

URBAN POOR EDUCATION: POLICY AND PRACTICES IN NEPAL



Nepal Case Study



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HOMENET Nepal
Kathmandu
December, 2010

Urban Poor Education: Policy and Practices in Nepal

A review of education policy and program/practices focused for urban poor children including home based workers' children of Nepal

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URBAN POOR EDUCATION: POLICY AND PRACTICES IN NEPAL

A Review of Education Policy and Practices of Urban Poor Children

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Foreword

HomeNet Nepal (HNN) a nationwide network of Home Based Workers (HBWs) in Nepal has consistently been working in a diversified manner. HBWs are one of the major work forces in the informal economy who are over worked but under paid. It is estimated that there are at least 2.2 million of HBWs who works for the employer/sub-contractors from their home. Of total, a significant number of them are in urban areas and leading measurable life and working in poor condition.

Due to lack of legal protection, HBWs, who are living and working with diversified type of vulnerabilities who are neither included by the existing social security mechanisms nor can pay from their earning to cop. If asked as to why they migrated from their village to cities? The common answer would be for their children's education. But, have they been able to provide better education to their children? Off course not. Since they have already been fallen into trap of the vicious circle, in many cases, they have given up the hope.

In every plans and programs including MDG, Government of Nepal has prioritized the education with huge investment. But the plight of education of the children belong to urban working poor i,e, home based workers, street vendors, domestic workers, construction workers, urban porters and chimney workers are found to be much more measurable.

In this study, the team has made all the efforts to review the existing policies, plans and program of the government and other line agencies and find the gaps. I would congratulate the Consultant Mr. Dhungana and the team for their hard work by which despite of budget and time constraint, they have been able to bring this report with many useful suggestions and findings too.

With regards,

Om Thapaliya
Executive Director
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Babarmahal, Kathmandu
December, 2010

Acknowledgement

The government's policies are crucial for the development of the country. Education is a key component that drives development. Education is believed as multifaceted address to different challenges including poverty. But poverty itself is a barrier to access to education. On this standing, the national educational provisions can only help the poor. Urban poor represent one categorical group disadvantaged to education. Very few policy documents identify this population in urban population. This volume is an endeavor to see the extent address made by the state educational policy to urban poor in regard to the educational access.

This review briefly highlights the education scene of Nepal and urban poor in Nepal. A brief review of the constitutional provisions and international commitment is in the next section. The following section reviews periodic plans of government, the ambitious SSRP and associated legal provisions. Further EFA NPA, CD, MDA are reviewed. NFE and ECED policy and program is reviewed as these programs have been important programs to remove barriers to education.

This review also includes some interesting views and responses of a workshop held for the policy discussion on 22nd of December 2010 at HNN. Despite of short time, attempts was made to visit some of the schools to find how they support poor and needy children. It even includes some field stories.

Though I am principally involved in preparing the report, this report would not have got the shape without the generous support of the personnel at HNN. Particularly I would like to thank Mr. Om Thapaliya, Executive Director HNN to involve me in this review. My heartfelt thank goes to all HNN personnel for making all logistic arrangement to conduct a workshop and bring the report to the shape. Thanks are also to HomeNet South Asia and ActionAid Nepal for their institutional support to carry out the study.

I would like to thank all the workshop participants for sharing important views and putting reflections on the discussion issues in the program. I would like to thank Mr. Hari Lamsal, MoE and Dr. Mahesh Nath Parajuli, educationist and policy analyst for providing important documents and their valuable time. Furthermore my thanks are to government officials serving in different department under MoE who expensed their time in sharing about government policies.

Parbat Dhungana
December, 2010

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASIP	Annual Strategic Implementation Plan
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Project
CBECD	Community Based Early Child Development
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CD	Core Document
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CLC	Community Learning Centre
CSSP	Community School Support Project
DEO	District Education Office
DFA	Dakar Framework of Action
DoE	Department of Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECED	Early Childhood Education and Development
EFA	Education For All
FE	Formal Education
GoN	Government of Nepal
HBWs	Home Based Workers
HNN	HomeNet Nepal
IGP	Income Generation Program
INGO	International Non Government Organization
LLL	Literacy and Life Long Learning Program
LSGA	Local Self Governance Act
MDA	Mid Decade Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
NCED	National Centre of Education Development
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non Formal Education
NFEC	Non Formal Education Centre
NFEC	Non Formal Education Centre
NGO	Non Government Organization
NLFS	National Labour Force Survey
NPA	National Plan of Action
NPC	National Planning Commission
NUP	National Urban Policy
OCE	Office of the Controller of the Examinations

PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
PhD	Doctorate of Philosophy
PPC	Preprimary Centre
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SESP	Secondary Education Support Program
SK	Shishu Kaksha
SSR	School Sector Reform
SSRP	School Sector Reform Plan
TEP	Teacher Education Project
TEVT	Technical Education and Vocational Training
TYIP	Three Year Interim Plan
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICEF ROSA	UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WEF	World Education Forum

Executive Summary

- Considerable achievements have been made in educational attainment in terms of access and equity. Despite challenges are increasing to bring the rest to school, a continual follow up to early activities and achievement is also important. And policy has provisioned that these achievements continue.
- The contradiction in between early policy (and practices) of education with the present constitutional provisions on education is a genuine issue. How come two policy paper direct different directions. This demands reviewing of policy papers' (policy, legislative, and program) to incorporate the essence of right based education provisioned by the interim constitution of Nepal.
- The conflicting policies and the gap in between policy and implementation is another challenge. Government policy advocates for free basic education in one hand and in other permits schools to collect donations from parents. In practice the donations are compulsory pay off for basic education. This indicates a need to revise conflicting policies. The weak implementation of program has been identified as a regular challenge across all sectors in Nepal. A joint monitoring and regulatory committee including all stakeholders may result improvement in implementation.
- Still certain disadvantaged groups to education exist; they need an attention and specific program. Urban poor and children of HBWs represent one such group in urban population. As the contexts and needs of this population are different to rural poor, a different policy address would stand better.
- Solution to problems demands identification of the target group and their problems. To cater the developmental and educational need of urban poor including the children of HBWs, an up to date demographic and socio-economic status would be useful. This indicates an urgency to carry out a study to find out the exact number and status of urban poor.
- INGOs, NGOs and CBOs are important partners of development. Their role is important to support the government and people regarding the right distribution of the developmental and national facilities to all the citizen of the country. Coordination among different partners along with the private sectors, the local peoples and government can be a way to address the access issue (to education).

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This brief report presents the status of existing education policy, plans and programs addressing the urban poor children. The report focuses on different policy and educational intervention programs to address urban poor children belonging to low income families especially working as Home Based Workers (HBWs).

1.2 Background of the Study

Education is a multifaceted address to various problems related to individual, society and development. Education in developing society is considered as a basic to human right (Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention of the Rights of the Child) and this has been ratified by the global community. Education is a gateway to social status, livelihood, employment and development.

“...Education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled, and responding flexibly to the circumstances and needs of all learners...” (WEF, 2000). This means, despite of all challenges including children in a risk situation education is a right as well as development imperative. Any children should not be deprived from quality education for any reason including poverty. The International commitments MDG and EFA compel all signatory to address for access, equitable and inclusive education.

