purpose are Balmandir Primary School, Silgadhi; Rampur Secondary School (Proposed), Budar; and Ghanteshwar Secondary School, Laxminagar VDC, Doti. Following the presentation of the concept paper, the participants expressed their views regarding the problems and the challenges they encountered while working in their respective sectors. The interaction was facilitated by District Convenor Mr. Shankar Thapa who was assigned by the EJG.

**Findings of the interaction**

- Fourteen percent children of the school-going age are out of school.
- The scholarship money meant for the Dalit, girls and the conflict-affected children is inadequate. The District Education Office releases less amount for this purpose and the teachers are falsely accused by the parents of misusing the fund.
- The stakeholders are not aware about the government's policy of free and quality education.
- The parents are not aware that education is a fundamental right and it can help in economic empowerment.

- The responsibility of management of primary and secondary level schools should be given to the local community.

### **Proceedings of the interaction**

#### **1. Mr. Prem Ojha, Social Development Centre, Doti**

- A lot of hype is there about Education For All in the district. But there is no mechanism to appeal for one's education rights if one is deprived of the same. The main function of education is to enable a person to empower oneself and earn a decent livelihood, but it is not possible in our case. People have failed to realize the value of education as it has not been practical in our context. This is one major challenge in the face of the Education For All goals. A study shows that 14 percent children of the school-going age are not able to go to school because of the impoverished condition of their parents. Although we have increased student enrollment under the EFA, the problem of drop out is also formidable. Strategy to retain the students should be adopted.

#### **2. Mr. Shankar Bahadur Kathayat, Headmaster, Kumalikot Lower Secondary School, Kumalikot**

- Only 50 percent of the scholarship quota under the Education For All campaign is released to the school. Every single student comes from an impoverished family in backward place like ours. So we face a dilemma in distributing the scholarship amount. There is a dilemma regarding whom to give and whom not to give. One hundred and seven children of conflict victims are studying in our school. How to teach them? The amount allocated under the program is not enough and if money is not provided, students do not come to school.

#### **3. Mr. Prem Bahadur Kathayat, Headmaster, Maglek Secondary School, Tikha**

- The students have been attracted towards studies and encouraged to come to school due to the scholarship. But the problem of dropout is still serious. I think this is because our education is not skill-oriented. There is a need of a clear action plan whether to become literate is the goal of EFA or to gather knowledge and lead a successful life. Efforts should be directed towards increasing the participation of women in the EFA campaign. Similarly, there is an urgent need of increasing the number of female teachers in schools.

#### **4. Mr. Ramesh Joshi, contact person, Education program, Dipayal Silgadhi Municipality**

- The Municipality has implemented education programs in the Municipality under its five-year Education Plan. According to our study, 629 out of the total 3235 children of school-going age in the Municipality are still deprived of education. This is but a small scenario of the state of education in the district, the larger picture is appalling. Therefore, there is need for taking this reality into account while formulating the education policies and plans at the district level.

#### **5. Mr. Jayaraj Sharma, Headmaster, Jhimemalika Secondary School, Bayal**

- How can we make the parents convinced on the benefits of education is the main challenge as majority of the parents in the district are economically not in a position to pay for the education of their children. I think the major problem in the success of the Education For All is the all pervasive problem of poverty in the rural areas. So, unless any concrete measures for raising the living standards of the people are implemented, the slogan Education For All would remain a slogan.

**6. Mr. Sukadev Shah, Headmaster, Gaurishankar Secondary School, Gaira**

- Education For All would hold no meaning until there is a synchronization of the aspirations of the parents and the objectives and goals of the government policies and programs. We have distributed the scholarship amount to the students. Still that has not deterred many of them dropping out studies in favour of going to India for employment. Therefore, raising awareness among the parents and ways to ameliorating poverty would be the solid foundation for the success of the EFA.

**7. Mr. Amrit B.K. , District Program Coordinator, FEDO**

- EFA has been focused only on increasing school enrolment. But equal focus should be given to the ways of retaining students. The scholarship amount should be increased and efforts should be made towards doing away with gender and caste discrimination from society and in schools as well.

**8. Ms. Neelam Oli, Representative, CPN (Maoist), Doti**

- Programs like EFA would not be result-oriented until education is inaccessible and unaffordable. Quality education would remain a dream until the present dual system of education is intact. The present education system is such that it is stratified into two categories- one for the children of the rich and affluent few and another for children of the families which are impoverished. The gap between the education as is provided by the boarding schools and that provided by the public schools should be bridged.

**9. Mr. Muralidhar Bhatta, Headmaster, Radhakrishna Secondary School, Tijali**

- We have posts for only three teachers in our school. But we run classes up to Grade five. There is shortage of teachers in our school. Since the policy of liberal promotion will result in the deterioration of the quality of education, there is need for making policy reforms in this connection. If the mediocre students are also promoted in the name of liberal promotion policy, this would develop the wrong notion among students on the rationality of education itself.

**10. Mr. Kumar Khadka, Local Development Officer, Doti**

- The slogan of Education For All has become redundant. Whether the main objective of the campaign is to guarantee primary level education to all or secondary education to all should be spelled out clearly. The EFA programs should be catered to the specific needs of the urban setting and the rural setting since the needs of urban and rural people are different. This aspect should be taken into consideration while formulating education policies.

**11. Mr. Sachchidananda Joshi, Program Director, Social Service, Doti**

- Education For All holds no meaning until there is guarantee in the education policy that education would be fully free of cost. The deadline fixed for the program is approaching but the government has still not bothered about the free and quality education aspects. This kind of confusion will always arise if there is no regular and effective monitoring of the programs. The stakeholders themselves seem to be ignorant of the program. The question of which is to be prioritized poverty alleviation or EFA should be settled first for ensuring Education For All.

**12. Mr. Jagat Bahadur Malla, School Management Committee chairman, Gaurishankar Secondary School, Gaira**

- EFA is just a slogan. Until the problem of shortage of teacher remains, it would be impossible to achieve the EFA goals. Therefore the problem of shortage of teacher should be addressed on an immediate basis through teacher quota management and

redeployment of teachers. Equally important is the physical infrastructure of the schools. Many schools lack adequate number of classrooms and furniture. This problem should be sorted out for achieving the EFA goals.

**13. Mr. Upendra B.K., Program Officer, Link-Helvetas**

- The parents need to be well-informed about the Education For All campaign. They should be made aware that education is a right and it helps in income-generation and reducing poverty. Emphasis should be laid on technical and vocational education. Education should be practical and should produce tangible results for the layman to understand its value. It should be geared towards the maximum utilization of the local means and resources.

**14. Mr. Dhan Bahadur Khadka, President, Teachers' Union, Doti**

- The District Education Office implemented the program. Accordingly the number of students has also increased in the schools. But the problem is that there is no adequate number of teachers' postings in schools. This problem is bound to create obstacles in the timely realization of the EFA goals. There is a need of attractive incentive packages for attracting children to come to school. Similarly, there is a need of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism for EFA.

**15. Mr. Bijaya Khadka, Representative, Nepali Congress**

- It is our collective responsibility for making the EFA successful. Therefore, the views, suggestions and advice of all the stakeholders is necessary while formulating the education policies for the district. Nepali Congress is ready for that. We express our party's commitment for the effective implementation of the EFA.

**16. Mr. Ram Bahadur Aiyer, Representative, CPN (UML)**

- The Education For All campaign would be successful if the responsibility is to be given to the Village Development Committee. Therefore, the responsibility of managing the primary level education should be handed over to the VDCs and the Municipality. It is for sure that change in education would be hard to come by unless the local bodies are given the responsibility of education in their areas.

**17. Mr. Jeevan Sharma Poudel, Deputy Director, Department of Education**

- We are carrying out evaluation regarding the outcome and the challenges for the Education For All program. We are working towards making policy reforms, correction of shortcomings and needs assessment. The correct evaluation of the program can be made only after getting the factual and unbiased information. Interaction programs of this kind help us in getting the right information and identifying the problems and challenges. Non-formal education should also be given equal emphasis in the implementation of the EFA.

Acting District Education Officer, **Mr. Khagendra Joshi** did not wish to speak in response to the queries raised in course of the discussion and on matters that needed to be clarified by the District Education Office. He only said that the EFA has been hampered due to the conflict and all the supportive programs geared towards achieving EFA goals have been carried out and implemented in the district as per the directives from the centre.

-----  
**Sindhupalchok District**

**Introduction**

The District Interaction on 'Education For All and Status of its Implementation in Sindhupalchok District' was organized in Chautara, the district headquarters, on 11th January 2007. The interaction was organized by Education Journalists' Group (EJG) as part of its Media Mobilization for Education For All (EFA) project undertaken with support from Save the Children Norway/Nepal. The interaction was attended by representatives of the major education stakeholders based in the district, teachers, the School Management Committees, local Non-Governmental Organizations, the District Education Officer and the DEO officers. The participation of the local leaders of the political parties was however not as expected. Although representatives of the Nepali Congress and the People's Front Nepal presented the views on behalf of the political parties in the district, CPN (UML), CPN (Maoist), Rastriya Prajatantra Party and Nepali Congress (Democratic) which have a major presence in the district could not attend the program.

The interaction was conducted by Central Representative of EJG and EJG president Mr. Sudarshan Ghimire. At the outset, local correspondent of the *Kantipur* daily and president of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), Sindhupalchok Branch, Mr. Rishiram Poudyal had presented a working paper entitled 'Education For All Campaign and Status of Implementation'. The proceedings of the interaction were conducted based on the working paper. A majority of the speakers expressed their views focused around the working paper.

#### **Findings**

- Discrimination between boys and girls in school education.
- The NGOs run educational programs in the district but do not inform about this to the District Education Office.
- Transparency in the evaluation of students.
- Lack of teachers postings.
- ECD has had a positive impact
- Need for transparency from school level to the DEO.
- The investment in education is not produced the desired results.
- The District Development Committee (DDC) should play the role of a coordinator and facilitator in education planning.
- No adequate promotional activities undertaken in the district in connection with Education For All. (EFA).

#### **Detailed views of the participants**

##### **1. Mr. Rishiram Poudel, FNJ President, Sindhupalchok**

- I came across new facts and information regarding the situation of education in the district in course of my on-site study visits to the District Education Office and some schools for preparing a working paper as directed by the Education Journalists' Group. I realized that there are many topics in education that the journalists have to investigate and report constantly. Especially, there are many activities and programs conducted by the District Education Office under EFA campaign. I will continuously report on these topics in future.

##### **2. Mr. Tulsiman Shrestha, Bandevi Lower Secondary School**

- There is no adequate teachers' postings in our school, because of which the children have not got quality education. I not only reported the shortage of teachers' posts in my school to the District Education Office but also traveled up to Bhaktapur to press the Director General of the Department of Education on this matter. But the Director General expressed his inability to address the problem, saying, "We can not allocate teachers posts from our pocket. What can I do?" This shows that there is no indication that the problem would be addressed in the near future. How can the children get quality education in this situation?

