

**Association of  
International NGOs in Nepal**



**DISABILITY WORKING GROUP**

**Inspiring Inclusive Stories of AIN Members:  
Contributing Towards Inclusive  
Development**

**December 22, 2016**

**Kathmandu**

## FOREWORD

The Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN) is an active umbrella network for 125 INGOs working in Nepal.

The AIN's Disability Working Group (DWG) has been making continuous efforts towards mainstreaming disability within the AIN fraternity and beyond. We have been making efforts to be a role model among the stakeholders while we walk and talk about inclusion. In 2016, the DWG has led the implementation of capacity development trainings on disability-inclusive development and disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), which the AIN members found to be very practical and useful in designing and monitoring the implementation of their programs. The DWG also accomplished the construction of a model accessible public toilet in Bhrikutimandap at a total cost of NPR 4 million, which will serve the dual purposes of showcasing accessibility, and an example to be used in advocacy with stakeholders. To further the above goals and share some of the best practices, the DWG has been continuing with the quarterly newsletter initiated in 2015. Furthermore, with firm belief in data-based advocacy and a conviction to lead the way, the DWG has also begun the AIN-wide disability inclusion survey every two years, with the next one due in 2017.

While we celebrate the 25th International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 2016, we strive to demonstrate AIN's efforts towards inclusive development through compiling a handful of inspiring, inclusive stories on different themes, from programs implemented by AIN members at the individual, group and national levels. We hope these stories substantiate AIN's leadership in ensuring development programs in Nepal are inclusive, its expertise through pooling experts from the many member organizations implementing a variety of development programs, and its legacy of ensuring access to equal rights and opportunities, development, DRR and emergency response. It's our privilege to come up with such representative stories.

We advocate to all the AIN members, development partners and state agencies to be a part of our efforts at forming an "inclusive society for all".

Together we can definitely do more!!

**Shaurabh Sharma**

Coordinator

AIN Disability Working Group

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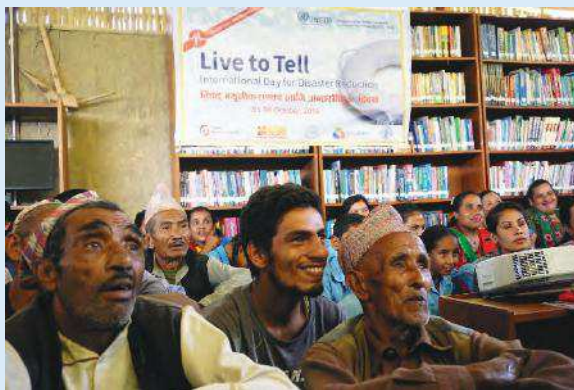


Photo: Representatives of DWG members, following a periodic coordination meeting.

## Promoting disability inclusive disaster risk reduction

Following the 2015 earthquake, Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB) has been supporting the development of inclusive and resilient communities in Nepal, through collaborating with the state, local communities and civil society organizations including disabled peoples' organizations (DPOs) and I/NGOs.

Disability-inclusion is an integral part of the ASB's Nepal Program. A fully accessible public libraries are being developed in Dolakha and Nuwakot, which will act as resource centers that contribute to community development afterwards. ASB has engaged members of DPOs and local Self Help Groups of persons with disabilities to develop their capacities, ensure their meaningful participation in project activities, and mobilize them to conduct awareness and advocacy on disability issues at the local level.



ASB is an active promoter of Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) approach globally and in Nepal. A founder member of the DiDRR network of organizations fostering meaningful participation and contribution of persons with disabilities in all aspects and steps of the DRR initiatives, ASB has been promoting this approach through enhancing the knowledge and capacities of DPO leaders, DRR stakeholders, government officials and partner staff. ASB plans to support DRR communities in Nepal to improve their understanding from a disability-inclusion lens.

ASB has been actively engaged in contributing to disability-inclusive policies in Nepal and at the regional level. On November 3-5, 2016, ASB attended the Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR in New Delhi, India and led the Disability Stakeholder Groups in making a regional disability inclusive DRR plan. The resulting stakeholder commitments have been appended to the Asia Regional Plan 2015-2030. Furthermore, the New Delhi Declaration 2016, calls on all governments and stakeholders to: *Encourage meaningful participation and support representation of women, children and youth, and persons with disabilities in leadership role for disaster risk reduction.*

ASB has also been actively supporting the amendment of the Local Disaster Response and Management Plan (LDRMP), which clearly outlines the inclusion of persons with disabilities in DRR structures and processes and prescribes for the collection of DRR database including persons with disabilities.



ASB - the Workers' Samaritan Federation - is a German aid and welfare organization, engaged in areas such as civil protection, rescue services and social welfare services. As a non-political and non-denominational organization, ASB has, since its foundation in 1888, represented continuity and reliability.

## EREC-P: Disability Inclusive and Integrated Eye and Ear Care Program

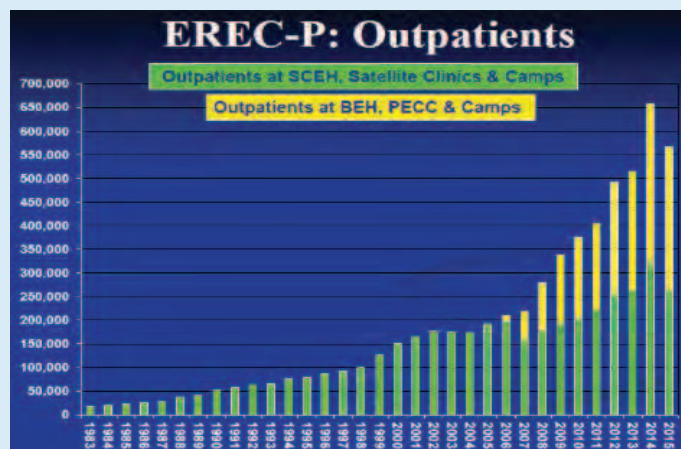


Photo: Ashok Shah, CBM

The 1980 Nepal Government comprehensive blindness survey identified a 0.84% (with vision  $<3/60$ ) prevalence of blindness in the country. The survey, conducted with support and coordination from the World Health Organization (WHO), International Development Partners (IDPs) and Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh (NNJS) also identified that most cases of blindness could be avoided with effective eye care services.