The development process has made urban and rural areas. The distribution of the physical facilities is entirely different in these two areas. Poor people in these two different areas are striving with different needs and contexts. The challenges vary considerably. A single policy may not address all poverty and interlinked issues. Different studies show, urban poor are increasing in cities of Nepal. Imparting education to the poor has always been a challenge. There has been very less study regarding how policy and actions of government address urban poor children's access, challenges and practices with reference to education. Therefore this study brings out the government policies, plans and programs focused on poor and gender in urban areas.

This study is an intention to contribute developing strategic plans to address urban poor children education. The study is a part of regular activity and interest area of HNN. HNN is a non profit, non political and a social organization established in 2000. This institution envisions improving the livelihood of poor HBWs by bringing them and their contribution into the mainstream of the national economy. The present study is a part of its regular

program and future strategy to focus on the educational issues. The study is also a concern of HomeNet South Asia and ActionAid Nepal. Many urban poor families especially the children of HBWs do not get an easy access to the school for different reasons. The study is even expected to bring out some key inputs for policy formulation to address the urban poor of Nepal.

1.3 Educational Development in Nepal: Overview

The institutional development of education started quite late in Nepal. Historical development of education shows it remained accessible only to certain family till 1950. Though historically the first Education Ordinance related to education affairs came in 1940, this could not make any significant change to early practices.

It was only after the *Ranas*¹ (Post 1950) Nepal started prioritizing education as an important tool for development; the interrelationship between social development, physical development and education was understood (democratic innovation period, 1950-1970). With the National Education Planning Commission, 1954 Nepal experienced a rapid expansion of schooling. After 1950 the country also started to receive foreign assistance in development and education. This made education more accessible and relevance to our settings. Following the trend, government started developing various policies and action to address different issues and emerging new challenges in education.

The present is different, rapid expansion of schooling and people interest in schooling made a significant change. Now about 94% of all primary school age group children are enrolled to school. The external assistance has stood very worthy to make this development. With all of these advancements and progress, we are still far behind in education and development in global scenarios. We still have many children who are out of the school. Numbers of students do not complete the basic education cycle. Poverty has been one of the major causes to hinder children to basic education. Social exclusion, gender inequality comes intertwined with poverty and increases further challenges.

Post 1990 is the democratic period; people had great expectation regarding development. But the Maoist insurgency after 1996 brought many challenges; education alone could not be away from it. Despite of all these challenges government priority and actions are continuous to make education accessible to all.

The present focus has made a positive change in access to education. Education for All, National Plan of Action (2003) has defined the indicators and target for different period line to meet the educational goals (MoE & UNESCO, 2003). This indicates the government has

¹ *Ranas* represent the state governing groups of the time (before 1950)

the highest priority to ensure educational access. The progress was rapid early but the pace was not sustained. Now the challenge remains to bring the unreached, extreme poor, urban poor, and pupil with multiple challenges to the school.

Summary. *Though the institutional development of education in Nepal is quite new, considerable achievements had been made in relation to access. With approximately 94% of primary school age children to school, children with higher challenges are still out of school. The government is striving with all the challenges to ensure educational access to all pupils.*

2. The Study Approach and Limitations

The study is a qualitative inquiry. This study is based upon the review of government policy papers, action plan, budgeting, statements and commitments. The desk reviews are supplemented by discussions with educationists those making key contributions in the policy development. The study even explores some of the ongoing practices addressing urban poor education in the Kathmandu Valley.

This report also includes sharing and reflections of government and others policy makers/influencer, NGOs and CBOs workers and representative stakeholders from core study groups.

The study to its types even demands exclusive study of the actions by different NGOs and CBOs working informally in urban poor education sectors. This could not be made as the time and logistic constraints limited the exploration to those areas.

3. Urban Poor in Nepal

Nepal is one of the poorest and least developed countries with 30.8% people below poverty line. It is in 144th position in Human Development Report 2009 (UNDP, 2009). Though the poor of the country had been struggling for improvements in their life standards different challenges drive them back. Chetry in his paper (presented at ADB Manila) listed several reasons for this vicious poverty cycle. “Nepal faces immense social, economic, and political problems mainly due to the government's failure to provide a sense of security, control corruption, and provide economic relief to the poor. Other problems are political instability, quarrels between and within political parties, and a lack of agreement with respect to

national priorities (Chetry, 2001)". Even after a decade the same challenges exists (to overcome the poverty) in Nepal. The political conflict and insurgency has increased the challenges.

There had been several studies and program regarding poverty reduction in the country. Even though the government has a separate arrangement PAF and PRS to address the issue, the challenges sometime seems increasing. Different academic and government studies show poverty is interrelated with the educational attainment of the people. It is believed that education can stand as a multifaceted address to poverty, livelihood, culture and other aspects of development. But the poverty itself in other hand creates challenges to educational access. UNICEF study (2007) finds many dimensions of poverty and social exclusion are strongly related to educational disparity. There are a range of demand related factors, including the 'opportunity cost' of education for the poorest children and attitudinal barriers (such as gender- or caste-based discrimination or the belief that disabled children are uneducable) to ensure access to school (Seel, 2007).

There has been very less study in regard to urban poverty. Still a contextual official definition of urban poverty and urban poor is not available in Nepal. The government does not have a program (in education) in a different stage focused for urban poverty. This means the urban poor and rural poor come in same category in all policy and programs. But the reality is totally different. Though urban poor hold more cash (money), all income goes to food. An INGO official in a personal communication to a news media said, "Life of urban poor in Nepal is more vulnerable than that of rural poor". Various pull factors drives people to the city which increase the number of urban poor. An USAID study on Urban Profile (Kathmandu) predicts an exponential growth in the urban poor population in days ahead. Only 7% of the country's poor live in urban areas, but this is 23% of urban population of Nepal (USAID, 2002) . Urban unemployment is about 20 folds to national unemployment figure, unemployment is one major reason of urban poverty. This indicates urban poor represent a major cluster among deprived population.

The conflict has also projected the number of urban poor. The conflict has made effects in two tiers. First the government program on poverty reduction could not reach the targeted poor and secondly the conflict driven migration added the number of poor. Both of these cause made a significant increase in the number of urban poor. In theory urban poor children including girls do have access to school as compared to the rural poor but in practice there are several challenges. Many challenges were shared in the discussion like; opportunity costs; the siblings care; livelihood unsustainability; lack of basic needs; social exclusion; lack of capability and functioning; fear for exposures; strong cultural ties;

personal thinking and developments, and vulnerability are major challenges to educational access for urban poor (HNN, 2010).

Who is urban poor? As mentioned early, the state does not have a definition to address this group of people. But working definition for this study is poor residing in urban areas are urban poor. This include the people below the poverty line, HBWs with a challenge to furnish the educational needs of their children, people with no substantial income to project to social dignity, the people living in unhygienic crowded areas/slum comes in the focus. An official address and a definition of urban poor have been felt at present time. Government should review indicators to define urban poor. An official data of urban poor is must to address the problem of this population.

National Urban Policy (NUP 2007) in its executive summary claims the document to orient developmental activities and challenges associated with the urbanizations. The policy has identified six major issues in concern to urbanization in Nepal; urban poor represent one among them. It identifies urban poor as one of the increasing population and challenges of urbanization (GoN, 2007, p. 6). Though, the policy addresses concern (in its strategic plan) to support them in income generation and livelihood promotion including safe settlement issues, the definition to identify the target group is still blur in the document.

Summary. *Urban poor has been identified as one challenging group of population regarding distribution of education, development and other citizenry rights. The challenge seems to deepen; as their population is increasing; and the country does not have a contextual working definition till date (of urban poor and HBWs) to address their problems.*

4. Education Scenario of Nepal

Improvement has taken at present time from the early national census 2001 (which reported the literacy rate of above six years as 54.1%). NLFS (CBS GoN, 2009) survey states the literacy rate as 63.7% of 6+age group population.