- 3. Mr. Ram Prasad.....,President, Thulo Sirubari School Management Committee**
- The teachers' posting is not adequate. There is also the shortage of educational materials. The District Education Office should make provisions to that end.
- 4. Mr. Hari ....., Kamaladevi Secondary School, Pipara**
- We are running classes up to the Secondary Level, but the Government has only allocated four teachers' quotas at the Primary Level and only one for the Lower Secondary Level. We have to run Secondary Level classes at any cost. Therefore, we have started to collect fees from students. The Government should also make arrangements for providing training also to teachers appointed through private resources so that they would be motivated in their job.
- 5. Mr. Topnath Ghorasaini, President, Gyanmandir Lower Secondary School, Melchaur**
- We have up to 100 students in a class in our school. How to teach them in one crammed classroom? This problem has created a headache. The people from the Dalit community send their children to school with the lure of getting scholarships but do not send them regularly. We have been enrolling them although they come in the middle of the term, thinking that there is nothing wrong in enrolling students in the middle of the term as long as the children continue coming to school.
- 6. Mr. Om Adhikari, former President, Management Committee**
- The headmaster has extensively misused the fund meant for scholarship in our school. How to control such misuse? The School Management Committee does not have the authority to take action. The District Education Office has not responded despite of being pressed on this issue from time to time. Teachers who had gone on leave during the Dasain festival have not yet returned to school. This has hampered the children's studies. Who will take responsibility for that? Arrangements should be made so that the children's studies would not be disturbed due to this reason. There is also lack of adequate classrooms. we do not have the money and how can we build new classrooms?
- 7. Mr. Som Sapkota, President, NGO Federation, Sindhupalchok**
- There is lack of coordination between the district-based Non-Governmental Organizations and the Government Organizations on many topics. Some I/NGOs based in Kathmandu come and carry out certain programs in schools here and leave without informing us.
  - The Social Welfare Council writes to us asking whether certain activities have been carried out or not after these I/NGOs have left the District. We are aware only after the Social Welfare Council informs us through letter. This tendency has to stop. There is a tendency among the parents to send their children to boarding schools located in the District Headquarters and in town areas.
  - This may be the reason why the number of girl students is more compared to the boys in public schools. How to remove this discrimination between girls and boys? Moreover the public schools have become the base of party politics. If a person affiliated to one party is elected the president of the School Management Committee, then the people who are affiliated to another party do not cooperate. This kind of tendency is still prevalent. This should be done away with by any means.
- 8. Mr. Shiva K.C., Headmaster, Thuli Sirubari Secondary School**
- Our school, which was established as a Primary Level School in 2017 B.S., was upgraded to a Lower Secondary School only in 2050 B.S. We have been running classes up to the Secondary Level since 2055 B.S. We are running classes for the Secondary Level from primary and lower secondary level teachers. The local people can not give money for running the Secondary Level. We teachers are constantly making efforts for collecting resources for running the secondary level classes. But we have not received any tangible support. The District education Office also says it can

not provide additional posts for teachers. There is also lack of adequate furniture in our school. We have not received a single penny under the scholarship fund.

**9. Mr. Sanukaji Thapa, Headmaster**

- Our school is running classes from 1-5 as a public school whereas classes above that are being conducted from private resources. It is very essential to maintain deep understanding and coordination amongst the teachers, parents and the School Management Committee for maintaining the quality of education. This is established from our experience. I feel we have done something tangible.
- Children of the school-going age from the area covered by our school all come to our school. Special attention and care should be given to children's health. Children's health is the precondition for better education.
- There is need for transparency in the student evaluation process. A special discussion should be held on this topic with the experts concerned. Similarly, how the socialization of the children is taking place is also significant. We should pay attention to the socialization aspect of the children.
- We have been carrying out student evaluation in every 15 days. This ensures that we are updated about the learning and the performance of the children every 15 days. Periodic examination alone is not enough for total evaluation of the students. The Tuki Sangh has been providing support to us for teachers training and by giving us educational materials.

**10. Mr. Komal Bahadur....., Simpani**

- Our school which was established in 2052 B.S. has only three teachers' posts. The number of students at the school is more than 300. How can such a small number of teachers handle more than 300 students? We are in a great difficulty due to the shortage of teacher. The District Education Office does not add to the positions of the teachers. The deputation of the remaining teachers has been revoked and they are yet to return to school even after nine months since the revocation of their deputation. Why this situation? The District Education Officer who is present here, please, give a satisfactory explanation.

**11. Ms. Indira Sigdel, Teacher, Dakshinkali Primary School**

- I feel it is appropriate to distribute the scholarship amount in the presence of the resource persons and by calling a parents' gathering. If this process is followed, then we can prevent misuse of scholarship funds.

**12. Mr. Suresh Shrestha, Nepal Teachers' Union**

- It is the primary responsibility of the teachers to ensure the quality of education. We teachers are not fulfilling the role that we are required to fulfill as teachers. There are many reasons for that. These reasons should be identified and addressed for ensuring the success of Education For All campaign. We have not received any detailed information on EFA. How can we make contribute to the success of the program if we are not well-aware on the details of the program?

**13. Mr. Chandra Basnet, Tuki Sangh**

- Tuki Sangh has implemented support programs for only 15 Village Development Committees. Our focus is on Education For All and the quality education. We have also been providing support for the operation of Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centers. We have also been carrying out construction of physical infrastructure of schools.
- We should also look at the ways of bringing children who are out of school to schools and what the role of each of us is to that regard.
- The trilateral relations between the teachers, students and parents should be very cordial for ensuring quality and regular classes. There should be regular contact and interaction among all these stakeholders.

**14. Mr. Ramesh Chapagain, B.P. Memorial Primary School**

- We have started to produce educational materials at the local level itself. Other schools might also do the same and I think they should do that. If any of our friends from other schools need any information regarding this topic, they can visit our school.
- There is no indication that the teacher quota in the district would be managed at the earliest. Even if quotas are added, it will take an entire year. Therefore, the immediate way out to address the problem of teacher shortage is to hire local qualified people on contract basis. There is no alternative to hiring teachers on contract basis. We teachers have to make the parents convinced about the need to hire teachers on contract basis.

**15. Mr. Krishna Shrestha, Chautara Campus Steering Committee**

- The Education For All (EFA) campaign would not become successful until the policy of compulsory education is implemented. The government would be compelled to make arrangements for the minimum infrastructure when the concept of compulsory education is executed.
- The classroom should not be without teacher in the absence of another teacher who has gone to attend training. There should be compulsory teacher replacement system in the absence of another teacher. The present system is causing a great deal of hindrance to students' studies.
- The NGOs and other organizations only work for a short period. They come to work in the education sector bringing with them new concepts and innovative ideas, work for some time and then go after completion of their program. So, the responsibility for the long-term management of education is that of the government alone. The government alone should take the responsibility for the education.
- It is necessary to raise public awareness about the importance and the need of education. Similarly, the people should be imparted skills on school management. It is too late.

**16. Representative, Bajra Foundation**

- We have imparted health education training to one teacher each from all the schools in the eight Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Sindhupalchok District. The teachers should have the basic information on health and hygiene, then, only can they look after and take proper care of the children.
- We have also constructed school buildings in four VDCs. Our organization is providing support for educational materials. We hope that this support has provided significant assistance in increasing the enrollment of children in school.

**17. Ms. Krishna Gurung, Women's Self-reliance Center**

- We dwelt on the problems for a long time. We only related the different problems in the schools but we did not focus our attention towards identifying the ways for resolving them. It is we who should seek solution to the different problems. In my view, the ways of resolving the problems are contained in the success stories themselves. Therefore, we should also pay attention to the success stories along with the problems. Success stories not only teach us new methods, but also inspire us in our work.
- While talking about Education For All, the most important topic is child-friendly classes. If the classrooms are child-friendly, then the child can learn well. Therefore, we should first of all see whether the teacher is behaving well with the child or not.
- Transparency is another factor that determines the progress of a school. Therefore, all the activities of the school should be made transparent.

**18. Mrs. Bishnu Maya Sapkota, teacher**

- I had the opportunity to conduct a small-scale research study on Education For All as a part of my University degree. The findings of the study showed that the misuse of the investment put in the EFA is greater than the outcome.

**19. Mr. Tanka Dhungel, people's Front Nepal**

- The education policy of our country itself is unscientific and impractical. The present education is totally money-driven. This should stop.
- Education For All is limited only to slogan. Nothing has been done at the district level. This is the first program on EFA.
- We should think deeply as to why the children from poor families are deprived of education and find out ways of addressing the problem.

**20. Mr. Makar Udhas, Nepali Congress**

- The present Education Act and Regulation should be revised.
- We politicians should also work for reforming education. There is no use doing politics the traditional way.

**21. District Education Officer**

- I feel that I should listen to you all in this forum rather than speak. The truth should be accepted without any prejudice whosoever might have said that. I am of the principle that the problem should not be avoided under any pretext. I express commitment to translate this commitment into practice and expect the same from others.
- I will go to the District Education Office and inquire about the questions related to misappropriation including teachers whose deputation has been terminated not returning to schools and the misuse of scholarship fund, and immediately initiate the action.
- Teachers, parents and friends from the Non-Governmental Organizations raised a lot of problems, they also suggested ways of solution. In my capacity as the District Education Officer I express my commitment to resolving these problems. I will take the policy-level topics which can not be resolved from my level to the higher authorities.
- The task of collecting the necessary resources can not be done in a day. This surely takes time. But if the teachers take the necessary initiatives from their respective sides and create a better teaching-learning environment with the existing facilities and resources, I believe, we can bring about 50 per cent improvement in the education. Therefore I humbly request my teacher friends to make sincere efforts to that end.
- The topic of lack of discussion on and adequate information about Education For All was raised by a majority of the speakers in this forum. It has not been very long since I came in this District as the Education Officer. I will try to address this shortcoming. I will organize such programs from time to time.
- Lack of coordination with the local NGOs is true. It was emergency period previously which is a special situation. Peace has been restored in the country now. There is a political outlet. The law and order situation has improved and we should be open and interact as far as is possible. I would like to assure you all that the District Education Office would take initiatives to that end in the coming days.
- There is no such program designed by the District Education Office alone. The program formulated and send by the Centre is implemented in the districts. I feel that this process should be reformed.

**22. Mr. Sudarshan Ghimire, EJG President and Central Representative**

- A lot of new issues have come from this forum regarding the Education For All campaign and changing the education policy. Not only problems but the ways of resolving them have also been suggested by the participants. Let us all take account of them and let us all sincerely work from our respective places towards attainment of Education For All in heart, words and deeds.
- One of the participants of the forum itself said that this is the first forum of its kind to be organized in this District. Education Journalists Group can not always come here and organize this type of program. You yourselves are capable of doing that. We have

taken the initiatives only. Now, you can continue to organize interaction forums like this. The District Education Officer has also made a commitment for this.