The 2010 rapid survey indicates a 0.6% (with vision  $<6/60$ ) and 0.21 (with vision  $<3/60$ ) prevalence of blindness, with cataract also down from 72% to 65% as a major cause of blindness. These indicate a huge contribution to prevent blindness in Nepal.

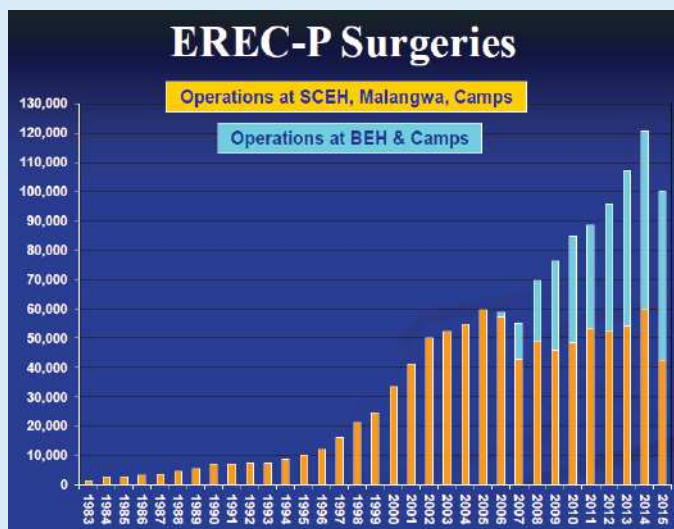
Since its inception in 1983 as a small eye unit in Lahan with only 12 beds, the Sagarmatha Chaudhary Eye Hospital (SCEH) has provided eye sight to thousands of people every year. It is now known as the Eastern Regional Eye Care Program (EREC-P), also including the Biratnagar Eye Hospital. Spanning 2 hospitals and 16 satellite clinics, the



EREC-P is providing high quality eye services at an affordable cost to scores of poor and under-privileged people of eastern Nepal as well as northern India.


**CBM** began its eye care program in 1982 with the establishment of the Sagarmatha Chaudhary Eye Hospital in Lahan, eastern *terai*, in partnership with the NNJS, an NGO coordinating eye care services in Nepal. The Sagarmatha zone had the highest prevalence of blindness (more than 0.98% with vision <3/60) at the time. Since then, CBM representative and ERECP Program Director, *Dr. Albert Henning* (a German national) together with local SCEH donors (Chaudhary families) have served over 30 years and contributed to the advancement of the ERECP.

Today, ERECP is considered the third largest eye care programme in the world. It also contributes a third of the national surgical statistics. Employing more than 500 staff and 34 eye specialists, its self-sustained 950-bed eye hospitals provide a variety of eye care services including Paediatric Ophthalmology, Vitreo-Retinal, Cornea, Low-vision, Glaucoma and Oculoplasty from sub-specialty



departments. The accessible and disability friendly ERECP base hospitals have also been providing fellowships and a variety of trainings and graduate courses for eye care in affiliation with the CTEVT and NAMS. Its strong community outreach activities include diabetic retinopathy camps, comprehensive eye camps, workplace eye camps, school screening, pediatric eye camps, surgical eye camps and CBR Program.

CBM is currently focused on supporting the strengthening of sub-specialties, developing disability-inclusive outreach programmes (satellite services, awareness and camps) and technical human resources, and integrating ear care services in eye hospitals and satellite centers. The costs of these priorities account for less than 10% of the total ERECP turnover, indicating the sustainability and scalability of the program started 34 years ago.

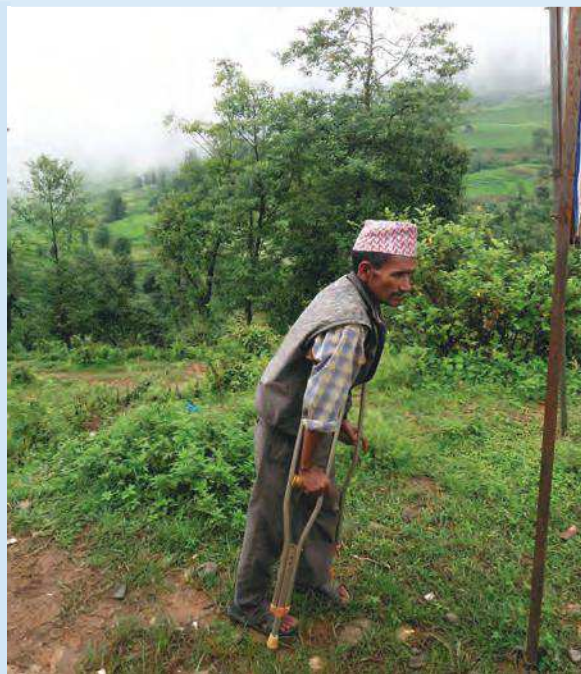


*CBM is an international development organization, committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in the poorest communities of the world irrespective of race, gender or religious belief.*

## Post-earthquake: Empowering mobility

**Padam Bahadur Puri, 50, barely but painfully survived the April 25, 2015 earthquake.**

Photo: Ms. Srijana Basnet, Community Health Officer, UPAKAR Project



Padam lived in ward 7 of Bhotenamlang VDC, Sindhupalchowk district, with his wife and two sons. He was not very strong financially, but was making his ends meet.

He was one of many who painfully survived the fateful day, as the quake brought his house down while he was inside. Stuck and seriously injured, he was almost paralyzed.

Padam couldn't move his body properly even after being rescued from the debris. He was only able to make minor movements after receiving treatment for some time, but still could not walk or carry out his daily chores himself. He lost the use of one of his legs.