The DoE record (2010) states there are 32,310 schools and 29,089 ECD centers in Nepal. Majority of them are community schools and the rest are institutional schools. This expansion of schools and government different programs has improved the NER. We have now brought 93.7% students to primary schooling (MoE, 2010).

Higher education in Nepal is through six universities at present and recently provisions are being made to add three more universities at different part of country.

A recent publication of MoE (2010) has listed seven national goals of education. These are the key policy and plan formulation guidelines for all educational programs in the country. The national goals of education are as follows:

National Goals of Education

- Nurture and develop personality and inherent talents of each person;
- Instil respect for human values and the will to safeguard national and social beliefs so as to help develop a healthy social unity;
- Help individual to socialize in enhancing social unity;
- Help individual keep his/her identity in the national and international context and to help her/him lead a socially harmonious life in the modern world;
- Help in modernization of the country by creating suitable human resources for its development;
- Teach about the conservation and wise use of Nepal's natural resources;
- Help and bring underprivileged and disadvantaged into the mainstream of the nation (MoE, 2010, p. 16).

Education in Nepal has two major steps, School Education and Higher Education. Pre primary includes ECD/PPCs. School Education includes Primary (grade 1-5), Lower Secondary (grade 6-8), Secondary (grade 9-10) and Higher Secondary (grade 10-12). The SSRP has proposed school structure of Basic Education (grade 1-8) and Secondary Education (grade 9-12) to gradually shift from the present system/structure.

Higher education consists of Bachelor degree; the duration of Bachelor program varies depending upon the subject and program. The Master degree program is followed by the Bachelor degree which also varies from two to four years depending upon the subjects and areas. Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) are the highest degree offered in Nepal.

Technical education is another stream of education in Nepal. The education of this category is focused to develop mid level human resources to support national development.

A similar but separate line of education, Sanskrit education also exists in Nepal. The students of this line can switch to general schools. The students with higher educational attainments in this line are allowed to move to specific subjects of general education.

The structuring of education has no significant relation with the different types of learners. Though technical education prepares individual early to the job market, it is expensive and competitive. SSRP is an ambitious plan of the government with a magnificent support from development partner. If certain provisions in SSRP could be implemented effectively many deprived pupils may take an advantage of education. An explicit review of the plan is made ahead in this report.

Summary. *The educations system of the country focuses on development of individuals who can support for sustainable development with a respect to social and national values. Change in School structure is in a transition state (as proposed by SSRP) at present time. SSRP and other programs focus to cater the needs of different population of people including efforts for literacy and skill based education.*

5. Major Commitments

5.1 Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of Nepal has provisioned education as the Fundamental Rights in Section 3 of Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 (GoN, 2007).

17. Education and Cultural Right:

- (1) Each community shall have the right to get basic education in their mother tongue as provided for in the law.
- (2) Every citizen shall have the right to free education from the State up to secondary level as provided for in the law.
- (3) Each community residing in Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script, culture, cultural civility and heritage.

Article 17 proclaims the Secondary Education (generally referred as schooling) is a citizenry right. Extensive reviews of the proceedings will explore about the policy and actions, which is done in next section of this report.

5.2 International Commitments

There are several commitments made in international forums regarding development, gender equality and education. Almost all international initiatives focus on education but these two international commitments are worthy to mention here as Nepal has shown

higher commitment toward them. And in the response, the country has received good assistance from international communities.

The MDG (UNDP) first goal focus on eliminating poverty and the goal 2 and 3 focus on education; educational access and educational inclusion issues.

MDG

...

Goal 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education

Target 3. Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Goal 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and at all levels of education no later than 2015.

Though we already missed the gender parity target for 2005, actions and data reveal an encouraging development in this concern.

EFA – 2000 is a global action plan to achieve Education for All by 2015, especially to provide quality education to all addressing the barriers to educations (WEF, 2000). The government has been working carefully to meet the targets through different program. Regular action plan and assessment of action is being carried out in concern with EFA achievements. The EFA review of actions and achievements becomes important to this review. This brings government policy and priorities to bring all out of school children to mainstream education. The review chapter incorporates the status and actions towards EFA.

EFA Goals

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs.
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to, and achievement in, basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (WEF, 2000).

Besides these educational commitments, Nepal government has signed many other international conventions and commitments. Major ones which even include the concern for education are:

- Child Rights Convention
- Child Labor regulations
- Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- Salamanca Declaration on Special Needs Education
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Many provisions and amendment had been made in laws to address the emerging issues and still many aspects remains to be addressed.

Summary. *Nepal has shown its commitments to international conventions/commitments to ensure basic education as a citizenry right to all citizens. As a response, the country has admired it in the constitution but others provisions including legalities to ensure such practices to action are still lacking.*

6. Policy and Priorities

Formulation of education policy and planning became more explicit and democratic only after 1990. Various important considerations like access, quality and relevance came into major concern. Many of the present issues and emerging challenges in education started being addressed after 1990. Several programs started at the period are continued absorbing the experiences. Thus, it becomes relevant here to discuss the development of major policy post 1990, and have gone less change to date.

6.1 Periodic Plans of Governments: Formal Education

The Eight plans (1992-1997) started the theme of Compulsory Primary Education. The plan emphasized providing an authority to local bodies to address the easy access to Compulsory Primary Education. It has emphasized the private sector involvement for providing access to education. The plan had addressed for easy access for poor and other out of school children without differentiation of children status and challenges (GoN NPC, 1992).

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) came as a continuation with early policy. The plan anticipated the gradual expansion of compulsory education from Primary education to above. The policy of mother tongue for primary education was brought in this plan. This was

particularly a focus to address many out of school children including girls and poor. Though it stood as a good plan the story of urban poor children remain uncovered by this plan too.

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) aligning to above policy expanded vision for easy access and free Primary Education. To ensure access and equal distribution of schools the plan directed for school mapping (for redistribution and opening more schools). The free Primary Education campaign and programs got special attention with emphasis to those who had challenges to school access. Yet the poor of different status had not been identified, the focus was there to bring all children to school. The plan in particular emphasized; *Dalit*, *Janajati*, girls, differently able and poor children's access to education providing scholarship for them. The plan did not address the issue of easy access to school for urban poor.

The three year interim plan (TYIP, 2007-2010) following early policies and international commitments proclaim for free Secondary Education as citizenry rights. Education, health and employment will be promoted as rights based program (GoN NPC, 2007). There are several programs emphasizing and aligning to global commitments, MDG and EFA priorities. The plan introduces 1-8 (on experimental basis) as a Basic Education to march ahead for free Secondary Education. There are new programs introduced for access, equity and quality issues. Provision exists for rural, deprived, at risk, disabled and conflict affected youths of all geographical regions to bring them in education, health, training and employment opportunities. Access and equity lies at the core of the plan. Strategies like, school network, opening and merging schools, female teachers, free books and scholarship provision made for equitable access to education. A target group action for women, *Dalits*, *Adibasi*, *Janajatis*, *Madhesi*² community, people with disability and those affected by the conflict is mentioned in the plan. These indicate the TYIP is a comprehensive address to bring all children to school. Reviewing the issues (on educational access and other education and training program) for urban poor and HBWs in urban areas, there is no any specific program addressing them. This plan has emphasized the role and establishment of ECED centers and their operation through local bodies and community. Though this action is more concern to address the quality issue and smooth transaction for schooling; it indirectly supports the poor to reach to the school. The siblings taking care of their young ones had a time for school as ECED centers take their role of looking after young ones.