-----

**Annex- 2 List of participants of District Interaction, Udayapur**

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Signature</b>
1.	Gyanendra Kumar Shrestha	Asari Primary School	Headteacher	
2.	Umesh Thapa	Manmohan Primary School	Headteacher	
3.	Manoj Kumar Thapa	Free Students Union/NSU	Secretary	
4.	Buddhi Rai	Majhkharka Weekly	Reporter	
5.	Maniraj Poudel	CPN (UML) District Com.	Secretary	
6.	Shiva Kanta Chaudhari	NSP(Anandidevi)	Dist. President	
7.	Khamba Bahadur Thapa	Shree Ma.Vi. Nepaltar	Headteacher	
8.	Shanti Danuwar	WOREC	Facilitator	
9.	Tulasi Bahadur Rai	Purano Gaighat		
10.	Govinda Dahal	Primary School, Asari	SMC President	
11.	Kaji Bahadur Basnet	Dist. Edu. Office, Udayapur	Resource person	
12.	Dinanath Dahal	Dist. Edu. Office, Udayapur	Resource person	
13.	Basudev Chaudhari	Dist. Edu. Office, Udayapur	Resource person	
14.	Brisha Bahadur Tamang	Dist. Edu. Office, Udayapur	Section Officer	
15.	Devi Khadka	Seto Gurans, Udayapur	Secretary	
16.	Madhukar Thapa	FNJ, Udayapur Dist. Branch	Secretary	
17.	Baburam Bhandari	Independent News Service	Representative	
18.	Kamal Babu Basnet	Nepal Samacharpatra	Representative	
19.	Mahesh Roka	ANNFSU, Dist. Office	President	
20.	Parameshwar Ghimire	ANNFSU, Central Com.	Member	
21.	Jhum Prasad Rai	Dist. Edu. Office, Udayapur	Edu. Officer	
22.	Sabina Tamang	People's Front Nepal	Member	
23.	Bhimchandra Rai	NepaliCongress(Democratic		

**Annex 3**  
**Interaction reports**

***A Report on Interaction on Girls Education in Nepal***

Organized by

Education Journalists' Group (EJG)  
Anamnagar, Kathmandu  
(26th January 2007)

**1. Background**

Education Journalists' Group (EJG) organized a discussion/interaction on "Challenges of girls' education from Dalit and excluded community of Nepal" at the EJG Hall in Anamnagar, Kathmandu on 26th January 2007. The discussion was organized in connection with making an assessment of the status of the girl education in the country. The Government has made commitments for Education For All (EFA) by 2015.

Girl education is an important component to fulfill the objectives of the EFA. Similarly, education up to the secondary level has been made free and declared as the fundamental right of the people by the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007. The Interim Constitution has paid special attention to women and the disadvantaged groups and for their equal opportunity and right to get the state facilities. But the pace at which the programs have been implemented is slow.

Similarly, it is stated in the objectives of the Education For All National Action Plan that the gender inequality existing at the Primary and Secondary education would be removed by 2005 and the full and equal access of the girls would be ensured to quality and basic education by 2015. The same action plan also envisages to guarantee access to free and compulsory primary education to girls and to maintain quality and access to primary education. The Action Plan also states that full and equal access to education would be made available to children, gender discrimination would be removed, scholarships and incentive programs for girls would be increased, the net enrollment rate for girls in Primary Level would be increased to 96 percent and the number of girl and boy students at every school would be made equal.

The statistics provided by the Ministry of Education show that at least 13.2 percent of the total children in the primary school age are still to be enrolled in schools in Nepal, and among them two-thirds are girls. In the absence of skills and job-oriented education in rural areas, illiterate parents are unaware that they need to send daughters to school. The national aggregate of literacy in Nepal is 42.5 for female, while the literacy for Dalit is 7. Among Dalit community, Damai has 28.6, Kami 26.7, Sarki 25.1, Chamar 10.8 and Mushahar 4.5. Only 15.6 percent of Dalit children are recruited in primary level, while reaching secondary the rate decreases around 1 percent.

In this context, Education Journalists' Group (EJG) organized the interaction to assess how the government's policy on Girls Education is faring and the problems and the prospects.

**2. Objectives**

The objectives of the interaction on Girls Education was to-

- Take stock of the girls education at present in Nepal,
- Discuss the implementation status of the girls education,
- Find out the problems and challenges in girls education,
- Find ways of tackling the challenges, and
- Suggest measures for the effectiveness of girls' education to meet the EFA goals.

### **3. Process**

The interaction was held at the EJM Meeting Hall in Anamnagar. The Interaction was mainly discussion-based and held in an informal manner. It elicited wider participation from the audience and the participants. The issues raised in course of discussion were explained by the program facilitator and the responsible officials.

Participants in the program included education experts, teachers unions, and representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations, lady teachers, Education Department officials and media persons.

### **4. Findings**

After holding discussions on the issues related to Girls Education raised in course of the interaction and the sharing of views, the meeting came up with the following findings.

- That the overall picture of Girls Education is not satisfactory. There still remained much to be done.
- Lack of public awareness on the need of educating girls.
- The problems of child marriage, poverty, discrimination, social attitude, family values and many cultural factors are hindering the girls' education.
- Lack of effectiveness in the implementation of different programs meant for increasing the Girls Education.
- Lack of incentives and physical facilities for the girl education.

The participants of the interaction came up with the following findings also-

- The programs implemented by the government aimed at promoting and enhancing Girls Education have had made a positive impact to a certain extent, but these incentive packages were far from adequate.
- Incentive programs for increasing Girl Education should be implemented in an effective manner and they should be expanded.

### **5. Recommendations**

Following the discussion session, the participants came up with the following list of suggestions for making the Girls' Education Program more effective and result-oriented.

- Need for registration and follow-up of girls' enrollment program.
- Provide micro credit facilities or loan for girls' education.
- Run adult literacy campaign for mothers.
- Effective coordination among all the stakeholders and undertaking programs in a synchronized manner.
- Creating awareness at the grassroots level.
- Need to remove the social evils like child marriage and discrimination among boys and girls.
- Fix responsibilities by linking the local bodies to the Girls' Education Program also.

- Increase the active participation of women teachers in the Girls' Education program.
- Increase the number of women teachers in schools.
- Make the physical facilities in school child-friendly, especially for the girls.
- Move ahead the different programs for promoting Girls' Education being undertaken by the donor agencies in an integrated manner.
- Fix responsibility of local bodies, community-based organizations, schools, parents, teachers' unions and the district level education agencies in girls' education.
- Need to carry out effective monitoring.
- Establish girls' hostels in schools.
- Form mothers' groups to promote girls' education.
- Need to increase scholarship for girls.
- Need to do social auditing.
- Implement non-formal education targeted toward women.

## **6. The views of the speakers**

### **Mr. Rajan Sharma, Coordinator, Media Mobilization for Girls' Education, EJG**

At the outset, Mr. Rajan Sharma presented an overview of the interaction program. He provided the background to the program and presented the findings of a study on Girl Education carried out by the EJG in some Terai Districts. Quoting from the findings of the study, Mr. Sharma said that despite the different programs launched by the government to promote Girl Education, the results have not been that much promising.

He said various programs have been initiated by the government along with its national and international commitments and in collaboration with the non-governmental organizations. This has generated a new feeling among the parents to send their daughters to school. He stated that this was a qualitative progress, which has increased the number of girls going to schools in the recent years especially in urban areas. This trend has well crossed the national average, but still much needs to be done in rural areas, which houses over 80 percent of the country's total population and the situation of girls' education remains abysmally dismal.

Mr. Sharma stressed that in this backdrop, it was urgently necessary to advocate for universal education for all.

### **Mr. Asharam Maharjan, Concern Nepal**

In connection with the girls' education, Mr. Maharjan stressed the need of giving priority to flexible education. He said to bring the girls who remain out of school back to school, it is necessary to bring incentive packages. For this, he said, provision of flexible school time should be made, the scholarship incentives provided to the girls should be increased and the curriculum should be also made short and flexible.

Similarly, Mr. Maharjan underlined the need for promoting non-formal education. He said a lot of girls and women who remain out of school due to various constraints might be included in the informal system of education and their literacy increased. Mr. Maharjan also underlined the need for making the school tracking system much effective. He said overall, the education needs to be made flexible and life-relevant curriculum that is practical based should be devised.

### **Mrs. Jalpa Pradhan (World Education)**

Mrs. Jalpa Pradhan, as a representative of an organization that has been working in the girls' education sector, stressed the need of giving emphasis to raising awareness of the parents and the local community on the need of educating girls. She said the existing social thinking among the general people and lack of awareness was the main stumbling blocks to girls' education in Nepal's context. She said parents should be responsible for educating their children and they should be made aware of the need of educating girls.

In this connection, she underlined the need of effective implementation of the government's policies and programs that are focused on promoting the girls' education. She said a watch dog of various governmental and non-governmental organizations should be established to especially devise policies for and monitor the girls' education.

### **Mrs. Sanu Kumari Nepal, Principal, Kanya Higher Secondary Education**

Mrs. Nepal also more or less agreed to what Mrs. Pradhan said in connection with promoting girls' education. She said first of all the parents' awareness level should be raised- especially the awareness of mothers. She also stressed that the discrimination between sons and daughters that is prevalent in our society should be eliminated so as to overcome the challenge it poses to girls' education. She said because of this social attitude, many parents who are ignorant and illiterate are unwilling to send their daughters to school. She stressed the need for organizing a gathering of parents and launching an awareness campaign.

### **Mrs. Kamala Tuladhar, Vice-President, Nepal National Teachers' Organization**

Mrs. Tuladhar said efforts at promoting girls' education are suffering for lack of effective programs. The lack of awareness on the part of the parents and the local community on the importance of educating girls is another factor that is hampering Girl Education in Nepal. She said the Education For All program is not monitored adequately and in an effective manner. In this connection, Mrs. Tuladhar underlined the need for carrying out follow-up programs to the programs already undertaken in promoting girls' education. She said the Girls Education campaign should be expanded and it should not be only confined to the urban setting.

Mrs. Tuladhar said that girls' hostels should be established in the villages as a measure to promote girls' education. She stressed the provisions should be made for providing free education to girls from grade 1 to 12 and girls education should be made compulsory. Mrs. Tuladhar further said that there should be a 33 per cent reservation to women in the teachers' quota. She stressed that 50 percent of the teaching staff in every school should be women. She also stressed concerted efforts of the local bodies, parents, teachers, civil society and government agencies would be necessary for promoting Girls' Education.

### **Dr. Nancy J. Baker, Education Advisor, EJG**

Dr. Baker shared about her family background. She said although her mother did not have the chance to complete her school, she was intelligent and very practical lady. Dr. Baker said it was because of the support and the care of her mother that her brothers and sisters could go to school and pursue studies. Dr. Baker said education is very important for the family, local community and the nation at large. She said young women and girls

are the future of Nepal as the Nepali people embark to build a new Nepal and the young men should provide support to them.

Dr. Baker asked the audience to look back at our mothers and grandmothers who were not in school but taught us life skills. She said we should be thankful to them for they brought us up, taught us different life skills and gave us the opportunity to go to school. She said the youths should help the government to bring new policies to the country which would provide equal access to all, irrespective of their gender, to go to school.