**However, this was not the end of his tribulation.** Deserted by his wife and children, who apparently moved to the city, Padam was left to suffer in his plight with only a pair of crutches to support minimal movements. Unable to make ends meet anymore, let alone afford a follow-up treatment, he went to live with his cousin. Even then, he could neither afford a treatment, nor obtain his cousin's support to be treated well.

**FAIRMED's** UPAKAR project discovered him in the course of mapping persons living with disabilities in its project area comprising 12 villages (VDCs) of the district. The project assessed his condition, and decided to support his follow-up treatment in line with its provision to provide funds for travel and treatment for persons injured in the earthquake. The NPR 5,000 (CHF 45) fund allowed Padam to travel to the Dhulikhel Hospital, where he received free treatment, as well as supported his medication and other related expenses.

Padam's health is improving by the day, as he is able to move and walk better with time and treatment. He acknowledges the support he received from UPAKAR, "for supporting me during a very difficult time, as well as for helping people like me".

Post-earthquake, FAIRMED/UPAKAR has brought positive changes in the lives of 18 people like Padam in Sindhupalchowk district.



*FAIRMED supports people who are prone to diseases, disability and poverty in Africa and Asia, with the goal of "Improved health status of the poor, marginalized, disabled and NTD affected people through increased access and utilization of quality basic health care services".*



## Preparing persons with disability for employment

Among its many projects and partners in Nepal, Felm supports disability specific projects in eight districts across the country, and supports some 400 students with disability, from primary school to post-graduate degree levels.

Felm's Disabled Empowerment Project (DEP) provides a variety of trainings to young adults with disability through an innovative workforce and an effective career development model that benefit the individual, the workplace and the community. The On-The-Job (OTJ) Training and Internship Program (IP), based on Finnish education and employment support models are individually targeted and are continuously improving.



*OJT Bharat Adhikari, employee Sushila Bhujel (former OJT) and former scholarship graduate Anjana KC from the IL-society Kaski.*



*Newly appointed staff Pushpa Rokaya, Suk Maya Rasaili and Junga Bahadur Dangi of the Forward Looking during work orientation.*

The DEP mostly targets graduates from different vocational trainings and scholarship programs. Felm has encouraged inclusion of persons with disability as staffs in its disability work partner Forward Looking (FL). Currently fifty percent of staffs in the FL are persons with disability. Furthermore, following Felm disability work initiatives, over two dozen persons with disability were employed in Nepal's government and I/NGOs sectors in 2016 alone.

*Photos: Prakash Dhakal/Felm*



*Established in 1896, Felm is one of the biggest development INGOs in Finland. With the financial support of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Finnish Lutheran Church, Felm works globally in 30 countries.*

## Delivering skills to dismantle social stigma against disability



Photo: Asharam Chaudhary, NNSWA, Kailali

"I am gaining respect from the very people in my neighborhood who previously made fun of my disability", says Kamala Tamata, 27, who currently makes a decent living from her tailoring shop. She exemplifies that dedication and skills can not only dismantle social stigma against disability and poverty, but also ensure a sustainable livelihood.

Prior to the intervention, Kamala experienced difficulties socializing in her locality, facing stigma over the impairment in her leg. Unaware of her rights to the state's disability allowance, facilities and other services as well as of local disability groups, she was excluded from participating in social functions in the community. She recollects feeling hesitant to do something on her own for fear of being mocked further by the society.

A community disability worker (CDW) of Handicap International (HI) partner Nepal National Social Welfare Association (NNSWA) identified her as a potential beneficiary of the Social Inclusion (STRIDE II) project. The project focuses on establishing links between

beneficiaries, livelihoods service providers and government authorities. Through a personalized social support (PSS) approach, CDWs identify the needs of beneficiaries and connect them to physical rehabilitation services, vocational training institutions, employers, microfinance institutions and other livelihood actors. The project, in turn, supports all these livelihoods institutions to make reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in their services, facilities and programs. The project also supports the mainstreaming of disability in the local and district level development planning processes through ensuring meaningful participation of persons with disabilities.

In case of Kamala, the CDW counseled both Kamala for her social and economic empowerment, and members of her family to convince them of her rights. She was continuously sensitized on disability rights and inclusive livelihoods and the impact of the counseling and sensitization showed in her confidence and willingness to come out of her house more often. Following her choice of tailoring as a livelihood activity, implementer NNSWA coordinated with Trace Nepal to link her to a three-month tailoring training in Dhangadhi, Kailali district. NNSWA continued to follow up on her during the course of the Trace Nepal-supported training, as well as to observe the changes in hers and social behaviors.

Kamala started her own tailoring shop upon completion of her training, immediately impressing the community with her tailoring skills. Today she earns between NPR 7,000 and 10,000 (about USD 70 to 100) per month, apart from claiming the social security allowance for persons with disabilities. She was also encouraged by NNSWA to start saving her earnings at the local Janajaagaran Cooperative.

Kamala now has access to skills, employment, financial and social services and linkages with different programs and services. There has been a change of attitude of people around her, which can be attributed to her confidence, diligence at work, and the income she generates. Having acquired knowledge on several issues, she uses it to sensitize other persons with disability and community members on disability rights, at times addressing a mass of people. She is also counseling and providing tailoring training to young women in her village, and advocating for economic independence and rights of persons with disabilities. She is regarded as an important member of the community, and she increasingly takes part in social functions.