The review of government plans indicates a clear commitment for ensuring education for all. Different programs (stated above) have been the actions and plans to increase equitable access to primary education. Identification of differential needs of the people with no educational access has been identified to higher extent. Gradually new challenges are emerging. Urban poor including the HBWs and their children is one of the major challenging

² Indigenous minority, usually deprived from developmental services

groups of population expanding in urban population. This population has different contexts and challenges to rural poor population. This demands a separate plans and action to cater to their challenges. The 'education for poor' would have addressed urban poor to some extent but there exists no mechanism to identify the urban poor. In fact the policy makers do not agree to the point that urban settings hold poor.

Government has shown its commitment to increase access to and equity in basic education through different policies, strategies and interventions. The complete and smooth implementation of actions and program are always challenging in Nepal. A study conclusion by UNICEF ROSA states whilst there have been many efforts and initiatives to address the serious levels of educational inequity that exist in Nepal, these have not been as effective as they might have been, even taking into account the very challenging governance context (Acharya, 2007). The effectiveness of the program fails quite often when it goes for weak implementation.

Summary. *The early plans (eighth and ninth) had emphasized for Compulsory Primary Education (grade 1-5) and its gradual expansion to above. Ninth plan and following plans made a generous focus to ensure access to out of school children. The tenth plan campaigned for educational access and equity along with free Primary Education. The following plans along with the learning from past plans, focused on ensuring education for all including deprived groups (poor) to education. Though many targeted programs were formulated to ensure education for all, the urban poor (a separate cluster with entirely different challenges and context) still remains unidentified. The implementation challenges are there with the existing program.*

6.2 School Sector Reform Plan (2009-15)

Education system of Nepal is passing through many changes as well as challenges. School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP, 2009-15) is a response of experiences, global commitments, aspirations of the people and to the emerging challenges in the education system of Nepal. It is a strategic plan to cover all unfolded challenges to early policies and global commitments. The program claims to take the learning from the Education for All (EFA), the Secondary Education Support Program (SESP), the Community School Support Project (CSSP), Teacher Education Project (TEP) and other programs. The SSR is a transformative action plan with affirmative action and policy changes towards attaining the EFA goals by 2015 (MoES, 2008). This strategy aims for universal enrolment at Primary Level. It aims for increasing internal efficiency by reduction in repetition and dropout. It emphasizes on the MDGs targets and EFA goals.

Implementation and budgeting are next challenging part of the programs. Financially it plans to be joint project with majority of budget from GoN (78%) and the remaining budget from the development partners of Nepal (MoE, 2009).

The SSRP continues the strength and good learning of early action and plans. For example the SESP, TEP programs strength is continued and attempts have been made to address the challenges. Focusing on the specific program to address the access to poor, many early programs had been continued. The role of ECED has been emphasized. ECED are emphasized for their attachment to school and community with the aim this would help bringing children to School/Basic Education.

The SSRP has three major focus areas of education; gender equality, inclusion and equity in education. Further program has identified three major problems in concern with equity and access to education; geographical, economic and social exclusion and gender issue has got special attention (MoE, 2009). The SSRP provisos basic education (age 5-13) to be provided free (no any admission, text and exams costs) and it will be extended gradually up to the age of 17. It continues to emphasize the active local role in educational governance. Basic education except insurgency victims would address 5-13 years age children. It has set provisions for bringing traditional forms of schools to mainstream education. These provisions are positive to address the issue of exclusions. The arrangement to increase female teacher participation is definitely a good practice to welcome girls to school. The urban poor and urban females are one group victimized of exclusions. Theoretically, it seems the problem of educational access of urban poor including the children of HBWs has been addressed. But in practice a single program cannot address the pupils of two differing contexts with their own unique problem.

Other affirmative specific action planed by the SSRP includes free Alternative Education Program for specific numbers of students annually to address children not being addressed by schooling/fail to come to School. The action plan plans to bring about 60,000 students to complete grade 9 and 10 through Alternative Education. This program would address the good number of disadvantaged people facing educational exclusion. As to the practice the later plan would address the people from urban population but not necessarily the poor. The program keeps an ambition of expansion of free education to secondary level by 2015.

Specific scholarship provisions are made to address the different types of exclusions in SSRP tenure. 75,000 extreme poor students (in the regular program) will get scholarship to complete secondary level (9 and 10). In addition to that 6, 60,000 girl students will get scholarships, this excludes the students those who get *dalit*, martyrs, disable, etc other categorical scholarships. 75,000 students will be receiving disabled scholarship. These indicate government concern to address the issue of exclusion. All these (*dalit*, girls,

martyrs, extreme poor, Karnali, and disable scholarship) provisions would definitely support to bring and retain many children to school. These scholarships program depending upon its nature will be implemented by DoE, NFEC and local governance.

Another areas emphasized by the SSRP is TEVT. SSRP plans to set TEVT certification level at grade 8, 10, 12 levels. Grade six to eight would include proficiency knowledge on vocational areas; Secondary level to include general technical and vocational skills. All students get exposure to basics of TEVT till grade eight. Following classes will focus for semiskilled professionals' development. SSRP plans to introduce 100 schools for such provisions to produce 80,000 semi skilled human resources. The emphasis on TEVT in fact is a good address for the families and students striving hard with their livelihood.

The education to female has been prioritized in SSRP. The program called Literacy and Lifelong Learning Program (LLL) emphasizes to train females and marginalized groups for life skills and continual learning. The program will be implemented through CLC and address about 7, 00,000 persons during the program cycle.

ASIP has emphasized for Open Schooling (Alternative Schooling) to address the different learning needs of various types of children and others learners failing to reach to school (DoE, 2009). This includes school outreach program (especially for remote village) flexible schooling option applicable to female, adults who missed school. There would be 32 different centers (coordinated through a joint action of CDC, NCED, NFEC and OCE) to implement this program.

SSRP is a good plan with the learning from the past. Government plan and donor willingness are positive strength of the program. As per the SSRP the MoE will be making necessary provision in the acts and regulations for legal remedy for those deprived of and/or denied access to basic education. The SSRP document has mentioned that affirmative action will be taken to increase the numbers of teachers from disadvantaged and female groups. The SSRP also aims to develop a code of conduct to safeguard pro-poor, non-discriminatory, and non-punitive practices in schools to promote access to and equity in schools. For poor, marginalized and needy populations, scholarships and other support will be provided. Special provisions will be made to cater to the needs of public school students in Karnali Zone and *Dalit* students across the country, with particular focus on girls. These points indicate a high priority for educational access and EFA. The SSRP aims to encourage schools located in sparsely populated villages for their registration as multi-grade schools. In addition to these major actions there are other actions which particularly focus for poor and deprived pupil especially rural poor. Almost all gender and poor focus program target rural areas for the action. This states the fact of government's denial that poor and deprived exists in urban populations.

The constitution states education up to secondary level as citizenry rights. SSRP focus on equality, access and equity issues concerned to right based education. But there is still no regulation or act to ensure rights based education or compulsory education. There is commitment to barrier free (ensuring equality and inclusiveness in school) education; however, there is no legislative measure to translate this commitment into actual practices in the school (MoES, 2007). This demands legislative measure to address gap, this is late when there are programs like SSRP already in action. Even with the plan and policies, challenges are there with the implementations. The news covered by the media reflects the implementation gaps; mainly gap were noted in scholarship distribution, maintaining student teacher ratio, availability of textbooks on time, etc. Furthermore, education policy in Nepal has yet to develop minimum requirements for a school. School directives are yet to be developed for ensuring the envisioned actions. These gaps create a challenge in effective implementation of the actions and strategy of the government.