Dr. Baker also pointed out the Girls Education was the responsibility of all. She said teachers can't point fingers at parents, parents at the school, the schools at the District Education Office and the District education Offices to higher authorities. She stressed that everyone has the responsibility to bring girls into school. She also underlined that people in the media should get the message out to the parents that girls need to go to school and that that was important for building a new Nepal.

### **Mr. Mohan Gyawali, President, Nepal Teachers' Union**

Mr. Gyawali said that the Government, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Education and the entire state was to blame for the problems in the education sector. He also said the teachers were equally to blame for the same that they were not doing enough. He said the teachers were not fulfilling their duties and responsibilities for promoting Girls' Education in a proper manner. He stated that the teachers were still using the traditional approach to teach the students and that they were also not fulfilling their social responsibilities. Calling on the teachers to be more responsible towards their profession and social responsibilities as well, Mr. Gyawali said the teachers have a crucial role to play in promoting Girls' Education.

Mr. Gyawali also stressed that the Government should now make provision for appointing female teachers in all the Primary Schools. He stressed that women's participation should also be increased in the School Management Committee and the Parent-Teacher Groups. He said the children from the marginalized communities should also be brought into the mainstream and provided greater access. Mr. Gyawali also underlined the need of making the basic education free and accessible to all. He said the distribution of then scholarship grants should also be scientific, transparent and justice-based.

He complained that although the media was beginning to give coverage to education issues, it was not doing that enough and key topics like women's education, Girls' Education and education of the marginalized communities were not given emphasis and not included in the priority list of the media. He stressed that the media should play its part from its side in promoting Girls' Education in the country.

### **Mrs. Madhavi Katuwal, Vice President, Nepal Teachers' Union**

Mrs. Katuwal said the District Education Offices in all the districts of the country should carry out the school mapping. She observed that doing so would help in keeping track of the activities and the status of the education policies and programs being launched by the Government. She stressed that the parents should be made aware on the importance of the Girls Education and the schools should play a more pro-active role in promoting Girls' Education.

Mrs. Katuwal also underlined the need of creating conducive environment at school for girls. It is the responsibility of the local community, schools, civil society and the state for launching an effective campaign for promoting the Girls' Education. She called on the teachers to lay emphasis on conducting child-friendly education programs. Mrs. Katuwal suggested that a pilot program should be implemented by selecting project districts for promoting Girls' Education and that this program should gradually be expanded to more districts. Moreover, she stressed that the state should accord priority to Girls' Education.

**Mrs. Divya Dawadi, Section Officer, Department of Education**

Mrs. Dawadi informed the participants of the program that the Department of Education was in the process of preparing a strategy paper regarding Girls' Education. She said the main focus of the Girls' Education would be community mobilization. She also informed that the Strategy Paper contained 16 strategies. Mrs. Dawadi said that the Department has prepared the statistics related to girls' education. She said one of the major focuses of the strategy was empowering the parents and building a network group.

She also said the Department was preparing a profile of female teachers and a checklist on teacher training. Mrs. Dawadi also dwelt on the different incentive programs that the Department of Education has launched for promoting Girls' Education. For instance, she maintained about the Welcome to School Program, which aimed to bring the out-of-school children in to school. The Welcome to School program was implemented last year. She said the program was successful in terms of students' enrollment. She added that as a result of the program, thousands of children were enrolled in schools. But it is a challenge that 13.2 per cent children of the school-going age are still out of school and among them two-third are girls. In this connection, Mrs. Dawadi said that the programs meant for improving girls' education that are already underway should be given continuity and these should be implemented in a more effective manner. She added that the scholarship for the girls should be increased and there should be effective monitoring of the scholarship distribution. She also informed that the scholarship for girls is to be increased and the objective is to distribute the same to 700,000 Dalit girls.

**Mr. Kedar Khanal, Chief, Nutrition Food Project**

Mr. Khanal said that in a bid to promote the girls' education, the Project has implemented four programs. He said that these programs are- the GIP or Girls' Incentive Program, the FFE program or the Food For Education program, the De-worming program and the MMC or the Maternal and Child Nutrient Program.

He explained the objectives of each of the programs and said that the outcome of these programs have been effective. As a result of these programs, the enrollment of children at schools has increased. He said it has been found that girls' enrollment has increased by 28 percent as a result of the GIP. He said this program has been implemented in 14 remote districts. He gave out the information that under the GIP there is a plan to distribute 144,300 liters of cooking oil to the parents sending their daughters to school at the rate of two liters per a girl enrolled at school. He also said that under the Food for Education program, 100 grams Haluwa (snacks) is distributed to the children and that this program is implemented in 21 districts of the country.

He also said that de-worming tablets are distributed to the children under the De-worming Program so that it would act as an incentive for the parents to send their children

to school. Similarly, under the Mother and Child Nutrient Program, the children are provided Lito (porridge for the child). This program, according to Mr. Khanal, is also effective.

## **7. List of participants**

1. Mr. Mohan Gyawali, Nepal Teachers' Association
2. Mrs. Madhavi Katuwal, Nepal Teachers' Union
3. Mrs. Kamala Tuladhar, Nepal National Teachers' Organization
4. Ms. Binu Subedi, Nepal F.M.
5. Mr. Rupesh Acharya, Annapurna Post
6. Mr. Deepraj Sanyal, EJJ
7. Dr. Nancy Baker, EJJ
8. Mr. Padam Gautam, EJJ
9. Ms. Manju Prajapati, Classic F.M.
10. Ms. Sushila Gurung, Himalayan Times
11. Ms. Sushma Poudyal, H.B.C F.M.
12. Ms. Nirjala Kakshyapati, Image Channel/EJJ
13. Mr. Kapil Shrestha, EJJ
14. Mr. Prakash Rijal, Samaya Sarathi
15. Mr. Harish Chandra Bhandari, Bhaktapur F.M.
16. Mr. Dilendra Bajyoo, Bhaktapur F.M.
17. Ms. Merina Sharma, The Himalayan Times
18. Mrs. Jalpa Pradhan, World Education
19. Mr. Govind Rosyara, Radio City F.M.
20. Mr. Purna Khatri, The Rising Nepal
21. Ms. Asmita Subedi, Nepal Samacharpatra
22. Mr. Asharam Maharjan, CONCERN, Nepal
23. Mr. Rajan Sharma, EJJ
24. Mr. Prakriti Adhikari, Gorkhapatra/EJJ
25. Mr. Bhuparaj Khadka, EJJ
26. Ms. Anita Shiwakoti, Communication Corner
27. Ms. Smita Koirala, Communication Corner
28. Mrs. Sanu Kumari Nepal Bhattarai, Kanya Mandir Higher Secondary School
29. Mr. Basudev Timilsina, Channel Nepal
30. Mr. Bharat Sharma, Rastriya Samachar Samiti (RSS)
31. Mr. Ganesh Rai, Kantipur daily
32. Mr. Sajib Kalakheti, Educational Pages
33. Mr. Manoj Poudel, EJJ/Kapilbastu
34. Mr. Kedar Khanal, Nutrition Food Project

### ***'Report on Interaction on 'School Drop-out: Problem and Solution'***

Organized by

**Education Journalists' Group (EJJ)  
Anamnagar, Kathmandu  
(2nd February 2007)**

## **Background**

The data on school dropout made available by the Department of Education shows that the total dropout rate for girls in School Year 2005/06 in Grade 1 is 15.9 per cent, 11.4 per cent in Grade 2, 11.1 per cent in Grade 3, 12.6 per cent in Grade 4 and 15 per cent in Grade 5. Similarly, the dropout rate for boys in School Year 2005/06 is 25.5 per cent in Grade 1, 9.2 per cent in Grade 2, 9.5 per cent in Grade 3, 10.6 per cent in Grade 4 and 14.6 per cent in Grade 5.

Likewise, the total dropout rate for both boys and girls in School Year 2005/06 shows that it is 20.9 per cent in Grade 1, 10.3 per cent in Grade 2, 10.3 per cent in Grade 3, 11.7 per cent in Grade 4 and 14.9 per cent in Grade 5. The survival rate up to Grade 5 for girls is 77.4 per cent while for boys it is 83 per cent. This data also shows that the dropout rate for the girls is higher than that of the boys.

According to the Tenth Plan, the net enrollment rate in Grade 1 in the year 2000 was 54 per cent. Out of the total number of pupils enrolled, 42 per cent repeat in Grade 1 and 13 per cent repeat in Grade 5. Out of the 100 students enrolled in Grade 1, only 63 retain up to Grade 5. The rest either drop out or repeat grades. The objective of the Tenth Plan is to retain 75 out of 100 pupils up to Grade 5 by 2007 and 90 out of 100 by the year 2015.

In this background, a cursory analysis of the data of dropout rate at the Primary Level shows that the rate of school dropout is a big challenge in meeting the goals of Education For All. There is no let-up in the dropout rate. The Department of Education has implemented new programs to check the dropout rate.

Realizing the gravity of the problem of school dropout and the consequences it would have on the overall goal of meeting the goals of Education For All program, Education Journalists' Group (EJG) organized an interaction at the EJG Meeting Hall on 2nd February 2007 to discuss the problem with the stakeholders concerned and to find out the solution to address this problem.

## **Objectives:**

The objectives of the Interaction on 'School Drop-out: Problem and Solution' organized by the EJG as a part of its Media Mobilization for Education For All (EFA) program is to-

- Find out why students abort studies
- Identify measures for retaining students in school
- Find out why students could not be retained in school
- Discuss the status of incentive programs implemented to address the problem
- Identify what could be done to effectively address the problem

## **Process**

The interaction was mainly discussion-based. Representatives of the teachers' unions, ethnic communities, marginalized groups, Dalit community and other stakeholders

shared their views on the problem of school dropout. They identified the weaknesses and strengths of the programs undertaken by the Government for addressing the problem. The participants also suggested some measures from their respective sides for addressing the problem. The interaction also sometimes took a question-answer mode wherein the participants raised queries and the Government officials from the Department of Education, the District Education Office and the Non-formal Education Center responded to the queries and explained the different measures taken to that end.

### **Summary of the findings**

On the basis of the discussions and what transpired in the interaction, the following major points were identified by the participants with regard to the dropout problem of school children.

1. Poor economic condition of the parents
2. Lack of awareness among the parents
3. Existence of discrimination on the basis of caste, gender and class in school
4. Lack of effective incentive measures
5. Lack of child-friendly environment in schools
6. Use of corporal punishment in schools
7. Failure to tie education with life-skills
8. Lack of flexible school hours
9. Schools being situated far from the villages
10. Unscientific examination system

### **Annex 1**

#### **Proceedings of the interaction**

The interaction started with the program modulator Prakriti Adhikari throwing some light on the problem of school dropout in the context of Nepal and how it was going to affect the goal of achievement of universal education and the quality of education. Mr. Adhikari also presented statistics on the school dropout rate in Nepal and the objectives mentioned in the different policies and strategy papers. In this context, the Government has initiated two special programs namely, the 'School Enrolment Campaign' and the 'Welcome to School' programs with the objective of enrolling children of school-going age especially the children with disabilities and those from the marginalized communities. The programs were launched in 2005. The objective is to identify children under this category and enroll them at schools accessible to them.

