



CWISH NEWS

November 2009

Children-Women In Social Service and Human Rights

Issue 5

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Social Audit and Project
Planning Program (26-30
April)

Annual Work Planning
Workshop of Child
Protection Committees
(16-18 May)

May Day Celebration and
handing over a petition to
the Ministry of Labour (1
May)

Planning and
Consultation Workshop
among project schools on
child protection (1-5 May)

Sensitisation Program at
Juvenile Delinquents
Correction Home (15
May)

World Day Against Child
Labour (12 June)

Focus Group Discussion
with female domestic
workers (30 June)

Training on Quality
Teaching Method (19-28
July)

Refresher Training on
School Based Counselling
(15 and 22 May)

Training for CSCs and
CPCs members on Child
Protection and
Mobilization of Local
Resources (25-28 August)

Participation in ILO
consultation for
International Labour
Convention (28 August)

Delhi Exposure Visit (4-12
September)

Life long learning

This 5th long waited issue of CWISH's newsletter demonstrates versatility of the actions CWISH takes for elimination of child labour which is one of its main goals. Its routine work in Drop-in-Centres (DICs) and projects schools as well as counselling and rescue aid functions are complemented by capacity-building and awareness rising programs, social mobilisation, lobbying and research on child labour issues

amongst other activities. Indeed, child labour is a phenomenon that needs to be approached in a comprehensive manner. At the core remains the idea that education reduces child labour and this issue focuses on the positive effects of education that cannot be underestimated. Further, learning is not only necessary for children. It is vital for us combating child labour to rethink our strategies, learn from the practices of others and refresh our memories.

Education to end Child Labour

Child Labor is a serious concern in Nepal like other developing/least developed countries. It is estimated that almost 1.8 million children are active in different forms of labor and 127 thousands of them are estimated in worst form of child labor. The situation is an irony to Nepal and Nepalese society where we have adopted united nation's convention on the rights of child, ILO convention 138 and 182.

One of the reasons, besides financial poverty, children mentioned is the educational factors that pushed them into child labor. More than half of the children in labor force are school drop-outs, many children are pulled into workforce such as in domestic work with the lure of better educational opportunities and in many cases educated people are found less in poverty.

On the other side Educational interventions are proved successful to improve the situation of working children and to remove them from the work. The educational activities for working children not only teaches them literacy and numeric skills only, but also boost up their confidence level, enable them to understand their rights and situation, empower them to negotiate with their employers and encourage them to leave the work and continue the togetherness with family. Not only this, educational activities for working children also contribute for sensitizing employers. This is evidenced by a study carried out by CWISH in 2009 in its project area, where the number of children less than 14 years has been significantly decreased and other situation such as school opportunities, salaries, light work and behaviour has been significantly improved.

Ironically the Nepalese educational policies and programs by government have not been sensitive towards these issues and have not been able to realize and reflect the concern of working children. If the educational policies and programs could respond the issues of child labor and working children, the end of child labor would not be so far in Nepal.

Milan Drahel, Executive Director

Thought of the month:
Grow a tree for ten years; grow human being for a hundred

Refresher training on counselling

CWISH organised two times one day refresher training on school based counselling for teachers in different government schools around Kathmandu valley on 15 and 22 May.

School counselling is a relatively new concept in Nepal and there are only few practitioners. It can have great effect for the academic performance of a student who is in need of counselling. Therefore, counselling training is very important for the teachers. CWISH provides annually trainings on school based counselling, this year it has conducted two four day trainings. Along with the training, periodic refresher trainings help the teachers to refresh their knowledge and share their problems with the trainer.

As we tell our students that repetition is the mother of all learning, it is good for our teachers to repeat their lessons too.

World Day Against Child Labour



In June it was time again to unite for the celebration of the World Day Against Child Labour. This year marked the tenth anniversary of the ILO Convention 182 prohibiting the worst forms of child labour.