The urban poor issue does not come to the need level even in SSRP. SSRP put forward various program for pro poor; incentive scheme, scholarship scheme, and other supports (special provisions) but all program targets the remote geographical settings. Though SSRP plans for others provisions for poor, marginalized and needy population the other document (ASIP) does not include the urban poor in this category.

***Summary.** SSRP (2009-15) realize higher challenge to bring (about 6% relying on data) out of school to school along with retention and completion of those who came to school. Several indicators and specific target programs has been set to ensure educational rights to all. The program has identified poverty as one major challenge and included a scholarship provisions for extreme poor. The program even has other areas like Alternative Schooling, TEVT and life skills and continual learning program which are focused to serve the poor and deprived populations. Despite entire plan is very good, it fails to identify urban poor as a disadvantaged group to education. The challenge to ensure the education to this cluster still remains a challenge.*

6.3 Education for All: Global Campaign

EFA campaign started after the World Conference in Jomtein in 1990. The current development in educational development in Nepal at Basic and Primary Level is largely attributable to this decade-long campaign (MoE & UNESCO, 2003, p. 4). The DFA (2000)

after reviewing the progress sets six priority goals³ to ensure education for all by 2015. EFA National Plan of Action (NPA) is a document approved by the government for achieving EFA goals. The government has identified many challenges for the attainment of EFA goals. The NPA focuses on meeting the EFA goals gradually phase by phase by the year 2015. The NPA focus for gradual expansion of free and compulsory education, open learning opportunities, and income generation program for parents, etc. These programs target to serve poor and socially excluded groups. It has many others programs to address other challenges. All programs will be incorporated in government regular fiscal plan and activities. In addition to the regular funding by the government the program will also be supported by the donors through 'basket funding'.

EFA 2004-2009 Core Document (CD) is a five-year strategic plan developed by Nepal and accepted by donor agencies within the EFA 2015 framework. It has the following three objectives:

Objectives of EFA (2004-2009) CD

- i) Ensuring access and equity in primary education,
- ii) Enhancing quality and relevance of primary education, and
- iii) Improving efficiency and institutional capacity (MoES, 2003).

EFA 2004-2009 and the tenth plan had adopted pro-poor approach. Provisions were to support children from disadvantaged communities; *Dalit*, girl children, children with disabilities, children living in difficult circumstances due to poverty or conflict. Incentive and scholarship provisions were made for such students to bring them to school schools. Need-based literacy classes and non-formal education programs were there to address the poverty, as poverty and illiteracy are intertwined. These programs were concentrated to poorest districts. This implies that the policy undertake that the poor people reside mostly in rural and geographically challenged areas. Elimination of gender disparity is another focus in CD. Plan and action to address this issue were made with focus to rural areas. This shows that government has not differentiated the challenges of the poor of different areas.

The CD states "... 'marginalized groups' includes *Dalits*, girl children, ethnic minorities, linguistic minorities, children from indigenous groups, children with disabilities, working children, street children, conflict- affected children, calamity-affected children, children from remote regions, poor children, children with parents in prison, children rescued from trafficking and children of migrant parents. In addition, location specific definitions of disadvantaged groups will be used. (MoES, 2003)". This opens a probability for addressing

³ Goals listed in page 8

urban poor and females of urban population who are excluded from education. However in practice there had been no address to the urban poor and females away from education. The opportunity cost for education and other costs are relatively different in urban setting. Urban poor children are more vulnerable in the sense that they are exposed to more challenges, peoples and interests. The EFA 2004-09 CD in principal had created a room where urban poor problems could have been addressed. But the practice always left this population unaddressed.

The identified disadvantaged groups to educational access and retention by MDA 2007 are as follows:

- Religious, linguistic, racial, and ethnic minorities/ethnic groups
- Castes, socio-economic classes, and other social stratifications
- Women and girls
- Persons discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation
- Persons with disabilities or special needs
- Residents of remote, rural, or border areas
- Undocumented people, non-citizens, non-registered residents
- Migrants, refugees, displaced persons (conflict or natural disaster)
- Children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS
- Children affected by conflict
- Street Children
- Working children
- Orphans
- The very poor
- Victims of domestic abuse (MoES, 2007).

Many of the above identified categories of disadvantaged groups also represent clusters of urban poor. Different categories within urban poor have been identified, but the address to this group of people is blurring (in the policy papers).

The early good practices under BPEP II (2001-04) to bring school age girls and the children of disadvantaged and deprived communities into the main stream schooling system have been reinforced in the EFA core plan 2004-09. Also, efforts are underway to develop sustainable mechanism to ensure that all children are enrolled in school at appropriate age level and that they complete the primary education cycle with good learning achievement (MoES, 2007). Majority of the good practices got continuity. There has been a good increment in student enrolments during this time which in fact is a great success. Now there is a slow progress in bringing rest students to school. MDA finds poverty is one of the major reasons

for it. Different types of poor reside in different location. Urban poor represents on big population which is out of education. Education plans and policy including the EFA (national) has not emphasized the inclusion (education) of urban poor.

Summary. *Despite of challenges, EFA campaign has made a significant contribution in educational development of the country. The donor funds ('basket funds') have been useful to address the challenges. MDA has identified disadvantaged group to educational access and retention including poverty as one major factor. Some sub clusters of urban poor has been listed but fails to list other urban poor along with HBWs children. And a visible program targeted to this population is still not in plan.*

6.4 Non Formal Education Policy

The adult education program was renamed as Non-Formal Education after 1990. With the change in the name many new programs were designed and implemented by Non-Formal Education Center (NFEC). NFE and Distance Education and Open learning policy papers were developed. Launching of National Literacy Campaigns (NLC) justify the government concerns in eradicating illiteracy. The majority policy/ programs in the period targets children and people who could not complete the school education. This indicates NFE was used as a strategy to mainstream out of school children and school drop outs of into the school.

Start of NLC to eradicate illiteracy from society, development of literacy materials in different mother tongues, integration of Income Generation Programs (IGP) with NFE, are some key exemplary tasks performed through NFEC. Most of the NFEC programs were implemented with special coordination with local bodies, communities, NGOs and other stakeholders. Decentralization was considered as a strategy for program management and NGOs were considered as partners in the implementation of NFE programs.

Education for All (EFA) set a 50% increment target in existing literacy rate by 2015 which is adopted in Nepal's EFA, NPA. NFEC has an added responsibility to address this challenge. Strategy is being adopted to expand CLCs as a tangible venue to scale-up and disseminate NFE programs. NFE takes Distance Education and Open Learning (2007) as options to expand access to school and higher education in challenges related to insufficient physical infrastructure and trained human resources. The program even targets to meet learning needs of diverse learners, out-of school youths, working-adults, disadvantaged groups such as women, other minority and discriminated groups. NFE policy opened options for Open Schools; these schools provide opportunity to complete secondary education mainly

through self-study, with minimal support. The SSRP has considered alternative modes of education as options for ensuring access to the needy population. This program has benefited many people residing in different areas including who missed a part of their school education. Though this channel makes a way for study, it is rather difficult for those who want to come to mainstream education and have not attended basic education or are illiterate.