Both these programs were implemented under three phases which are- 1.preparation phase, 2.implementation phase and 3.evaluation and feedback phase. Under the preparation phase, a survey of all the school-going age children in the coverage area of a school were carried out, data was collected and analyzed and the schools capacity to enroll and manage the extra students were assessed. Coordination was maintained with the community based organizations for the program and publicity and orientation activities for the program were also carried out under this phase.

Similarly, under the implementation phase, the children coming for enrollment as regular students were enrolled and the students who did not enrolled were enrolled by visiting the doorsteps of these children. Under the evaluation and feedback phase the impact of the programs was analyzed and shortcomings were identified.

**1. Mr. Dhan Bahadur Majhi, Vice president, Nepal Majhi Uplift Society**

- There is very little awareness among the Majhi community on the importance of educating their children. So, most of the parents do not send their children to schools.
- As a majority of people of the Majhi community are economically poor and living in deprivation, they can not send their children to school. Rather, they prefer their children to help them in their work on the farm.
- Out of 100 Majhis, hardly two pass the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examinations.
- The scholarship given to the children of the marginalized community is misused by their fathers or male guardians in liquor.
- There are very few people from the Majhi community in public service, police and the armed forces. This situation has created a general sense among the people of the Majhi community that what use sending the children to school.
- Only 400 out of the 72,000 Majhi population have passed the SLC examinations.
- The first time a Majhi individual passed the SLC exam was in 2021 B.S.

**2. Mr. Bal Bahadur Pariyar, General Secretary, Nepal National Oppressed Students' Organization**

- Students from the Dalit community are discriminated against at school on the basis of caste.
- Teachers are said to use discriminatory language to students from the Dalit and oppressed castes in classroom and school.
- The people of the occupational castes send their children to schools only up to the age when they are not able to take on their family occupation. Once the children reach the age when they can follow the family occupation, the parents ask the children to drop out from school.
- The rich and the powerful of the Dalits are said to take the scholarship amount meant for the students from the Dalit community for themselves.
- The parents are mostly not aware of the provision of the Dalit scholarship and other incentives.

**3. Mr. Rudrahari Adhikari, Officer at the Kathmandu District Education Office**

- The school dropout rate in Kathmandu District is not very high. The dropout rate for Grade 1 is 6.43 percent, for Grade 2 is 2.29 percent and for Grade 3 is 3.05 percent.
- Child-tracking is being carried under which the students are given a number which would make it easier to track the student even if he/she leaves one school and gets admitted in another.
- One of the causes of the dropout is the lack of adequate and user-friendly physical facilities in schools for example there are no separate toilets for girls and boys at many schools. So, attention should be given to improving the physical facilities at schools.
- Confusion in the distribution of the scholarship meant for students from the Dalit community due to the tendency of the Dalit parents to adopt the surnames of the so-called higher castes.

- A separate team is constituted and mobilized for monitoring the scholarship distribution. The local community should also monitor and check whether or not the genuine students are getting their scholarship.
- One of the major causes of high dropout is the temporary migration of parents from one locality to another.
- Another major problem is the lack of awareness and the poor economic condition of the parents. The parents, due to their poor economic condition, make their children work for employment rather than sending them to schools.

**4. Mr. Suprabhat Bhandari, President, Guardians Association of Nepal**

- The problem of school dropout is very serious both in the rural and urban setting and it should be addressed with immediate effect.
- One of the problems is the Government's lackadaisical attitude in the implementation of its own policies and programs. Government authorities' attitude is to just take the policies and programs lightly and there is bureaucratic red-tape.
- The causes of high dropout in the rural and urban setting are different and therefore call for different measures for resolving them. The main problem is the illiteracy and lack of awareness among the parents the rural areas and the rural poverty.
- The State should realize that education is its responsibility and take effective measures in ensuring education.
- The causes of school dropout problem should be properly identified and policies should be formulated for taking effective corrective measures for removing this problem.

**5. Mr. Laxman Khanal, Deputy Director, Non-formal education Center**

- The National Policy on Education has made provision for a program for addressing the dropout problem. The program is under implementation in 17 districts of the country. It is mainly targeted to the students from Grade 1-5. A Village Education Plan would be prepared under this program.
- The problem of dropout in the Kathmandu valley is highest throughout the country.
- The concepts of Open School, Alternate School and flexible school hours have been adopted and they would be implemented vigorously to address the problem.
- The school outreach program has been brought with the objective of bringing in the children from marginalized communities, dropouts and differently able children to school education.
- A condensed course catering the needs of the children is being prepared.
- Alternative schools are to be opened throughout the country for providing basic education to children at their own villages.

**6. Mr. Surya Ghimire, Headmaster, Pragati Shikshya Sadan Secondary School, Kupandol, Lalitpur**

- The problem of school dropout is a serious one and it needs to be tackled head-on. This problem has reached alarming proportions in the urban context.
- In my school also dropout rate is high for various reasons, one of them being migration of parents for job-related works.
- Altogether 43 students dropped out of school during the four months period from Baisakh to Shrawan in the current school session in Pragati Shikshya Sadan.

- By the end of the Second Term examination, 84 students had dropped out of the school. The total drop out in the school is 23.78 percent, i.e. 117 out of 492 students dropped out of the school.
- Among the causes of the dropout is temporary migration of the parents and the social context.
- Research shows that only 5 percent of the students dropping out of school join school again.
- Although the government has announced that education up to the primary level is free, the school still has to charge fees from the students to meet the expenses of the school. There is no adequate support for the general expenses of the school besides the teachers' salary. This issue should be addressed by the government at the policy level itself.

#### **7. Mr. Mohan Gyawali, President, Nepal Teachers' Union**

- The program's objectives have not reached the targeted community.
- The annual school days are short.
- The teaching-learning environment in the schools is not child-friendly and most of the schools run on dictatorship tradition.
- The children are subjected to punishment in the name of maintaining discipline.
- Schools, teachers and the community as a whole are not accountable to the children's learning needs.
- There should be a re-mapping of the schools so that children would not have to walk long distances to get to schools.
- It is the duty and responsibility of us all to extend cooperation in the sincere efforts at reducing the drop out in schools.

#### **8. Mrs. Gita Ghimire, Section Officer, Department of Education**

- The Department of Education has launched the Early Childhood Development program as a bridge program to prepare children to school. This program has been launched in schools as well as in the community.
- Various scholarships have been distributed to the students as an incentive for cutting back on the drop-out rate.
- Various stipends are provided to the disabled children. Provisions have been made for placement of disabled students in hostels.
- The scholarships for the disabled children are distributed on the spot.
- The Department has also launched a Girls Incentive Program to promote girls education. Under this program the parents sending their daughters to school are provided with two liters of cooking oil per a girl child.
- There is also a program for improving the physical environment of the school like toilets, playground etc. There is also a program for construction of additional classrooms and improving the physical infrastructures of the school.
- There is a provision of adding the teachers' posts on the number of students.

#### **Inputs from participants**

##### **Mr. Sudarshan Ghimire, President, EJJ**

- Parents do not send their children to schools as they can not relate the usefulness of education to livelihood.
- Our education policies, curricula and education plans have failed to tie and relate education with the life skills.

- There is a lack of life skill education and therefore the parents do not see any immediate benefits in sending their children to schools.
- There is lack of child-friendly teaching and learning environment in schools.
- Parents should be provided with incentives for sending their children to schools.

### **Dr. Shivaraj Lohani**

- The status of drop out as is seen in the government's statistics is very serious.
- Out of 6,459,871 children of the school going age, only 3,900,000 are in schools while some 1,100,000 children have never been to school.
- There is a possibility of 900,000 children dropping out from school.
- Fee is charged even through the government has declared that school education is free.
- We should analyze the push factors and pull factors of the high school dropout.
- The government should implement the school guaranteeing scheme.
- The non-formal education should be guaranteed.

## **Annex 2**

### **List of participants**

1. Mr. Laxman Khanal, Non-formal Education Center
2. Mr. Rudrahari Bhandari, District Education Office, Kathmandu
3. Mr. Sajib Kalakheti, Educational Pages
4. Mr. Mohan Gyawali, Nepal Teachers' Union
5. Mr. Shankar Dahal, Kantipur F.M.
6. Mr. Suprabhat Bhandari, President, Guardian's Association Nepal
7. Mr. Ramesh Lamsal, The Rising Nepal
8. Mr. Amrit Shrestha, Student, Baneshwar Campus
9. Ms. Binu Subedi, Nepal F.M.
10. Mr. Narayan Pangani, Yugsambad Weekly
11. Mr. Pramod Raj Sedhain, H.B.C. 94 F.M.
12. Mr. Bal Bahadur Pariyar, Mukti Samaj Nepal
13. Mr. Dhan Bahadur Majhi, Nepal Association for Majhi Uplift
14. Ms. Anuka Bhandari, Communication Corner
15. Ms. Smita Koirala , Communication Corner
16. Ms. Sita K.C., Himalaya Times
17. Ms. Bindu Poudel, Himalaya Times
18. Ms. Gita Ghimire, Department of Education
19. Mr. Purna Bahadur Shrestha, Education Journalists' Group
20. Mr. Deepraj Sanyal, Education Journalists' Group
21. Mr. Prakriti Adhikari, Education Journalists' Group
22. Mr. Surya Prasad Ghimire, Headmaster, Pragati Shikshya Sadan Secondary School, Kupandol, Lalitpur
23. Mr. Sudarshan Sigdel, Education Journalists' Group
24. Dr. Nancy J. Baker, Education Advisor, Education Journalists' Group
25. Mr. Purushottam Subedi, Education Journalists' Group

### ***A Report on Interaction on Resource Mobilization for Achieving EFA Goals***

Organized by

Education Journalists' Group (EJG)  
Anamnagar, Kathmandu  
(23rd January 2007)

## 1. Background

The campaign of Education For All started off by the World Conference of Jomtein in 1990 has put immense impetus on the development of education in the country. The current achievement in the educational development in Nepal at the basic and primary level is largely attributable to this decade-long campaign. However, the country assessment of EFA has indicated that the challenges still remain far from attaining the EFA goals.

The World Education Forum on Education for All (EFA), held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 to review the achievements of EFA campaigns in 1990 realised the difficulties of countries like Nepal. Accordingly the Forum adopted the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. The Dakar Framework for Action lists six major EFA goals to be achieved by 2015. It also lists strategies for achieving the goals. The focus of the framework is on collective commitments nationally as well as internationally to ensure that no country is left behind because of a lack of technical capacity or resources.

This international commitment comes both as an inspiration as well as a support for the development of basic and primary education in Nepal. And the country has adapted continued EFA campaign as the core strategy of educational development. It has adopted the goals of EFA as the goals of educational development in the country. The time line and the strategies outlined by the world forum have also been adapted. A National Plan of Action for achieving the goals of EFA has been prepared as a national priority.