Whilst celebrating progress made during the past ten years, the World Day Against Child Labour highlighted the continuing challenges, with a special focus on exploitation of girls. Girls that are engaged in child labour undertake similar tasks that boys but they often endure additional hardships, face extra risks and their work is hidden from the public eye. Girl child workers are engaged in a variety of work including factory, domestic and entertainment work. During the celebration greater attention was called for education and skills training for adolescent girls.

Like every year, this year also CWISH formed a joint program organizing committee along with 22 different organizations.

Girl child workers gathering



In preparation of the 12 June program, a gathering of girl child workers was held in May. During group discussions girl child workers identified problems in their life and the role of respective stakeholders.

Interaction with journalists

On the basis of the group discussions at the girl child workers' gathering, an interaction program was organised on 5 June in order to sensitise media about

the girl child labour. The representatives of girl child workers of each sector presented their issues and appealed to media to write about their problems and to raise their voices, also up to the government level. As a result of that, the journalist present stated their willingness to write about girl child labour in their newspapers in an effective way.

Press Talk Program

A Press talk program was held on 7 June, 2009 to brief media on the different activities to be organised for 12 June campaign. Mr. Chij Kumar Shrestha from Association of International Networks pointed out the respective roles of NGOs, INGOS and media in the elimination of child labour in Nepal and requested all the media persons to write about child labour and raise their voices strongly against it.

Lobby meeting with political parties



A lobby meeting of girl child workers with politicians from different parties was held on 8 June. Girl child workers requested the political parties and their members to be concerned about the problems of child labour, especially those of girl child workers, so that they would raise these issues and make

a plan and policies to address them: "We girl child workers would like to request all politicians to discuss our problems in your party and decide to eliminate child labour and to assure our problems politically." Political party members were also requested not to keep any child workers in their homes.

Political party members present assured that there would be an effective plan and policies formed in the future against child labour.

Addressing Constituent Assembly members



Representatives of girl child were given the floor to address Constituent Assembly (CA) members at an interaction program on 9 June. One by one each girl presented the problems girl child workers in their sector are facing. They requested CA members to pay attention to these and address them in the upcoming constitution. Especially the hardships in the entertainment sector and the politicians' lack of attention to them were raised strongly in the speeches.

The CA members present at the program agreed with the need to include children's rights in the new constitution and expressed their sympathy for the sufferings of the girls. So let's hope the issues raised at the program will be reflected in the new Constitution!



Main event

A rally started from Basantapur to Academy hall Kamaladi early in the morning on 12 June with the main slogan of this year's day against child labour "Give girl a chance: End child labour". Girl child workers representing their sectors along with journalists, media persons from different media houses as well as concerned stakeholders of different organizations and CA members were participating in the program held after the rally.



Some activities on 12 June

- Community interaction on domestic child labour by community based Child Protection Committee and community based schools
- Talent show
- Poem competition in radio Sagarmatha on girl child labour
- Youth mobilization to orient on domestic child labour in ten private schools
- Two street dramas on child labour



Domestic workers share their problems



On 30 June CWISH organised a focus group discussion for domestic workers with the aim to explore their and their employers views on domestic work, namely to identify existing problems of domestic work and appropriate measures to take in order to improve the terms and conditions of domestic work.

The domestic workers said that they did not get any opportunity to be educated in the past and had no access to other formal jobs or business. They do not intend to send their own children to such work.

A number of work conditions and security problems as well as the lack of appropriate laws for regulating and supervising the domestic work and eliminating exploitation of domestic workers were underlined in their discussions.

The discussions contribute to creating awareness on the conditions of domestic labour and provide direct policy recommendations. The summary of domestic workers and employers' views on decent domestic work was put forward for the ILO Convention Conference.