The government issued NFE Policy 2007 which aims at establishing NFE as an equivalent to formal education system or a parallel system. 16 points have been presented as the guiding policy for NFE of Nepal (NFEC GoN, 2007).

- Non formal education will be expanded to provide the academic and practical knowledge, skills and information to different age and levels of learners.
- NFE equivalent to FE will be provided to those who are deprived of educational opportunity or who dropped out of education.
- Special provisions will be made to increase access to education.
- Development and distribution of curricular and learning materials will gradually be decentralized and localized.
- CLCs will be developed as the centre of educational activities to ensure equitable access to quality non-formal education for all.
- The implementation of monitoring, supervision and evaluation of NFE programs will be decentralized.
- Networking and coordination and partnership will be maintained with the agencies involved in NFE for resource generation and mobilization.
- Inclusive education policy will be adopted to ensure access, quality and co-existence.
- Common database will be developed and shared among the agencies involved in NFE programs.
- Training, research, self monitoring and innovation will be included in NFE programs to build the capacity of the human resources involved in the NFE programs.
- Government and non-government organizations and private agencies will be mobilized to meet the targets of "EFA".
- The financial management of non-formal education will be made compatible with the economic condition and policy of the government.
- Local bodies will play the regulatory role for the management of nonformal education. Any of the modalities mainly from the following four (local body, NGO, CLC, educational institution modality) will be applied to implement NFE programs.
- NFEC will coordinate and collaborate with government, non-governmental, and international organizations to create cooperative environment among the agencies involved in NFE programs.
- The literacy campaign will be developed as the main policy strategy for the eradication of illiteracy and local agencies will be made responsible for the program.

- The agencies involved in NFE will develop their policies and strategies within the framework of the policies and strategies included in this policy document.

This reflects NFE policy is to cater to the academic and practical knowledge, skills and information needs of all. The policy focuses on expansion, strengthening, and utilization of CLCs for access, equity and quality education. Decentralized material development, distribution and strengthening of local bodies are the highlights of the policy. One main area that has been proposed to strengthen is networking and coordination among NFE providers.

The SSR Plan 2009 aims at developing life skills and facilitating continuous learning for youths and adults, with particular focus on females and disadvantaged populations. The plan has also ascertained to develop and extend alternative mode of education with equivalent status as the formal education, to ensure access of basic education to all school age children. Moreover, it has envisioned functioning of alternative mode of education including open learning system beyond basic education.

These reflect NFE is more than simply literacy; rather it is now an important strategy for educating and empowering people. NFE can be a effective program as developing local and national knowledge base for national development, and making a way out reaching to the unreached (through ICT). The program is more relevant in the context of Nepal's challenging geographical structure/remoteness and this demands effective resources mobilizations and extra efforts. And the resources are always scarce for the country.

With the vast of good aspects NFE has very high challenges to its implementations. The most important aspect the policy address is to cover education for all those left and challenged to go to formal schooling. NFE highest challenge remains in the budget for the program. The supposed coordination role (NFEC) between different stakeholders to serve literacy campaign and alternative education in practice is very weak. The involvement of NGOs has become prominent and do not find a coordinating unit for NFE in local levels. The provision in the LSGA to bring local bodies in NFE activities has not been able to do much because of lack of fund and technical capability. The fund and institutional capacity of NFEC is not supportive to NFE policies and expectations.

Summary. *NFE focus to supply the academic and practical knowledge, skills and information needs of all. This indicates that NFE is not simply literacy program. NFE is expected as an alternative program to meet educational attainment where there are challenges to FE channel. NFE policy emphasize for collaborative programs at local level to cater the contextual challenges associated with education. The major challenge (NFE) lies in the fund and the institutional capacity of NFEC.*

6.5 Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED)

At this stand of time we have high growth in numbers of ECED centers. The development of ECED centers has been one of the core activities to address EFA since the start of BPEP. The BPEP (1991) classified ECD centers into following categories: a) Institutions established by philanthropic organizations, b) institutions supported by the development projects, c) institutions operated by private schools, and d) provision of early childhood education in public schools at their own initiative.

BPEP introduced Shishu Kaksha⁴ (SK) in 1991/1992. Initially, the goals of SK were: (a) to make separate arrangement for under-aged children from grades one and two, (b) to improve teaching learning process in primary schools. SKs were attached to Government-aided schools as the joint initiative of BPEP and the community. The second phase of BPEP under the DoE changed the school affiliated SK into Community Based Early Child Development (CBECD) Program in 1999. The early orientation of education of SKs changed; to increase the enrollment, retention and achievement level of children in primary schools. The ECED is now to address the fundamental rights, a supportive program especially to children from poor and disadvantaged families

In EFA (2004-2009) period government accelerated the expanding of ECD program, community based centers and school based pre-primary classes. The EFA CD plans to develop ECD programs in line with an inclusive education approach. The DFA states, "Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children (WEF, 2000)." Focused with an intention to support female and take care of young children the program emphasized to recruit females from local communities as ECD facilitators. The CD expects ECD to have pro-poor effect because parents are freed to pursue income generation activities, and girl children freed to attend primary schools. Under the SSRP, ECED would work for integrating both development and educational aspects into one holistic embodiment, recognizing how basic education symbiotically draws on a solid foundation of child development. The Education Act, Seventh Amendment (2002) defined "Pre-Primary Education" as a school to provide a year-long education to children who have completed four years of age. The classes would focus to impart education for their physical, mental and intellectual development. The Education Regulations, 2003 conditions the local bodies (VDC and Municipality) as an agency to inspect/permit for the minimum facilities for ECED centers. In addition to this Strategy Paper for Early Childhood (2004) and ECED Operational Guidelines (2004) has been issued

⁴ Nepali name for Pre-Primary Levels

by the government. The strategy paper states ECED to address all round development of child through holistic approach, operate ECED activities in collaboration with different stakeholders, emphasize for vulnerable and disadvantaged children focused to children. The ECED operational guidelines states to focus for physical, social, emotional and intellectual activities of children and prepare them for primary school. The ECED curriculum has four development goals: physical; emotional; social and moral; and mental development (DoE, 2006). SSRP also focus on community based ECED centers with a view to ensuring participation, especially of girls and the populations facing multiple exclusions.

The resources for this program are channeled through MoE; DEO is responsible for coordination and regulation of the program. The policy expects the local contributions to supplement the financial needs of the centers.

Despite of good attempts, challenges were found in high turnover of facilitators and unequal distribution of such centers. Studies indicate that the curriculum is not followed in its true spirit due to inadequate capacities. The limited resources have created a great challenge to this program. Government policy and plan (SSRP) has also identified these problems. SSRP added further policy direction but no address on how to meet the financial deficiencies. The ECED centers contributions to urban population are less/ negligible. The (short) time the siblings are held at ECED centers do not give required time to elders for schooling. The elders taking care of their young ones also have to share housework. This gradually discourages the urban poor and pro poor to the education. The 'opportunity cost' for urban poor in terms of cash is higher. The national budgeting will not be able to cover these cost, rather other alternative strategic model must be taken to address the problem. Introducing life skills to this group of people may stand as better alternative.

Summary. ECED focus on Preprimary education and provides education for physical, mental and intellectual development of children (age 4+ years). ECED expansion accelerated in focus with support to girls and disadvantaged children to education. The major challenge associated with the program remains with its budget. The high turnover of the facilitators, limited resources, unequal distribution of centers, governing and administration, and monitoring are the challenges related to ECED centre.