*In Nepal since 2000, HI works through a network of partners to improve the living conditions and participation of children, women and men living with disabilities, with focus on access to quality rehabilitation services; access to services for people with disabilities; and prevention of disability. All HI partners are supported to engage in evidence-based advocacy for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN-CRPD).*

## **Plastic tunnels transform the lives of subsistence farmers in quake-hit Phakhel**



Photo: Md Saif/ICCO/ACT Alliance

When the devastating earthquake of April 25, 2015 hit, Kesar Bahadur Lama and his grandson were spending a relaxing Saturday noon on the second floor of their home in Phakhel, Makwanpur district. Lama is elderly, but also infirm – he needs a walking stick to support his own weight. But when the tremor shook their home violently and as things started falling on top of them, Lama’s first thought was to save his grandson. However, escaping would not be easy given the steep wooden stairs leading to the ground floor of the house. He therefore curled up with his grandson in a corner he thought was safe, and waited for the shaking to stop. Their house retained deep cracks, rendering it uninhabitable.

“Our lives were spared. We have to be grateful for that,” he later shared. “We slept in the open, under the skies for the first few days,” he vividly recollects. “After some time, we were able to build a temporary shelter and move in from the open field. We are still living there.”

ICCO together with its ACT Alliance members was one of the first organizations to reach out to the earthquake affected population of Makwanpur via conducting rapid needs assessment in earthquake-hit districts with the help of AKVO Flow. Together with its local partner Centre for Community Development Nepal (CCDN), ICCO sought to help the most vulnerable people in the community first, making households headed by single-women and persons with disability a priority in its selection of potential beneficiaries as part of the Nepal Early Relief and Recovery Project (NERRP).


Lama was among the 161 beneficiaries across Sindhupalchowk, Makwanpur and Dhading who received plastic tunnels as part of the livelihoods recovery support extended through the NERRP. Today, Lama farms tomatoes in his plastic tunnel and is looking to invest in additional plastic tunnels with the profits reaped from his initial year's yield.

"I've been a farmer for almost 35 years now. Before, everyone would take it in turns to work each other's fields. But now things have changed, young men want money for working the fields. It has become increasingly difficult for people like to me to farm. We had wanted to try farming in plastic tunnels before too, but the initial investment was too high for us. Having received the plastic tunnel from ICCO, I can honestly say, my life and work are so much easier," says Lama.

Lama intends to start rebuilding his house later this year. Having enrolled the help of his son and daughter-in-law, he is hopeful that the yield from the tunnels will be better next year, and that the extra profits could be used to supplement the reimbursement provided by the government to earthquake victims.

He has exemplified that differently-abled persons are as capable as others, and only need the opportunity to thrive. Meanwhile, ICCO Cooperation strives to develop more inclusive programs that support people at the grassroots level and secure their livelihoods through inclusive economic empowerment.

Since 2015, ICCO Nepal has been making conscious efforts towards making inclusion a priority across the organizational agenda. Currently, ICCO Nepal subscribes to the ACAP (Accessibility, Communication, Attitude and Participation) Inclusion Framework to ensure that all of its projects ensure inclusion of marginalized groups and people with disability across all stages of the project.

 <p><b>Partner to enterprising people</b> Member of the <b>actalliance</b></p>	<p><i>ICCO Cooperation seeks to contribute to a world without poverty and injustice, with two core principles of "securing sustainable livelihoods" and "justice and dignity for all". Through our programs, we aim to eradicate poverty from the grassroots through our integrated programs of food &amp; nutrition security, conflict transformation, fair economic development, WASH, and disaster risk reduction.</i></p>
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## **Empowering communities to realize civic, political and electoral rights**



Photo: IFES Nepal

In Nepal, as also worldwide, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) strives to realize the implementation of Article 29 of the UN CRPD. With funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IFES works with the Election Commission, Nepal (ECN) as well as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs) to advance civic and electoral rights of persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

### **Formation and activation of inclusive community groups:**

In 2015, IFES Nepal received worldwide acclaim from the Zero Project for its disability program, which helped include persons with disability in community groups that could engage in peer-to-peer education, as well as work together to jointly identify challenges facing persons with disability at the local level. Through advocacy plans, the entire community was involved in solving these challenges and creating a more encouraging environment for persons with disabilities.

### **Training to actively engage in civic rights:**

Working through the network of the National Federation of Disabled Nepal, IFES conducted advocacy and civic education trainings for six district-level DPOs in Banke, Bardiya, Dang, Kailali, Kanchanpur, and Dadeldhura. Each DPO has worked to train and mobilize 120 disability-inclusive groups who are actively promoting civic, political, and electoral rights of persons with disabilities and empowering them to participate in local government and community organizations such as VDC councils, women’s groups, school management committees, youth clubs, and cooperatives.

## Results of advocacy, awareness and support activities:

By November 2016, these community groups had succeeded in achieving the following:

- 108,063 (54,376 women) members of community received education on the importance and process of acquiring citizenship certificates, voter registration and civic/electoral participation;
- 1,895 persons (695 women) with disabilities were included in local groups, and thereby in local decision-making processes;
- 795 children (330 girls) with disabilities enrolled for free education; advocacy also led to VDC budgets being allocated for disability welfare;
- 499 persons (160 women) with disabilities received support to acquire their citizenship certificates;
- 1,906 persons (809 women) supported to obtain their disability ID cards, which when coupled with their citizenship certificate, enables them to claim disability allowances from the state;
- 3,083 persons (1,360 women) with disabilities are now registered to vote in elections.



Photo: IFES Nepal



*IFES supports citizens' rights to participate in free and fair elections. As the global leader in democracy promotion, IFES advances good governance and democratic rights by providing technical assistance to election officials, empowering the underrepresented to participate in the political process and applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle.*

*Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature democracies. Over the last three decades, IFES has engaged in programming and research across Asia, partnering global expertise with sustainable solutions in partnership with local organizations.*

## Stories of Dreams, Dedication and Economic Independence



**The Birth of a Role Model:** Amir Bhomjan, 16, from Palung of Makwanpur district, was born with a condition known as Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita. Due to his inability to move his body below the neck, he was completely dependent upon his family for his mobility and daily activities. However, he taught himself to write with mouth, and completed his fifth grade with much difficulty. Due to his school being quite far in the hills and his mother too exhausted to carry him, he couldn't continue his studies. Left to himself, he began expressing his thoughts through poetry and art.