Total cost estimates of the proposed EFA program for 2003-2015 in 2002 constant price index is Rs 295.3 billion (US\$3786 million). This cost estimate includes both regular and development budgets and the expenditure to be borne by the community. ECD and free and compulsory primary education activities account for more than 70% of the development cost estimated for the EFA program. The following is the component-wise description of the cost estimation.

**Table 1: Estimated cost by themes and regular budget**

<b>Total estimated cost by themes and regular budget</b>					<b>( Rs in Million)</b>
<b>SN</b>	<b>Expenditure Heading</b>	<b>Tenth Plan</b>	<b>Eleventh Plan</b>	<b>Twelfth Plan</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
1	ECD	15011.1	25511.5	20457.2	60979.8
2	Free and Compulsory Education	24919.3	25128.8	15846.2	65894.3
3	Life Skills	286.5	348.3	305.2	940.0
4	Gender Development	24.0	18.1	14.4	56.5
5	Mother Tongue	482.1	1166.9	880.8	2529.8
6	Literacy	3075.0	3395.0	1759.0	8229.0
7	Quality	2031.0	5465.0	3812.0	11308.0
8	Regular Budget	42487.3	51327.0	51556.0	145370.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>88316.4</b>	<b>112360.5</b>	<b>94630.8</b>	<b>295307.7</b>

US \$ Million	1132.3	1440.5	1213.2	3786.0
---------------	--------	--------	--------	--------

## Financing

The cost estimate is made on the basis of the total activities visualized in the National Plan of Action. This includes the cost to be expended through system mechanism as well as through the communities, homes and individuals.

It has been estimated that 814.5 million US Dollars would be spent for the Education For All (EFA) campaign under the first phase. Out of this, 279 million US Dollars would be financed from outside sources while the remaining 535 million US Dollars would be invested by the government. From the outside source for EFA, Denmark will contribute 33 million US Dollars, Finland 15 million US Dollars, Norway 25 million US Dollars, DFID 35 million US Dollars and the World Bank 50 million US Dollars as the pooling partners of EFA. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also signed an agreement for providing 30 million US Dollars for the EFA pool.

Apart from these pooling partners, UNICEF, Norway, JICA, UNESCO and World Food program have also provided financial assistance for the non-pooling sector. The Ministry of Education and Sports which is the implementing agency of the EFA campaign states that it is looking for financing the gap of 6 billion US Dollars for the next year. Similarly, it will have to collect resources for financing the EFA phase after 2009. The interaction has been organized in this context to look at the status of resource aspects of the EFA in the present context. Since resource also plays a crucial role in the success of the campaign, it is necessary to look into the current scenario of resource mobilization for the EFA.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of the interaction on Resource Mobilization for Achieving EFA Goals is to:

- Have an overview of the present scenario of resource mobilization in EFA
- Learn about the major components of the EFA and how resources are being mobilized in each of those components
- Discuss the problems and challenges in mobilization of resources for achieving EFA goals

## 3. Process

The interaction was held at the Education Journalists' Group (EJG) Meeting Hall. The interaction was discussion-based and interactive. Participants in the interaction included representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Department of Education, donor agencies, civil society and media persons. The program modulator Mr. Prakash Silwal welcomed all the participants and opened the interaction by giving a brief overview of the EFA and the resource mobilization status for the same. He explained the objectives of the interaction and the importance of it in the context of Nepal.

## 4. Findings

- The national EFA campaign is on course as regards the resources. The resource allocation as per the core document has been followed strictly.

- Looking at the increase in the student enrolment and the estimated cost of 50 US Dollars per child, there will be a gap of about 60 million US Dollars and the government should bring programs for bridging this resource gap.
- Ninety-three percent of the budget allocated for the EFA is spent.
- There is a 24.23 billion budget ceiling for next Fiscal Year.
- Of the total budget earmarked for EFA, nearly 57-58 percent is spent in Primary School Education.
- The expenditure per student is nearly 44 US Dollars per head as calculated on the basis of total budget expenditure and the number of students.
- As a result of the EFA, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) and the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) have increased.
- Still 13 per cent of children of school-going age group or nearly 550,000 school-age children remain out of school. The challenge is how to bring them into school.
- Still there is a large number of drop out which also needs to be tackled effectively.
- Looking at the current enrolment rate, the total number of students and the cost per student at US Dollars 50 per head, there seems to be a gap of 6 billion US Dollars. The Ministry is discussing this issue with the donors.
- On the basis of the expenditure and the increase in the number of students as a result, Education For All (EFA) is a successful program.

#### **Annex-1 Detailed views of the speakers**

##### **Mr. Mukunda Mani Khanal, Section Officer, Ministry of Education**

- The total budget outlay for EFA is 814 million US Dollars. Out of this 279 million is to be financed by the donors and the rest is to be borne by the Government.
- Ninety-three percent of the budget allocated for the EFA is spent.
- There is a 24.23 billion budget ceiling for next Fiscal Year.
- Of the total budget earmarked for EFA, nearly 57-58 percent is spent in Primary School Education.
- The expenditure per student is nearly 44 US Dollars per head as calculated on the basis of total budget expenditure and the number of students.
- As a result of the EFA, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) and the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) have increased.
- Still 13 per cent of children of school-going age group or nearly 550,000 school-age children remain out of school. The challenge is how to bring them into school.
- Still there is a large number of drop out which also needs to be tackled effectively.
- Looking at the current enrolment rate, the total number of students and the cost per student at US Dollars 50 per head, there seems to be a gap of 6 billion US Dollars. The Ministry is discussing this issue with the donors.
- On the basis of the expenditure and the increase in the number of students as a result, Education For All (EFA) is a successful program.
- If we can come up with concrete and realistic programs, it would not be difficult to find the donors.

##### **Mr. Bishnu Devkota, Director of the Department of Education**

- The discussion should be focused on resource allocation and the resource gap.
- There is a funding gap of about 50-52 million US Dollars for the EFA target even as one and a half month remains for the same.
- The main activities under the EFA are taking place in the Primary Education program.
- Similarly, work is also going on in the non-pooling sector. Save the Children, Unicef and related organizations are contributing to this end.
- Ninety-one per cent of the budget allocated for the EFA has been spend.
- There is a lack of disintegrate data for carrying out the full-fledged analysis of the student enrollment and the resource mobilization.
- There is a core group which comprises 13 per cent. The target should be to get this core group into school.
- There is need for identifying the number of children who remain out of school through an effective child-tracking system.
- Teams have been constituted under the leadership of the Education Secretary for monitoring the EFA program. These teams will conduct on-site visits of the different areas and see if everything is moving ahead as per the schedule in connection with the EFA program, including the resource aspects.
- All the District Education Officers have been briefed clearly about the EFA program and the related National Plan of Action.

**Mr. Krishan Dhungana, Department of Education**

- The donors are contributing only 24.4 per cent of the total EFA budget while the rest is being born by the Government.
- A total of 180 million Dollars is contributed by the donors in the year 2004-2005.
- EFA budget is released as per the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Sports and it is disbursed by the District Education Offices concerned.
- Up to 92 per cent of the total EFA budget has been spend.
- There are some practical difficulties in the release of budget.
- The budget release process is more supply-driven than demand-driven.
- A total of 29.9 million US Dollars were spent on EFA in 2004-5. It is estimated to be 30.8 million Dollars in 2005-06 which is the actual expense while it is expected to be 48.1 million in 2006-07, 55 million in 2007-08 and 60 million in 2008-09.
- There are also problems regarding the distribution of the scholarship.

**Mr. Juho Uusihakala, Donor Contact Point, Embassy of Finland**

- Financing of EFA started in 2004 with five pooling partners. They are Denmark, Finland, Norway, World Bank and DFID. Lately, the Asian Development Bank and UNICEF too joined in the pool.
- The European Union has also decided to contribute to that end with an amount of 60 million Euros. An agreement to this effect has been signed recently between the government and the EU. The main areas of EU cooperation under this agreement are education and peace process.
- Regarding the resource side, there is not enough resource for the EFA and we have to make best use of the available scarce resources. Not enough money available to meet all the needs.
- Of all the money contributed by the donors for EFA, 65 per cent is spent on teachers' salary and the rest is spent on school support on education programs.
- Ninety percent of the budget is spent on education component while the rest is spent on development and administrative support.

- How to utilize the scarce resources in the best possible way is the main challenge at present.
- Regarding the scholarship distribution problem, the problem should be addressed at the resource allocation level itself. The problem is more pronounced with regard to the Dalit and girl students as their number is big.
- Scholarships have helped increase the enrolment as well as in decreasing the dropout rate.
- There is huge disparity in the Student-Teacher Ratio (STR) and the distribution of teachers.
  
- There are many inequalities in the districts in terms of the different education indicators in relation to the EFA goals. Twenty districts are well above the national average while 20 districts, especially in the Mid-western Development Region, in particular, the districts of the Karnali Zone, are way below the national average and the challenge is to improve the situation in those districts so as to bring them at a par with the national average.
- The problem related to the Student-Teacher Ratio (STR) is also very glaring and the government should make adjustments.
- About 630,000 children remain out of school and they should be brought to school. Similarly, the problem of dropout should also be addressed appropriately.

#### **List of participants**

1. Mr. Juho Uusihakala, Embassy of Finland
2. Mr. Mukunda Mani Khanal, Ministry of Education and Sports
3. Mr. Bhuparaj Khadka, Education Journalists' Group (EJG)
4. Mr. Deepraj Sanyal, EJG
5. Mr. Lokendra K.C. Yugbodh Daily, Dang
6. Mr. Pushkar Thapa, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus
7. Mr. Tika Das Shrestha, Naulo Saichhik
8. Ms. Mamata Thapa, Kantipur Daily
9. Mr. Dilendra Bajyoo Bhaktapur F.M.
10. Mr. Anup Regmi, Radio Sagarmatha
11. Mr. Madhav Pandey, Himalaya Times Daily
12. Mr. Rupesh Acharya, Annapurna Post
13. Mr. Sudarshan Sigdel, EJG
14. Mr. Prakash Silwal, EJG
15. Mr. Krishna Dhungana, Department of Education
16. Mr. Bishnu Kumar Devkota, Department of Education
17. Mr. Suresh Shrestha, Communication Corner
18. Mr. Bharat Sharma, EJG
19. Ms. Kokila K.C., The Himalayan Times
20. Mr. Rajaram Gautam, EJG

## **A Report on the Interaction on Early Childhood Development (ECD)**

**Organized by**

**Education Journalists' Group (EJG)  
Saras Marg, Anam Nagar, Kathmandu.  
(17 November, 2006)**

### **1. Background**

The Interaction on Early Childhood Development (ECD) was a part of the regular interaction programs that the EJG has been organizing in connection with its Media Mobilization for "Education For All" (EFA) Program that it is currently undertaking. One of the major goals of the Education For All Movement adopted in 1990 in Jomtein, Thailand and reaffirmed by World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in the year 2000, is to expand early childhood care and education. It was in this context that the interaction on early childhood development was organized. The interaction also augmented to the regular weekly interactions that the EJG has been holding on pertinent educational topics, bringing together stakeholders, policy-makers and experts on related topics.