Lobbying for better conditions

Regulating the conditions of domestic work internationally is important for improving them and

for reducing domestic child labour. A consultation meeting on Recommendations for Domestic Labour for the International Labour Convention was held on 28 August. Representatives from trade unions, press, international organizations and NGOs participated in the program. Executive director of CWISH, Milan Drahel, presented recommendations for the International Labour Convention. A number of possible interventions were discussed. These included the definition of domestic work, formalisation and monitoring of it, encouragement of part-time domestic work (as residential workers face a higher risk of abuse), advocacy for the ratification of Migrants Workers' Rights Convention's, improvement of the administrative practice concerning migrant domestic workers and implementation and enforcement of laws in all the areas of domestic work.

Trip to Delhi



As we have seen in this issue, teaching children is a key in addressing domestic child labour, but learning is also important for the organisations that work with the issue. CWISH organised an exposure visit to Delhi for its focal persons in municipalities, its own staff and members of some other local NGOs on 4-12 September. Purpose of the visit was to see what could be learnt from the practices of authorities and organisations addressing child labour in India in

order to combat it more effectively in Nepal. The visit was organised in the framework of the Municipalities Project that attempts to sensitise and strengthen the municipal authorities to meet the specific needs of domestic child workers.

The trip turned out to be a success. The participants visited local government, international and community based organisations and got inspired by their work. Whilst learning hard, participants also had time for some recreational activities, and many stories have been heard of bargaining at markets in Delhi.

Immediately after the journey, a workshop was organised to go through the visit so that the participants replicate and reflect their learnings in ongoing programs. Many fresh ideas such as education on wheels, children's bank and social marketing were discussed in the workshop. At the end of the workshop all focal persons from municipalities made an action plan on how to include their learnings in their work.

It remains to be seen whether we soon see busses offering education to child domestic workers or celebrities taking part in advocating for ending domestic child labour but if you do spot such things, we know that Delhi exposure visit was fruitful!



Orientation to juvenile delinquents

Juvenile delinquents face violence, chemical dependence, crime, sexual

abuse and social deviation. They are very prone to be abused as well as to be the abuser. An awareness orientation program on "Child Sexual Abuse" was arranged by the volunteers from Padma Kanya Campus on 15 May at Juvenile Delinquents Correction Home in Sano Thimi to sensitise the children in the correction home about the vulnerable nature of child sexual abuse.

Community actors mobilised



The Community Police Valley Coordination Council organized a three days Workshop on Child Protection and Local Resources Mobilization and a one day Planning of Programs for the Upcoming Days for the Community Service Centres and Child Protection Committees from 23 different communities in the valley on 25-28 August. CWISH provided financial and technical support for the programs as it cooperates with both Community Police & Service Centres on child labour and child protection issues.

The workshop covered issues such as child rights, child protection, social mobilization and local resource management. On the last day all the participants made a work plan on behalf of their community to follow in the near future.

Trainers and the organizing committee believed that the participants would reflect their learnings positively in their

community. The participants themselves considered the program useful and emphasised the important role of the community in advancing child protection. The idea of mobilization of local resources was also received with enthusiasm. The Chairperson of CWISH Bimala Jawali and CA member Shanti Adhikari underlined the idea. Usage of local resources could enhance ownership and sustainability of projects as well as communities' coordination with CWISH and police.

Teaching teachers

Our teachers are also students. To increase the qualitative teaching method, teachers in CWISH's 29 cooperation schools were given training on the topic on 19-28 July. Teachers learnt how to create a cosy learning environment and how to teach children in a friendly manner. Focus was on 5 major subjects: science, Nepali, maths, English and social studies. Two days of training was devoted to each of the topics. All together 90 teachers participated.

Child Clubs reviewing and planning

A review and planning workshop of child clubs was organized on 16-18 May.

To preserve children's right of participation CWISH has been cooperating and supporting child clubs to organise their programs. Child clubs play a significant role in building and enhancing children's leadership and decision making skills which are also useful in youth and adult life.

Last year child clubs had planned to organize socially themed programs on child sexual

abuse, child protection, HIV/Aids etc. The organized programs were reviewed at the workshop and participants identified challenges and learnings regarding them.