Karuna Foundation identified him following the 2015 earthquake, through a program implemented in the region in partnership with UNICEF. Impressed by his talent and fervent spirit, he was brought to Kathmandu to help hone his talents, where he sharpened his skills with the help of great mentors of music and art. And since nothing could be done medically, Karuna provided him with a trolley to ease his mobility.

With support from Karuna, Amir launched his first music video and his first painting exhibition in May 2016, where he immediately sold 30 of his paintings. He was able to repay his family's loan which drew 36% interest.

His story was covered by many national and international media, and he also received the National Youth Talent award from the president of Nepal. He is continuing painting and is working on his second music album professionally. He also wants to be a motivational speaker for people like him.

***I used to hate myself and felt like a burden; but what happened in these 1.5 years is so surreal. I will keep chasing my dreams: Amir Bhomjan.***





**Dedication towards economic independence:** Jamuna Waiba, 20, from Laharepauwa Village of Rasuwa district is deaf and mute. She first came in contact with Karuna Foundation Nepal through the Inspire2Care (I2C) project in 2011. She rejoined school with counselling from the CBRF, but found it difficult to ace her studies due to lack of special school in the district. She therefore dropped out again, but discovered a new passion and a probable economic prospect in tailoring.

I2C project provided her with 6 months' basic training in tailoring and a sewing machine to gear her up for her journey towards financial independence. She opened a small shop in her village and started earning up to \$70 a month. With coordination from Karuna, she also enrolled in the government's tailoring training program to further hone her skills. However, she soon lost her house and all her belongings, including the sewing machine, in the devastating earthquake of April 2015.

Acting on a request from Jamuna and her mother, Karuna supported the purchase of a machine to resume her work. Coupled with the advanced training, her business continues to grow, as she is able to earn up to \$200 per month. She has become an inspiration in her village, including in the child clubs of Laharepauwa.

***When I couldn't do well in school, I was frustrated. I remember the first time I started tailoring; it was something meant for me: Jamuna Waiba.***

**Karuna**foundation  
Saving children from disability, one by one

*Karuna Foundation works on the prevention of disabilities among children and improved quality of life of children with disabilities by strengthening health care systems and empowering communities through two community models, Inspire2Care and Share&Care. Karuna is also active in disability inclusive disaster relief and reconstruction after the earthquake in Nepal.*

## Ensuring disability-friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health services



It is estimated that 1 in every 10 persons in the world are living with disability (UNFPA/WHO, *Promoting sexual and reproductive health for persons with disabilities*, 2009).

Young people with disabilities have the same Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) needs as other young people. Marie Stopes Nepal (MSN) conducted a study on SRH needs among Young Persons with Disability (YPWD) in 6 districts of Nepal. The study indicated that YPWD do not receive even the basic information, leading to lower service uptake. In Nepal, the challenges facing YPWD are aggravated by lack of education, low acceptance by the society, and negative attitudes of service providers.

MSN strongly believes in ensuring its service centers are disability-friendly. Therefore, MSN strives to ensure positive attitude among its service providers towards persons with disabilities and providing non-judgmental SRH services to them. In this regard, MSN organized disability sensitization programs for its service providers and volunteers. The main objective of these programs were to familiarize all staff and volunteers to different forms of disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities to access information and services on SRH.

*“I was not comfortable speaking with YPWDs about their SRHR needs. This is because I do not know their language or gesture to explain them how contraceptives work”:* One of our volunteers.

*“When we initiated the study on SRH needs of YPWD, we realized that we do not have proper signs to explain about abortion to deaf persons. It was really difficult for us to make them correctly understand the SRH terminologies.”* – Research team.

Following these sensitization programs, MSN also began coordinating with organizations working in the area of disability in four Youth project districts: Kaski, Parsa, Morang and Kathmandu. Drawing on MSN’s commitment to inclusion, this youth project appointed YPWDs as pop-up volunteers to utilize a peer-to-peer approach and reach the maximum possible number of YPWDs with SRH information and services.

**Dan Bahadur, 19 and with a physical disability, has been educating fellow youth in his city Kathmandu on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).**

There are 3 million people with disability in Nepal today, says Bahadur, and nearly half of them young. Not long ago, they were socially ostracized, he says: “People looked down upon the disabled. They were regarded as people who brought bad luck to others.” Today, however, there are special facilities for persons with disability, including scholarships and quota in educational institutions and government jobs.

Yet, when it comes to sexual health, these persons and especially the youth are normally forgotten. Bahadur wants to change that, but so far, the goal has remained a big challenge. “People laugh at me when I talk of SRHR. Some think it is weird and even ask me, “Do persons with disability have normal sexual needs?”

There are, however, a lot of people who give him support. Many of them are persons with disability themselves, including players from the national Wheelchair Basketball Association – an institution promoting and campaigning for sportspersons with disability. Bahadur has met several players, made them aware of their SRHR rights, including contraception, abortion, counseling on sexual health and hygiene.

Nilima Raut, Youth project manager explains, “The main slogan of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals itself is **‘Leaving No One Behind’** and in reaching out to YPWDs, we are trying to achieve that.”