6.6 Workshop Proceedings

A workshop was organized by HNN on 22 December 2010 to share the primary review of education policies in concern with urban poor and gender focus. Participant included

representatives from different organizations working for poor and vulnerable groups; representatives from urban poor, HBWs, females, Scholars, CBOs, INGOs, NGOs and GoN (annex I).

The educational policy has many provisions for poor including the extreme poor to bring them to school education. The policy and budget reflects an attention given to the poor. Different policy papers, assessments, action plan and budget have listed different vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, but the urban poor and females including HBWs children have not been identified as disadvantaged group elsewhere. Urban poor including HBWs children represent one distinguished group of disadvantaged school age children whose large number is still out of formal schooling system. Urban poor females are more disadvantaged as multiple exclusion factors prevails; urban life, poverty, social and cultural belief and personal mindset were the challenges for this population. Along with this, all agreed about the need of life skill education. The participant agreed a sustained address to urban poverty can be made by focusing on vocational educational and vocational trainings.

Participant shared challenges regarding the educational access to poor. Kathmandu valley has 60,000 porters (personal communication, 2010) and their children are one among disadvantaged poor (to education) living in urban areas.

“A public school in Kathmandu valley refused to admit the children of porters,” says one participant who work for an NGO working for livelihood promotion of porters (of Kathmandu).

An issue was even raised about the point of demarcation of urban poor. Many of the government policy papers does not address ‘urban poor’ as there is no specific official definition of urban poor in our country says Om Thapaliya (2010), director of HNN. The discussion ended with an argument that the policy should revise for a specific urban poor definition.

On a discussion whether a separate legal provisions and education entity/body has to be built as to cater the need of this population. Almost all participants pointed about the implementation weakness of present administration. ‘Governance has been a major issue and fault where we should improve, the school system and the educational practice are not healthy’ was the view of one senior participant.

Responding to discussions government policies, analyst Mr. Sushil Sharma also agreed to the points that policy documents has no specific address to 'urban poor' including the 'children of HBWs'. The government policy does not make a difference in rural and urban poor (in education). Basic education is free, one should complain if a school asks for fees. To address the inclusion and other issues related to EFA, Basic Education Guideline is in pipeline and Directives for Schools has been recently issued. He highlighted the importance of different NGOs and CBOs role to communicate the essence of government policy to the public where people are deprived of those facilities.

A researcher was sharing about a workshop where they confronted education officer, a public school head teacher and a parent who had paid fee for his ward. The education officer committed for an action for the school taking fees.

The Cover Page Story

"I paid 300 for the enrollment and 50 as examination fees for my son" says an HBW woman regarding his son educational expenditure studying in grade one. "He got three books from the school and rest including the dress and shoes it took all my savings of a year (personal communication, 2010)."

Along with above concerns the discussion realized, an up to date data of urban poor group should be kept intact. The government focus for education should specifically target urban poor along with other target group developing suitable program. The education should focus on life skills (VEVT) including non formal education for those who skipped school age. The NGOs and CBOs should make a facilitation role in providing education and further support for the engagement of this population to productive sector.

Summary. Education policies of Nepal had provisioned to ensure School Education to all including extreme poor. All poor of the country do not share the same contexts and challenges. The easy access to education is still a challenge to this group (urban poor including HBWs' children). There are no specific policy response beside a general address to all poor of the country. The challenges to ensure education to unreached has become challenging even due to weak implementation of policies; conflicts between the policy and program and practices. Subjective study followed by relevant educational program can address the problems of urban poor. INGOs, NGOs and CBOs' roles are very important on these issues.

6.7 Other Actions

NUP 2007 has identified urban poor as one of the challenges towards the optimum development of the urban cities. As an address to this challenge government has included certain strategic plan in their policy paper. The programs are especially focused to foster the livelihood of urban poor. It includes programs like employment opportunities, settlement plans, and commitment to focus on MDGs during urban planning. The policy provisos stay arrangement (home/land for pro poor) and alterative income generation activities for urban poverty alleviation (GoN, 2007, p. 23) including easy loans for low income families. Education does not come under priority sector on urban policy paper. If poverty is addressed which is one major challenge to education, educational access and retention would increase; the other way to this, there is no any positive implication that NUP 2007 can bring to the education of urban poor.

During the short field study in Kathmandu Valley, few examples regarding a positive support were found. Some were generous effort of support where some were as social service and some as NGOs activities. A case was very interesting.

Win-Win Dealing

A leading private boarding school at Kathmandu established with a profit motto provides scholarships for female candidates from poor and disadvantaged family. The institution has made a positive change in the life of certain urban poor. Students and their families are happy with the services of the institution. The institution has been receiving a fund from donor to support the study of the disadvantaged group. Though it may be an issue of transparency in regard to governance but for two parties it is win-win dealing.

“I have written many appeals to foreigners for poor student to their study, and few are lucky to get sponsors (Personal communication, 2010).” An academician shared a story about the indirect support he made to a girl till she could make her own stand in the society. Some schools at Kathmandu valley support in education of poor student through sponsorship by foreigners/donors. I found three out of five boarding schools visited held sponsored students; the sponsors were usually the foreigners. But this support is very less to the urban poor population and the extreme poor are still away from this.

Some NGOs and CBOs supported and/or operated schools have made a significant contribution on educating the urban poor and females. Prerana Mahila School is a regular school to supports females over 14 years to bring in education. Most of the students are fee paying but it also supports others who cannot pay. Though it may not be able to address the

extreme poor, its contribution to address gender and inclusion issue is appreciable. The challenges for the extreme poor and urban poor in many stances remain unaddressed. The sparsely distributed programs are not enough to cover such a large population of urban poor. This demand the urban poor should be taken as one deprived group from education. They have specific challenges and context. A specific program addressing their challenges can ensure their access to education and development.

Summary. *NUP has identified urban poor as one major issue which needs a strategic address in the days ahead. Beside government services, a small number of urban poor are getting educational access and services from different non government sectors. These include NGOs, CBOs and even some private organization including private boarding schools and individual sponsorship. This indicates a new probability of collaborative action among community, NGOs government and private/corporate units in education.*

7. For Future: Priorities

- The schooling opportunities has expanded, attempts on strengthening of the system for inclusion, quality, equity and access has improved from early levels. International commitments and the acceptance that education is the right of the people are also important understanding set to this period. These good practices should be consistently reflected in all policy and action papers of the government.
- The constitution provisions of education (right based education) are not truly incorporated by policy, legislations and action plans. The practices are more away to these provisions. This demands review of educational policies and legislations in accordance to new national educational provisions and directions.
- Basic and primary education is free (free tuition fee and free textbooks). However provisions are still there that schools are free to raise donation from the community and the parents to meet development and maintenance cost of the schools. In most instances, the donation contributions are enforced by the schools. The issue of such 'donation and free school education' up to basic and primary level persists. This in practice has increased disparity and social exclusion. The difference in fees/donation of schools is contributing for socio-economic disparity and educational exclusions. The poor is becoming more deprived from education. This conflict in policies/actions needs a revision.
- The gender issue has not got due address as a result nation failed the early (2005) target of gender parity set by MDG. The gender disparity in education is a challenge in rural as well as urban setting. There had been no study on barriers of urban poor females to education. And what type of education will help them? A study regarding it is imperative to support this population.
- The schools in practice still do not accept the concept of inclusive schooling. Basically there exists two tiers of gaps; one internal communication gaps which include communication between teacher, head teacher, community (SMC) and local governance (DEO); and the other between school and society. These laps had contributed in weak implementations of the program. Trainings/School Directives to school can help to address this challenge to schools. Furthermore, the NGOs and CBOs working in education can facilitate, coordinate, communicate and support to reduce the challenges and advocate against injustice in relation to educational attainment of deprived pupil.
- Urban poor represent one major cluster of urban population. The children of urban poor including the children of HBWs have to face multifaceted challenges to education/schools. Government must identify this population along with their challenges to education and cater suitable education program for poverty reeducation as well as sustained livelihood.