During the workshop the children were also oriented on issues such as child rights, child protection, child participation, women leadership and social inclusion.

Making headway for child protection

CWISH organised a planning and consultation workshop among 29 project schools working on child protection on 1-5 May. Participants were informed on the issues of child rights and child protection in school, importance of formation of child protection committees and mobilization through local resources. An annual work plan was developed by the participating schools on child protection.

Youth on the job



CWISH works closely together with the youth. Their mobilisation on child labour and related issues is an effective way of rising awareness. Youth clubs organised an awareness program on child sexual abuse, HIV/AIDS and child rights in nine government schools for altogether 822 participants on 15 and 23 October.

Stories of the month:

Kuldip dreaming of his own teashop –but school would come first



Kuldip Thapa, a domestic worker of 14 years of age comes to Bag Bazaar Drop-in-Center for an hour daily to learn and play. He started coming once the DIC teacher Kaetra asked her neighbour, Kuldip's employer, who agreed to let him come.

Kuldip left his home village Argakatchi and was pulled out from school in order to come to Katmandu to earn money for his family for whom he sends almost all of his salary. The rest of his siblings are still in his home village.

Kuldip says that in Katmandu he has become more independent and he gets better food and clothes. He is also well liked by the family who employs him and by the staff at a hotel where he also works in the evenings. He does simple house work at home, such as sweeping and cleaning. Yet his days seems very long, he wakes up at 5.30am and goes to bed at 9.30. Sometimes he has free time during the day.

It is when Kuldip talks about learning and his future that his smile gets wide. He has learnt many things at the DIC: about traffic rules, how to open up himself, not to listen to strangers and how to do his work. Most of all he enjoys playing and singing, and he has made nice drawings too. One of them displays him as a big boy in nice clothes with a big smile. Kuldip has clearly gained self-confidence at the DIC, and has plans for the future. Kuldip wants to establish a tea shop once he is an adult since tea and coffee are popular. He has gotten the idea at his work at the hotel. Kuldip is clearly a clever boy with a good sense for business.

However, first Kuldip wants to go to back to school full-time in his home village, if he is sponsored to do so. Even though Kuldip has learnt many things in Katmandu and wants to support his family, he clearly longs to be with them and have the opportunity to learn and not to work yet, which are indeed the basic rights of any child.

Stories of the month:

Brighter future for Sabita through education



A 12 year old girl Sabita seems serious and calm. She tells her life story openly and shows great maturity for her age. Listening to this girl wanting to become a teacher in the future one understands truly the value of education.

Sabita is originally from Lamsung, but her family settled in Dhapasi. Three years ago she came to Katmandu with her family to find employment. None of the children in her family went to school and her three other elder siblings are still illiterate and uneducated. That could well have been Sabita's destiny too. Her mother found her a job as a domestic worker in a house of a distant relative. She used to wash clothes, cook food and clean rooms every day. If she made a single mistake, the children of her employer teased her. The mother of the house had no objection, herself sometimes scolding her. Even her own mother did not respond to her grievings. She received neither salary nor money from her family. She got food and old clothes from her employer.

When Annu Miss met her employer and told about a Drop-in-Centre in Basundara where domestic child workers can participate in non-formal education when it suits them, she was allowed to join classes at ten years of age. Sabita learnt drawing, art, dance, reading and writing (perfectly), English, math and science at the DIC. After a year, she was sponsored by CWISH to go to school starting from grade 3 and she is currently at grade 5.

Sabita lives now with her own parents and does not work anymore but she would like to stay at school all the time. School has obviously provided her a safe place where her willingness to learn has been satisfied. She is very happy reading and writing and very positive that education will be useful for her in the future.

Sabita has also informed other children about DICs. She says that if CWISH had not sponsored her education, she would have no future. Sabita would never involve her own children in similar kind of work that she has done, because the future is dark in such a work. Her own is much brighter now.

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