*Marie Stopes Nepal is an implementing partner of Marie Stopes International. It provides a wide range of services to meet the sexual and reproductive health right needs of the men, women and young people of Nepal. We are increasing awareness and understanding of SRHR balanced with increasing access to affordable quality services to prevent unwanted births. It also uses an advocacy-based approach to support people in exercising their fundamental SRH rights, particularly targeting underserved, marginalized and hard to reach populations.*

## Avoided Biura leads social transformation in remote Karnali



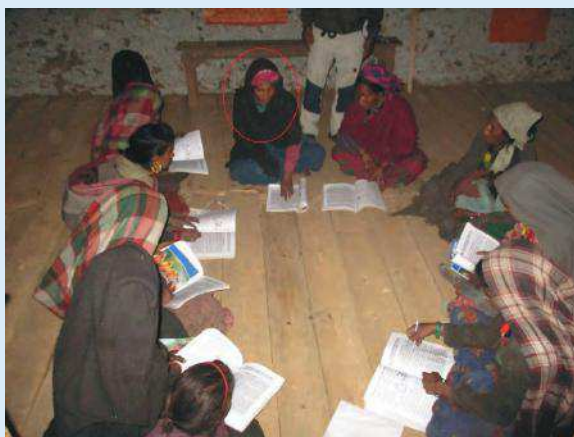
Biura Rawal, 19, was born in Kalai-7 of Mugu, a remote district in the Karnali zone. She lives with her parents, along with her five sisters and a brother. She was unfortunate to lose her right hand and right ear due to falling on fire as a child, and not being able to receive timely treatment, which her family could not manage at the time. An NGO supported her treatment when she turned 10, but it was too late. She lives with this disability.

Due to her disability, Biura was resigned to isolation. She was avoided by her family, who did not support her in household chores, dropped her out of school, and increasingly considered her a burden to the family. Similarly, her friends and the community started calling her “handicapped” and did not include her in community matters. This discrimination was beginning to take its toll on her psyche. She shared, “I felt shy and could not face strangers. I couldn’t even face a group of people, and used to cry alone.”

*I Have a Voice; Women Advocating for Development in Nepal*, a project implemented at Kalai and other VDCs of Mugu, was able to change Biura’s situation. She became a member of the Himali Women Development and Advocacy Group (WDAG) which was comprised of women from different castes and abilities. As a member of this WDAG, she participated in a 14-month literacy class to acquire basic literacy skills, and was soon able to write general applications and text due to her additional learning efforts beyond the classes.

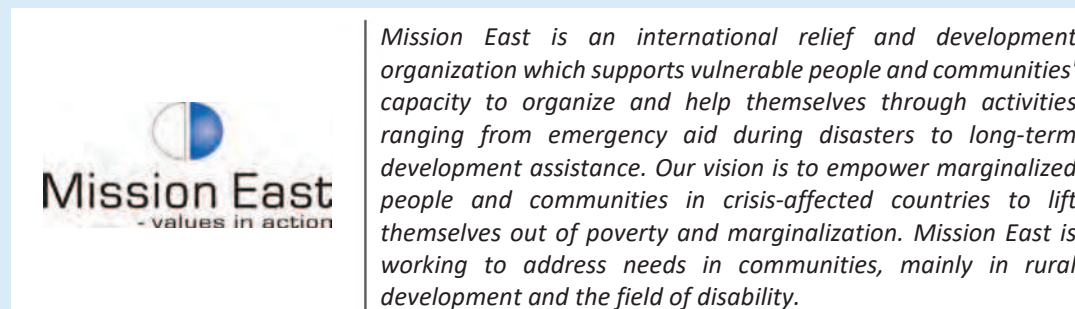
Through participating in various trainings (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, rights-based approach, inclusive local planning process and participation) and literacy classes facilitated by the project, Biura became aware on issues such as gender and sex, women’s rights, gender-based violence and discrimination, social security services, basic services, the value of education, importance of participating in local planning process, and women’s participation. Encouraged and motivated, she rejoined school and is currently pursuing her higher education.

Due to her dedication and with support from the project, Biura has become a Literacy Facilitator in the second phase of the project *VOICE: Voicing for Equality and Justice for Women in Karnali*. She is now leading local campaigns and community action directly concerned with women’s issues. She is leading an awareness campaign on combating



*chhaupadi*, an ill-practice rooted in the local tradition. She has made public her mission of ridding Kalai village of the *chhaupadi* practice, towards which she also coordinates with AGDGs, women's networks and other community groups. She also leads adolescent groups in her village as facilitator of the *Aadhar Kendras* (a dialogue forum for adolescents). Her family and the community now respect her efforts.

She express with a smile, "Disability should not be a cause for exclusion, we can prove ourselves if we are included in the community."



## Hopeful silver linings: Mainstreaming disability in Nepal's Education sector



*"The right time arrives in everyone's life; mine arrived after coming to this hostel. Darkness is over; I can see the hopeful silver lining now." – Shiva Raj, a 16 year old boy with a visual impairment from Salyan, Nepal.*

Shiva Raj is a music lover, singer and someone who can playfully move his fingers upon the keys of harmonium (a musical instrument similar to a piano). Pumping the air board of the harmonium, Shiva Raj soulfully depicts his feelings through a song called "*Marney Kasailai Rahar Hudaina*" (No one desires to die).

The doctor once said that the vein in Shiva's eye was damaged, which is why he was unable to see. "People talk about colors, but for me there are no colors. I can feel and listen from my inner eyes," says Shiva Raj. It was not his choice to be born with a disability, but he felt discriminated for no fault of his own. He faced several hurdles at school, in public places, at social gatherings and functions due to his disability.

The primary school in Surkhet district where he was enrolled was neither equipped with an accessible infrastructure, nor did it offer adequate training to teachers. Hailing from an impoverished family surviving on the single income of his father, his family was unable to afford the costs for Shiva to attend a special school for children with disabilities. His dreams and hope of a bright future were slowly fading away. "I almost lost every hope in life and was waiting for an end," says Shiva Raj.

A social worker who once attended a Plan International Nepal training informed Shiva Raj and his father of the Plan-supported initiative to enable right to education for girls and boys with disabilities, implemented in the region by the Blind Association of Banke (BAB). The father and son then visited the BAB, where they met several other girls and boys with disabilities with similar stories to tell.

With support from the BAB, Shiva Raj enrolled at a specific residential secondary school which provided more accessible and inclusive education. An excited Shiva Raj shares, "I slowly regained my self-confidence and self-respect; my faded dreams started to reappear. I can see the hopeful silver lining and believe that I can make my own journey in life." Now in grade five, he has accepted his disability, and would rather focus on things he can do in life.