- One third of the country lives under poverty (UNDP, 2009) and by population figures the percentage of urban poor is increasing. These statistics indicates urban poor as one of the deprived group from different national services. Government has to identify this group of people and the challenges related to their developmental needs.
- A review of definition of 'urban poor' becomes urgent so as to identify the problems linked with the poverty of the urban poor population. Nepalese cities and context (socio-economic environment) differ in many ways from other urban areas of the globe. This demands a specific definition for urban poor (of Nepal) which ensures their access to national developmental benefit.
- Urban poverty can be addressed only after getting the real challenges associated with them. To address the problems, it is also essential to know their demographic characteristics. This demands an up-to-date data of urban poor living in urban cities of Nepal.
- Urban poor has many challenges including a continuous need of cost for living and food. Providing TEVT could be one of the responsive ways to reduce urban poverty and help urban poor families. Government policy needs to make a study about its applicability and plan for action accordingly.
- The policy review, discussion and field study has showed education as a deep concern of many institutions; INGOs, NGOs, CBOs and even the private sectors. Government as the major policy maker and care taker of education can explore about the probability of new approach to address EFA. This brings out a possibility of addressing the education of urban poor through different approach including public private partnership (PPP).

8. Conclusion

Federal Democratic Republic Nepal is an official name of the country after abolishing the monarch in 2006. Along with the political changes the country is experiencing changes in various sectors. The changes in the education sector are more rapid than other sectors. Different programs and intervention in education has brought a considerable achievement in increasing the access and equity in education. The quality issue and other emerging issue are other challenges which demands interventions in days ahead. The good practices needs to be continued and new intervention should be planned for the challenges ahead.

The new Nepal interim constitution claims the education up to secondary level is citizenry right. But the policy, legislations and practices are not compatible to the constitutional motto. This demands an extensive review of all educational policy and practices of the country. Still a regulatory act to ensure right based education and a legislative measure to ensure barrier free education is lacking. Some policy and practice are conflicting. Therefore, it may be too early to say that the policy of free basic and primary education is completely adapted in practice.

Government assessments, reviews and policy have identified different clusters of population deprived from education. The identified disadvantaged list does not include the urban poor. Urban poor represent one major portion of urban population. The HBWs' children educational access and attainment figures are not satisfactory. This indicates that the urban poor should be identified as one population which has many barriers to education. The needs and contexts of urban poor are completely different. As challenges differ, this demands policy makers to identify the status, challenges of urban poor and cater them accordingly.

The rules and policy do not act alone unless we have committed and honest system to implement them. The good governance/administration of plan and its regular monitoring is very important. A joint monitoring mechanism (government and people) and actions for deficiencies is essential.

The role of NGOs and CBOs cannot be omitted in a developing country. Nepalese people have strong socio-cultural ties; in these contexts the role of local institutions becomes more important. These institutions should support media, government and other development partners to disseminate the right information. The developmental imperative should reach to every citizen of the country and to this government as leader should coordinate with other development partners including the local peoples.

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Annex I

List of participant in Policy Sharing Workshop

शहरी गरीब लक्षित राष्ट्रिय शिक्षा नीति

समिक्षा कार्यशाला गोष्ठी
२०७७/०९/१९ (२२ डिसेम्बर, २०१०)

क्र.	नाम	संस्था/ठेगाना	पद	फोन नं./इमेल	हस्ताक्षर
१.	कमला रजुवार	इस्वापोरवरी इ.प्र.इ.ला	उपाध्यक्ष	९८०३५०५८८५	कमला
२.	सिता लागुन	समुह फर्विडो	कोष ब्यक्त	९८०८२३३०२५	सिता
३.	पर्वत ढुंगाना	इ.प्र.इ.ला, ललितपुर	Policy Review H.B. Professor	९८५१५५०६५६	
४.	हीरा के.सी.	गोशाला	सचिव	९८५२८२५९५३	हीरा
५.	सावित्री पुजापती	ज्योती महिला संस्था	अध्यक्ष	९८५१५७९६२५	सावित्री
६.	अपसरा ज्ञानल	स्वाकला महिला ज्ञानल	अध्यक्ष	९८५५३०९५८८	अपसरा
७.	शान्ता श्याक्य	सामो प्येनारी ललितपुर	अध्यक्ष	९८५०१२६५५	शान्ता
८.	राधिका कुमार् विष्ट	HDC Nepal	का.संयोजक	९८५९६६६५०	राधिका
९.	सुशीलबाइ रजुवार	MoE	S.O.	९८५१५८०५३८	सुशील
१०.	सुखला श्रेष्ठ	CIUD	Program-coordinator	९८५१५५१६५	सुखला
११.	पद्मल काठ माले	SOYA	अध्यक्ष	९८५९२५५५२९	पद्मल
१२.	गणेश विर्सेला	मै.दे. यु. कंग्रेट	आध्यक्ष	९८२९०६०६००२	गणेश
१३.	अनन्त आचार्य	अध्यक्ष परिषद्	पुर्वा	९८५९८६०२५०	अनन्त
१४.	गोला पाण्डे	होम सेट नेवा	वित्त व्यवस्थापक		गोला
१५.	शरणा आचार्य	"			शरणा
१६.	सुखला लामा	"			सुखला
१७.	स्मृति आर.डी. ऐन	"		९८५१५३७९६७	स्मृति
१८.	गौरीशंकर पस्वा	संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालय	अध्यक्ष	९८५७७९५७८३	गौरीशंकर
१९.	मिथुन राईचार्य	क्लब नेपाल		९८०८५५८१५	मिथुन
२०.	सुखला श्रेष्ठ	मै.दे. यु. कंग्रेट	सचिव	९८५९०५५५२६	सुखला
२१.	सुखला कुमार् पस्वा	HNN + BWN HNBW		९८५८०९५६०५	सुखला

शहरी गरीब लक्षित राष्ट्रिय शिक्षा नीति

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२०६७/०२/०१ (२२ डिसेम्बर, २०१०)

क्र.	नाम	संस्था/ठेगाना	पद	फोन नं/इमेल	हस्ताक्षर
२२.	आम्र धरालिया	हेमन्त शेरचन	श - १६ -		
२३.	Anita Krishnan	HomeNet Nepal	DOC Officer		
२४.	Pushpa Gurung	Nepal Media Mail & e-mail	Field mobilizer	pushpagung@gmail.com	
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२६.	Krishna Khatiwada	CPABA Nepal	F-S	caadanepal@	
२७.	Ruchila Pandey	SDC	A.C.C.		
२८.	संजिता मैताली	का.स.स	का.स.	sanjitamaitali@yahoo.com	
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३०.	Anuj Ghimire	Student			
३१.	Salina Chalise	Amunig	DO.	०९७२३४१५	
३२.	सरला शिरी	गोपी नट		९८७१७३०१	
३३.	Opkar Kshetri	YOPL	A.O	kshetri_uplen@y	
३४.	Kripa Pradhan	Student-	EMBA		
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