### **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the interaction on 'Early Childhood Development (ECD) Center is-

- To discuss the present situation of ECD in Nepal,
- To discuss the qualitative aspects of the ECD program in the country,
- To discuss the policy matters related to ECD,
- To discuss the needs and problems of the ECD sector, and
- To discuss the linkage of ECD and primary education.

### **3. Program method and participation**

The interaction was organized at the EJG meeting hall. It was held in an informal manner. The mode of the interaction was mainly discussion-based and it was participatory in nature. Some of the difficult topics that came up during the discussion were explained by the program facilitator.

Participants in the program included media persons, M. Phil. students from Tribhuvan University, ECD center managers, Education Department official and other stakeholders.

### **4. Findings**

After holding discussions on the views expressed by the speakers in the program, the interaction came up with the following findings.

- A majority of the participants agreed that the situation of the Early Childhood Development program in the country was not satisfactory and there was much that needed to be done.
- There are certain points in the policy document regarding the ECDs that are not clear and which need to be explained out.

- A majority of the ECD centers that are being operated in the country lack proper physical facilities like furniture, classrooms and other amenities.
- There is no regular monitoring regarding the quality of the ECD programs and hence, such programs are not run in a systematic manner.
- There is a general lack of coordination among the different Government Ministries and the line agencies regarding the policy and operation of the ECDs.

Similarly, the participants also differed in certain topics like the management of the ECDs, the level of their effectiveness and their quality of service, with some (mainly the research students) saying that the ECDs currently being run are far below the standard goals based on these standards while ECD managers and the Government official saying that although not all of these standards have been met, still the level of progress was satisfactory given the short history of the ECD concept in Nepal.

## **5. Conclusion**

On the basis of what transpired during the interaction, it can be concluded that the overall situation of the Early Childhood Development and Education Program in Nepal is not very satisfactory. The existing status of the ECDs on the basis of their management and expansion was also not up to the desired extent. Similarly, there is a lack of clarity in terms of the concept of the program, and the monitoring aspects. Government's support, both financial and technical, was very insignificant and the community support was also lacking due to confusions at the policy level.

## **6. Recommendation**

In the light of the problems and the challenges, the prospects for the ECD Program in Nepal were outlined and discussed in the interaction. The conclusions that were drawn and it is recommended that in the first place the Government should formulate a clear policy guideline outlining the concept of the ECD centers, their management, monitoring and expansion, and coordination at different levels of operation from the Centre to the community-level. Similarly, it is recommended that the ECD centers that are in operation in the country should be provided with adequate financial and technical assistance for enhancing their effectiveness and service delivery. Moreover, the community and the general public should be sensitized regarding the significance of the ECD program and how it is going to benefit them in the long-run.

### **Detailed views of speakers**

#### **1. Mr. Kamal Gautam (M.Phil. student, Tribhuvan University)**

Mr. Gautam said in the first place he is interested in the Early Childhood Development Program as he was currently doing a research study on this topic. He stated that the main objective of his research study was to carry out a survey of the ECD centers being run in the Kathmandu Valley and their status.

He said although the findings of his research are still not published, what he has found from his general observation so far is that a majority of ECD centers he visited in course of his research were not adopting the standard practices for the early childhood development program. Mr. Gautam said that most of the centers running the ECD program did not have child-friendly learning environment. They also lacked physical facilities. He

particularly pointed out to the fact that the teaching and learning environment at these centers was not child-friendly. These centers, he said, were also wanting in the physical facilities for the children.

## **2. Mr. Parashuram Adhikari (Bal Bikas Primary School, Chhetrapati)**

In his statement, Mr. Adhikari mainly shared the experiences that go with running early childhood development centers. Bal Bikas Primary School, the school he runs, is also operating one such center. He said that a majority of the parents who enrolled their wards in the ECD centers expected that same level of education that is provided by the boarding schools should be provided to the tiny-tots admitted at the ECD centers. This, said Mr. Adhikari, shows the ignorance on the part of the parents, and by the same token, the community, towards the very concept of ECD.

Mr. Adhikari expressed the view that the ECD centers have a paramount role to play in 'preparing' the children below the school-going age for school. He explained that the training that the small children get at the ECD centers prepares them for school and they can adjust well in school when they are enrolled in primary schools. Moreover, he said ECD is a kind of easy transition to school for kids. This program is helping the school.

He stressed the need of running the ECD program in a systematic way and said that the District Education Office could perhaps play a key role in this. He said the District Education Office's support to the ECD centers was starkly lacking and ineffective. He also underlined the need of providing training to the teachers and the helpers on the concept of Early Childhood Development. Summing up his statement, he said there is a need of more reforms in the ECD program.

## **3. Mr. Hem Raj Pujara, (Officer, Early Childhood Development Section, Department of Education)**

In the interaction, Mr. Pujara mainly expressed the Government's viewpoint about the ECD program. He said as the ECD program in Nepal has relatively a short history, it was just beginning to take off in the context of Nepal. He informed the participants that efforts were made to systematize the Early Childhood Development concept only six years back. He stated that in this connection efforts were made at formulating the policy, guidelines and operational plans for the ECD program. He added that efforts have been made for institutionalizing the ECD program.

The Department of Education official also informed that the Department has prepared a manual for providing training to the teachers and implementing the program in a planned way. Overall, he said that efforts have been made at preparing the necessary infrastructure for the program.

Moreover, he said the government has the plan to expand the ECD program. The target is to set up 2,500 such centers by the end of 2006. He further said that 6,000 quotas were distributed last year and 4,000 this year. Mr. Pujara said that the national curriculum of the ECD program has been prepared and it would be implemented in all the districts. Similarly, the Department is also in the process of preparing a parents manual.

He stressed that the main responsibility of operating the ECD centers was that of the local community and the local bodies. He said the government has only a supportive role to play in the implementation of the ECD program. To be specific, he said that the Department

of Education's role was to provide technical and some financial support for the program. Mr. Pujara stated that parents' role and responsibility in the operation and management of the ECD program would be increased gradually over the years.

He also disclosed that although the ECD is one of the key components of the EFA Movement, it has received very lukewarm attention from the government and the donor agencies. He made an important disclosure that this program was not in the government's and the donor agencies' priority list, which is sad considering the important place ECD occupies in the overall development of the education sector.

#### **4. Ms. Agatha Thapa, (Director, Seto Gurans, an NGO running ECD center)**

At the outset, Ms Agatha Thapa, who is the Director of Seto Gurans, a non-governmental organization working in child welfare and early childhood development sector, threw light on the status of the ECD program in Nepal. She observed that the image of the ECD centers in Nepal which was very positive in the initial phase has begun to decrease. She said that the ECD program was not in a well-defined policy structure. There was a gap between the ECD facilitators and the teachers and the government's policy document was not clear in that regard.

Ms. Thapa also shed some light on the different activities being carried out by Seto Gurans with a view to promoting the ECD program in Nepal. In this connection, she said, Seto Gurans has organized a national conference of ECD center facilitators which was participated in by 300 facilitators from different districts. She added that her organization was trying to promote child focused learning through activities. She added that Seto Gurans has formulated a loose curriculum for the ECD program and the different ECD centers her organization was supporting in the districts were following this curriculum. She gave out the information that Seto Gurans has opened eight Resource Centers throughout the country. Similarly, her organization has opened model centers in 38 districts. Moreover, she said, Seto Gurans is conducting research on the different aspects of ECD program.

She also informed the interaction program that Seto Gurans, with the cooperation of Nepal Eye Hospital and the Ministry of Health, is conducting a free eye and ear check up camp for the underprivileged and helpless kids on the occasion of International Child Rights Day on November 20.

She stressed that child focused learning through activities should be the hallmark of the ECD program but lamented that this was not so at many of the ECD centers being run in various parts of the country. She also pointed out that the distribution of the ECD centers was also skewed with many such centers running mainly in urban areas. She noted that the concept has not gained currency in the countryside mainly due to the lack of awareness among the parents about the ECD concept and its importance for their children.

Ms. Thapa also commented on the facilities available at the ECDs and cited the example of one such center being operated at a school in the outlying part of the country where the ECD section was also run in the same classroom used by class one students. She also complained about the misuse of the ECD teachers' quota. She said the local community should be empowered and provided with necessary funds to operate the ECD program.

Regarding the quality aspect, she underlined the need of carrying out regular monitoring and evaluation for maintaining the quality of the ECD program. She said the

Media could be of help in this. She said the Media should support in promoting the ECD and highlighting the cause of the program.

She also noted that despite the initial hiccups that the program was facing, it has to be expanded and further promoted for the sake of our children who are the future pillars of our country. Only by investing in the health and education of our children can we ensure a better future for our country, she said.

Ms. Thapa also spoke on the objectives of the ECD program highlighting its salient features. She said that since education is fundamental to the achievement of all aspects of human and social-economic development, it was necessary to expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

## ***A Report on Education in Mother Language***

Organized by

Education Journalists' Group (EJG)  
Anamnagar, Kathmandu  
(19th January 2007)

### **1. Background**

It has been many years since education in the mother tongue has been introduced at the school level. Primary school level students have got the opportunity to carry out their studies in their respective mother tongues like in the Rai, Limbu, Gurung and Maithili languages. The Curriculum Development Center has been preparing the curriculum on mother tongues on the basis of the population. The work of preparing the textbooks for mother tongue has been obstructed after controversies regarding the textbook on the Magar (Kham) language surfaced.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal has guaranteed the right to get education in one's mother tongue and accordingly it has been followed in designing the school level curriculum. The political parties and the civil society are also wholly agreed that education in mother tongue should be promoted and developed in order to achieve the goals of Education For All and quality education.

However, the pace of promotion of education in the mother tongue is not moving ahead in a speedy manner. The stakeholders are also complaining that although the State has made provisions for education in mother tongue, it has not allocated enough resources for the same. Moreover there are many practical problems and challenges that have to be tackled to make the policy on education in mother tongue fully operational.

### **2. Objectives**

- The objectives of the interaction on mother tongue is to-
- Make a general assessment of the present status of the policy of education in mother tongue.
  - Identify the problems and shortcomings in the implementation of the policy on education in mother tongue.
  - Discuss about the ways of moving ahead the policy of education in mother tongue as a national campaign.
  - Find out the views of the people of the linguistic communities concerned regarding this policy.
  - Identify the general impact the policy has in EFA goals after its implementation.

### **3. Process**

The interaction was mainly discussion-based. Representatives from different linguistic groups, ethnic communities, curriculum experts, students' organizations and textbook writers participated in the interaction. At the program, the participants shared their views about the concept of education for all. They threw light on different aspects of the policy on education in mother tongue. The participants also suggested measures from their respective sides for

making the policy effective. The interaction also took a question-answer form wherein the participants raised queries and sought explanation on certain issues related to education in mother tongue.

#### 4. Findings

On the basis of the discussions and what transpired in the interaction, the following major points were identified by the participants with regard to the education in mother tongue policy.