He is more confident, and has a dream to follow: complete studies, do a short course in music, and attempt the public service examination to try his luck at a government job.

In partnership with the BAB, Plan has supported the construction of an accessible hostel building, now home to 41 girls and boys with disabilities from 7 different districts of Nepal. Plan has also provided education materials and clothing to each of these students.

As a child rights organization, Plan International has been working in Nepal through its rights-based, child-centered community development approach. Working for and with girls, boys and young people but also with women, teachers, health workers, civil society organizations and governmental partners to collaboratively create an enabling environment in which the rights of all girls and boys, including girls and boys with a disability, can be fulfilled. Inclusion and non-discrimination are amongst Plan's core working principles.

Plan has been promoting disability inclusion in Nepal's education sector through targeted as well as mainstream interventions, including but not limited to: improving inclusive learning spaces and the physical environment of schools; assisting District Education Offices (DEO) to develop inclusive education plans, training of DEO officials in planning and budgeting for children with disabilities; technical contributions to the development of an inclusive teacher training manual which is now adopted and used; and advocacy to introduce – for the first time in Nepal – a vocational education stream in schools for children with a hearing disability. Since 2014, the vocational education stream for children with hearing disability has already been implemented in two schools.

Plan also partners with the Hospital and Rehabilitation for Disabled Children (HRDC) on corrective surgery and medical rehabilitation of children with a physical disability, and with NFDN, National Federation of the Blind (NAB), National Federation of the Deaf (NDFN), and the Parents' Federation of Persons with Intellectual Disability (PFPID) on advocacy initiatives targeting policy engagement, sign language development and capacity building, teacher training, curriculum development, braille book production and teacher training.



*Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organization that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We strive for a just world, working together with children, young people, our supporters and partners. In Nepal since 1978, Plan has been helping poor children in Nepal to access their rights to health, education, economic security and protection.*

## Transitional ECCD proved to be a boon to Samshad



Mohamad Samshad, 10, was one of the most regular students in one of Save the Children's Transitional Early Childhood Care and Development (TECCD) centers in Saptari district. Despite the wide known importance of ECCD, many parents in Nepal do not send their children to ECCD centers, primarily due to the few number of ECCD centers in remote geographic areas.

Born with physical disability, the happy kid Samshad cannot talk properly and walks only with the support of wooden crutches his grandfather made for him. His disability kept him away from formal education for 10 years until he attended the TECCD in his village. Attending TECCD not only made him excited about learning, but also opened the doors to his formal education. His family didn't believe he could go to school like other children, and only realized his potential when he started learning alphabets and responding to his teacher at the ECCD.

Samshad is one of 427 children who graduated from 16 different TECCDs in the district. 85% (365/427) of these TECCD graduates later enrolled in schools, four of them children with disability. Samshad is one among them. Now, he is regular in school and loves being there. He has also been provided a wheel chair which has eased his journey to the school. Save the Children aims to create hopes in the lives of many children like Samshad.



## Ram Saran: an entrepreneur in Dolakha



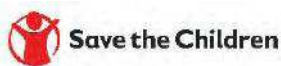
Ram Saran Damai Nepali, 29, lives in Namdu VDC with his wife and two children. He met with a fire accident when he was 9 months old, having been left unattended near a source of fire while his parents were working in the field. The fire completely burnt his left hand and ear. As a result, he can only use his right hand, although he can hear fine. However, the disability has not deterred him from working.

He worked as a wage laborer in India, and built a house for the family with his hard earned money. That was until the devastating earthquake of April 2015.

The powerful earthquake brought his house down, and resigned his family to living under a makeshift tarpaulin shelter. He felt unable to provide for his family, with his children now facing the cold seeping in through the cracks and the dew drops from the roof of the temporary shelter in the morning.

Following the earthquake, Save the Children launched an emergency response in Nepal to support earthquake-affected families, with special focus on children. The program responded to the Education, Health, Child Protection, Livelihood, Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs), Water and Sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs. 46 persons with disabilities in Namdu, Jugu and Kshetraba Village Development Committees (VDCs) of Dolakha district were encouraged to become entrepreneurs. They were provided with ‘start and improve your business (SYIB)’ and business specific skills training, and a conditional cash support of NRs. 40,000.

With this support, Ram Saran was able to set up a grocery shop adjacent to his temporary shelter. He earns about NPR 10,000 per month from the venture, which helps him run his family expenses, and is slowly helping him get back on his feet despite his previous debts. He now aspires to open a shop in the nearest bazaar, which would yield more profit. Most of all, however, Ram Saran wants to have a stable income so that his children don’t have to leave their education halfway through like he had to.



*Save the Children comprises Save the Children International and 30 member organizations working to deliver change for children in around 120 countries. Around the world, we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. Save the Children uses a holistic approach to help us achieve more for children, and to use our resources in an efficient and sustainable way.*

## **Improving the quality of life for children and persons with disability**

People have common needs, but some people have special needs. Disability is an important public health issue, especially in a developing country like Nepal where the social attitude towards persons with disability is negative. Often regarded as a burden to the family, persons with disability are forced to be dependent and live a secluded life deprived of facilities. It is important to identify these persons so they can be supported to realize their rights, receive proper medical treatment and live a dignified life.

### **CONFIDENT AND COMMITTED AMBIKA**



23-year-old Ambika Ghimire is an accountant at NCDWS, a UMN partner organization in Sunsari. She is happy with her involvement in the organization and her family is very proud of her as well. She was born with a physical disability on her right leg and had a surgical operation at HRDC Banepa Hospital 18 years ago.

Ambika has three sisters and a brother. She remembers her parents working very hard in the fields to feed the family and send the children to school. They had taken a loan to buy a buffalo which unfortunately died, and they had to work harder to pay back the loan. They struggled to feed the family from the very little income they earned.

Namrata, a staff of NCDWS met this family during her survey and decided to help. First, she counselled Ambika about the significance of a disability identity card and helped her get one. Next, NCDWS gave goats to the family to get them started with the goat rearing business. The goat business did pretty well and allowed them to buy some chickens which added to the family income. It was particularly helpful in paying the school fees.

Eventually the family also opened a small grocery shop and are happy with the business. Currently, they earn around NPR 20,000 (AUD253) per month. They now have chickens, ten goats and one cow. They have also returned the loan of NRS 30,000 (AUD 380) that they had taken from NCDWS.

The family is particularly happy that Ambika has a job at NCDWS. Ambika doesn't see herself as a person with disability; she is confident, hardworking and committed.

During July 2015 to 2016, UMN's disability rehabilitation program (using the Community Based Rehabilitation approach) has worked in 29 VDCs and 5 Municipalities through Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) to enable persons with disabilities and their families to live an improved quality of life as equal citizens. Some of the key achievements were:

- 36 out of 77 persons with disability and their parents (in case of children with disability) have been successfully involved in income generation activities and have been making some income.
- 34 local committees and groups are mobilizing the local resources for disability rehabilitation work. Approximately 197 persons/children with disabilities and their parents have benefitted from this.
- 199 persons were able to get government classified disability identity cards and have started to receive benefits from the government.
- 8 resource schools are functioning well, benefiting 133 children with disability (103 deaf, 20 blind and 10 with learning disability).
- 18 schools are disability-friendly.
- 5 partners were able to receive Nepal government's CBR program and budget.
- 77 children (44 male, 33 female) received medical treatment and rehabilitation care.



*United Mission to Nepal (UMN) strives to address root causes of poverty as it serves the people of Nepal in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. Established in 1954, UMN is a cooperative effort between the people of Nepal and a large number of Christian organizations from nearly 20 countries on 4 continents. Multicultural teams of Nepali nationals and volunteer expatriate staff work alongside local organizations in less developed areas of the country, building partnerships that lead to healthy, strong and empowered individuals, families, and communities.*

## Leave no one behind - WASH and disability

Photo: Smritee Bajracharya, WAN



Ganesh Bahadur Gwacha, 51, lives in Jhaukhel, Bhaktapur, with six members of his family. Ganesh and his wife both have a physical disability which can make everyday life difficult without access to proper sanitation facilities. Ganesh and his wife often had to walk long distances to defecate in the open.

*“Since our family didn’t have a toilet, we had to walk a long way to relieve ourselves. The journey was long and tiring for us. On rainy days, it was very difficult because we had to walk through muddy puddles that were very slippery and we had to be very careful. Sometimes we had to use our neighbors’ toilet, we would get shouted at and it was very embarrassing for us. Often, we were chased away for defecating on other people’s land”,* says Ganesh.

WaterAid Nepal’s partner Environment and Public Health Organization (ENPHO) set up a two-year integrated WASH project in Jhaukhel, supporting 12 persons with disabilities, helping improve access to sanitation facilities.

*“With technical support and guidance from ENPHO, we have built a toilet in our courtyard. ENPHO has been very thoughtful about our access issues. When they designed the toilet; they installed handrails at both sides of the latrine and on the wall next to the door. These days, we have no fear of falling down or slipping. We don’t have to worry about going far from home to defecate at night. Our feet aren’t dirty anymore because we don’t have to walk on muddy paths. We can use the toilet anytime with dignity and self-respect and our status in the community has gone up,”* adds Ganesh.



Photo: Smritee Bajracharya, WAN

In order to meet the national sanitation target of reaching everyone in Nepal with a toilet by 2017, Nagarkot Municipality was declared open defecation free (ODF) in 2014. In the beginning, the main goal was to build improved latrines in the area. Later, however, additional designs were added to support the sanitation needs of persons with disabilities. Around 13 persons with disabilities were provided with mobile commodes to install in their toilets so they can sit comfortably while defecating and they no longer need to rest their hands on the toilet floor. Hygiene standards have improved and are better maintained as a result.

### Inclusive WASH in healthcare institutions

After the two major earthquakes that struck Nepal in 2015, WaterAid Nepal supported the construction of four units of inclusive toilets and two units of inclusive shower rooms over two days at Khagendra Nawajwan Kendra, Nepal Orthopedic Hospital in Jorpati, Kathmandu. Responding to an urgent request from the National Federation of the Disabled, Nepal (NFDN), WaterAid Nepal ensured accessibility and cost-effectiveness through using local materials such as CGI sheets, bricks (ramp) and bamboo (handrails).

Around 1,100 patients benefitted from the initiative, 500 of whom were persons with disabilities. WaterAid Nepal continued to provide follow up and technical support to NFDN to ensure the functionality of the facilities (the facilities were later dismantled after patients returned to their homes).



Photo: Samira Shakya, WAN

*Patients using the accessible temporary latrines at Khagendra Nawajwan Kendra orthopedic hospital.*

WaterAid Nepal's involvement in the Nepal Conference on Sanitation (NECOSAN) in May 2013, helped change ministerial thinking around disability and WASH. Along with our partners and disability network groups, we advocated with the municipalities of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur to consider WASH access issues for persons with disabilities. In 2014, the Kathmandu Metropolitan City Office issued a directive notice to owners and management committees of every gas station in Kathmandu, urging them to provide male, female, child and disabled-friendly toilets.



*Since 1987, WaterAid Nepal has supported both rural and urban communities in accessing water and sanitation services. WaterAid Nepal has worked with its partners to develop appropriate tools and technologies to help build awareness, engage with persons with disabilities in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector and increase access to basic services for persons with disabilities. In 2015 and 2016, WaterAid Nepal reached almost 200 persons with disabilities with access to safe water and sanitation facilities, helping them lead healthier and more dignified lives.*

# AIN EFFORTS FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

## #DWGiFAIR

CELEBRATING 25<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

22<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2016, BHIRIKUTIMANDAP, KATHMANDU



Association of International NGOs in Nepal

DISABILITY WORKING GROUP