- Lack of adequate resources for the education in mother tongue
- Lack of trained teachers
- Lack of incentives for students studying in their mother language
- No standard curriculum
- Lack of textbooks
- Original textbooks on mother languages should be prepared as translation of books from the original Nepali into different mother tongues does not become effective.
- The education in mother tongues should be taken ahead as a national campaign
- Teaching and learning should be in the medium of mother languages.
- Education in mother tongues should be provided in all the mother languages without any discrimination.
- The textbook distribution system is not effective. Textbooks on mother tongues do not reach to the remote districts on time.
- The textbooks on mother tongues are not standard. There are a lot of factual and language mistakes.
- Education in the Tamang language is going ahead in a satisfactory manner at some schools in Dolakha, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchok districts.
- Textbooks have been prepared in 12 different mother languages.
- Education in mother languages should be moved ahead as a medium of teaching and as a separate subject also.
- Textbooks on different mother languages from Grade 1-5 have been prepared and still more in the process of being prepared.
- Controversy over the issue of whether to use Kham or Pam in case of the Magar language has stalled the task of textbook preparation.
- Preparations are being made for designing textbooks in the Rajbanshi and Sunuwar languages.
- The permission for education in mother tongues is given on the basis of the density of population and the demands of a particular linguistic community.
- Lack of script and written literature in many mother languages is hampering the task of preparing textbooks on mother languages.
- Need to prepare textbooks in mother languages in accordance with the modern-day needs.
- Need to change the social attitude towards the mother languages.
- Parents' lack of interest in teaching their children in their mother languages.
- Need to launch parents' awareness campaign on the importance of education in mother languages and therefore in the preservation and promotion of one's culture and heritage.
- Need to build positive social attitude towards respecting diversity and its preservation.
- From the pedagogical viewpoint also teaching becomes effective when the children are taught in their mother languages.
- The State should make commitment and devise concrete plans for promoting education in mother tongues.

- Need to conduct education in mother tongue as a national campaign.

## **5. Conclusion**

From the views expressed by the speakers, it can be said that different linguistic groups in the country have gradually become aware of the need of starting education in mother tongue. As a result, some of the linguistic communities have also started community schools offering courses in mother tongue on their own.

The government has also adopted the policy of promoting education in mother tongue. Accordingly, it has started preparing syllabus and textbooks on education on mother tongue. Similarly, it has made the necessary budgetary allocations for implementation of this policy. On the basis of this the appointment and arrangements of teachers' placements has also been adjusted or is in the process of being adjusted. Special subsidies are being given to schools running classes in mother tongue.

On the basis of the discussions, the overall situation of education in mother tongue is not progressing ahead as per the desired extent. According to the educationists, this is because of the lack of awareness on the part of the communities concerned regarding the value of education in mother tongue, the government's lackluster attitude in promoting education in mother tongue and the growing tendency among the parents to educate their children in English medium schools.

## **6. Recommendation**

- There is a need to promote education in mother tongue as a national campaign.
- Need to raise awareness at the community level on the importance of education in mother tongue.
- Allocating adequate resources for promoting education in mother tongue as a national campaign.
- Improve upon the syllabus and textbooks in mother tongue.
- Prepare qualified teachers to teach in mother tongue.

## ***A report on interaction on Learning with Dignity***

**Organized by  
Education Journalists' Group (EJG)  
(8th February 2007)**

### **1. Mr Karna Bahadur Shahi, General Secretary, National Private and Boarding Schools Association of Nepal (N-PABSAN).**

- The interaction is very relevant in the context of the 'Disciplining Children with Dignity- a Child-friendly School' program which is currently under implementation. The NPABSAN is also a partner in this program and it has been playing an active role in implementing the program in its member schools.
- The problem of corporal punishment is the outcome of our social mentality which believes in the dictum 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'. Many parents come to the school asking the teachers to punish their child for keeping them in discipline.
- The problem is ingrained in our social structure which believes more in coercion.
- The family, social and school environment is such that it encourages corporal punishment.
- We should acknowledge that there is problem of corporal punishment in our schools in the first place and devise a realistic policy for addressing the problem.
- NPABSAN has been providing training to teachers at member-schools on the topic of Learning with Dignity and the training is currently in its middle phase. The objective of the training is to train the teachers on different topics related to Learning with Dignity and its values.
- The government should also include the private schools in different trainings that it provides to the school teachers and management.

### **2. Mr. Lakshya Bahadur K.C., General Secretary, PABSON**

- The concept of the parents is such that they want their children to be kept under discipline at any cost without realizing the values of Learning with Dignity.
- Our culture and social thinking and the illiteracy among the people is another reason why children are subjected to punishment.
- We should create such an environment in which the school should feel like home and the home like the school for the children.
- The children should be taught good manners and to be in discipline from a small age at home
- Awareness programs should be launched so as to make the parents conscious about their role in promoting Learning with Dignity.
- The media, teachers and parents should have basic knowledge about the child psychology and they should be trained on learning with dignity.
- A complete change should be brought about in the social structure. Training just 1,000-1,200 teachers would not be enough for bringing about change in the behaviour of the teachers.
- The Ministry of Education should evaluate the schools on the basis of the degree of child-friendly environment present in the schools.
- The Ministry should bring forward a broad vision on promoting Learning with Dignity and devise a policy in this regard.
- The community and the schools should work together for promoting school democracy.

**3. Mr. Ramswarup Sinha, Director General, Educational Human Resources Development Center, Department of Education.**

- The topic of the interaction is very relevant and timely as it provides the opportunities for the stakeholders to discuss and share ideas on a very pertinent topic.
- According to reports, students at the Madrasas and Sanskrit schools are subjected to punishment to a greater extent. It is stated in one such report that 80-82 per cent students studying in Madrasas in Pakistan said they were subjected to physical punishment.
- The students in Nepal are also subjected to physical punishment as stated in a report prepared by Save the Children.
- The report also states that children in Nepal are also subjected to physical abuse, mental torture and sexual abuse.
- There is a lack of parental education on this topic. Many parents are not aware of the concept of Learning with Dignity and they do not protest even if their children are subjected to corporal punishment.
- Bullying by peers and discrimination by teachers is also found in schools.
- The problem should be resolved from the perspectives of the students, family and school.
- The teachers should be imparted necessary training on child rights, human rights and the concept of learning with dignity, and the role of the school is very important in this connection.
- The Department of Education has a plan for providing training to teachers on human rights, peace education and education in post-conflict situation. The Department, the teachers' unions and the private sector could collaborate on this topic.
- The Supreme Court also on January 7, 2005 gave a ruling for completely banning corporal punishment at schools.

**4. Mr. Keshav Prasad Bhattarai, President, Nepal Teachers Union**

- The restructuring of the state should focus on building positive values in society and the concept of Learning with Dignity ties with the restructuring of the state. We should bring up the issues concerning children into debate and discussions when the main agenda is of restructuring of the state.
- There is an urgent need of bringing about changes in our social thinking that teacher is all-knowing and perfect.
- The training, curriculum, syllabus should be in consistent with the rights-based pedagogy.
- School democracy should be promoted and emphasis given on child-friendly education.
- Teaching with Dignity also incorporates the preparation of child-friendly school management.
- The problem of corporal punishment is greater at the primary school level.
- There is an urgent need for reforms in the school environment and in the value system of school management.

**5. Mr. Hira Nepal, Nepal National Teachers' Organization (NNTO)**

- The problem of corporal punishment is widely prevalent in schools in Nepal.
- Awareness about teaching without using corporal punishment has started to gradually dawn in the teachers, parents and the civil society, thanks to the NGOs advocating for child rights protection.

- The NNTO has been conducting training on discrimination against women and against women teachers.
- All sides concerned should be involved in resolving the problem of corporal punishment in schools.
- The physical environment of the schools not being child-friendly is also one of the reasons for the existence of this problem.
- The concept of learning with dignity should be made a major component of the teachers training programs.
- It is necessary to restructure the education system of the country along with the restructuring of the state.

**6. Mr. Ramesh Prasad Gautam, Principal, Padmodaya High School, Kathmandu**

- The concept that children should be looked after, loved and cared for is there since ancient times.
- A person who believes in the adage 'spare the rod and spoil your child' can not become a teacher.
- Subjecting children to physical punishment leaves a deep impact on their mind and sometimes this could result in tragedy. The students become aggressive and begin to take revenge on teachers.

**7. Mr. Rishiram Sharma Bhattarai, World Education Program**

- The World Education Program has been working for promoting quality education and Learning with Dignity is an important component of this program.
- Our efforts should be to promote child-friendly schools.
- A child-friendly school should have community involvement in the different activities of the school.
- Programs should be brought for enrolling all school-age children in school.
- The management of the schools should be improved so as to promote a child-friendly teaching and learning environment in schools.
- The concept of teaching with dignity should be expanded to cover a wider area.
- There is a need to promote learning with dignity and teaching with non-violence concept in our schools.
- A concrete plan should be formulated for how the learning needs of children with disability could be addressed and made more effective.
- The World Education Program has developed special kit for meeting the educational needs of children with disabilities.
- The private schools should also carry out a piloting for promoting Learning with Dignity.

**List of the participants**

1. Mr. Keshav Prasad Bhattarai, Teachers' Union of Nepal
2. Mr. Ramesh Prasad Gautam, Principal, Padmodaya Higher Secondary School, Ramshah Path
3. Mr. Lachhe Bahadur K.C., PABSON
4. Mr. Rishiram Sharma Bhattarai, World Education
5. Mr. Karna Bahadur Shahi, National PABSAN
6. Mr. Sambhu Kattel, Media
7. Ms. Laxmi Adhikari, Communications Corner
8. Ms. Merina Sharma, The Himalayan Times
9. Mr. Sanjeev Poudel, Rastriya Samachar Samiti (RSS)
10. Mr. Anup Regmi, Radio Sagarmatha

11. Ms. Urmila Shakya, Classic F.M.
12. Mr. Santosh K.C., Newspaper
13. Mr. Purna Bahadur Shrestha, EJG
14. Mr. Jagan Nath Dhakal, Nepal F.M.
15. Ms. Rojita Adhikari, Nepal F.M.
16. Ms. Binu Subedi, Nepal F.M.
17. Mr. Laxman Poudel, Teacher, J.P. High School
18. Mr. Sajib Kalakheti, Educational Pages
19. Mr. Sudarshan Sigdel, EJG
20. Mr. Hira Prasad Nepal, Nepal National teachers' Association
21. Mr. Puru Khatri, The Rising Nepal
22. Mr. Deepraj Sanyal, EJG
23. Mr. Ram Swarup Sinha, NCED
24. Mr. Mohan Kumar Tamrakar, National PABSAN
25. Mr. Sudarshan Ghimire, EJG
26. Mr. Rupesh Acharya, Annapurna Post
27. Mr. Madhav Aryal, journalist
28. Mr. Purushottam Subedi, EJG/Shikshyako Nalibeli
29. Mr. Prakriti Adhikari, EJG/ Gorkhapatra
30. Mr. Hem Prasad Belbase, Dishabodh Monthly