



June 2018

Newsletter

One year of expanding the scope

Sisters for Sisters' Education II





Message from Country Director

This year, VSO is celebrating its 60th anniversary. Starting from 1958, 2018 is the 60th Anniversary of VSO as an organization began sending volunteers to countries in Africa and Asia. Over these six months, we will be celebrating the anniversary with a series of events, reunions and activities taking place around the world. Thank you all for your support and acting upon the vision VSO initiated long ago.

Sisters for Sisters' Education II project has completed one year implementation in Nepal. The first year is an inception year. Moving forward, the project in II year will focus on mentoring skills of Big sister, improve teachers teaching quality through the support of International volunteer Experts and implementing English and Digital for Girls Education.

Together the project team will facilitate the sharing of learning, gathering and funneling of evidence to influence policy directives and donor decision-making – ultimately deepening of the impact for better life choices and opportunities for marginalised girls.



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Welcoming new members in the team

Inclusive Education team would like to welcome our International Volunteer Experts James Quinn and James Russell in Nepal who will be based in Lamjung and Surkhet district. Similarly, we would also like to welcome Inclusive Education Head of Programme, Dr. Ananda Poudel, M&E Manager, Krishna Giri, and Project Coordinator ASRH, Priti Sharma, to the team.

We hope that they will have an amazing time working in VSO Nepal's Inclusive Education team –we are really happy to have everyone on board.

With thanks to



Role model– Big sister



Durga Dahal, 37, volunteers as a 'Big Sister' on VSO's Sisters for Sisters' Education II (S4S II) project in Surkhet, Nepal. Her role as a Big sister is to support little sisters in her home community of Ranighat to attend and stay in school. She convinces parents of the value of education and supports girls with any issues they face that are getting in the way of their dreams.

When I was young, it was really difficult to go to school from the secondary level. At the age of 18, I failed two subjects and I got married. Neither my husband nor the family realized the true importance of education.

From when I first joined this project, I received training in life skills. From that point onwards, I really felt the importance of education: that every girl needs to be in school. I realised I have a chance to bring them to school. I have three Little Sisters on the project. Previously, these girls were not so regular in school attendance. When I first went to their houses, their parents were not convinced to send their daughters to school. It took me several attempts to convince parents to send their children to school. But now, the parents are really aware of the importance of girls' education and my Little Sisters come to school regularly.

"I feel it's the responsibility of every citizen of this country to make sure girls are educated"



The most remarkable change that I've seen through is project is that there are more girls than boys in the school. Before, girls were expected to put the housework first, before education. I feel really happy to be part of a project like this working on girls' education. I know the value of education, because if I had a chance to study further, I might be a doctor or teacher, or something really good. I feel that all the girls need to be educated, and this is the responsibility of every citizen in the country.

Blessed to be mentored by my Big Sister



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Pramila, 13, is a 'Little Sister' in Surkhet, Nepal. Pramila used to take the lion's share of domestic work to allow her parents to focus on generating a livelihood, leaving her very little time for homework and study. Since Pramila started being mentored by 'Big Sister' Rama, her attendance, academic performance and confidence have greatly improved.

"I dream to be a teacher and serve in my own community."

I am studying at grade eight, but before I rarely used to be present at school. The school is far from my home. I have to cross through the forest and the river Bheri, which means it can easily take 45 minutes to reach school.

When I was selected as a Little Sister, I got a Big Sister to support me: Rama. She inspired me to go to school every day. She also talked to my parents and convinced them to send me to school. She used to visit four times a week at my house. She helped me do my school homework. I am very thankful for her.

I used to feel bad about my low school performance. I was shy to ask any question to teachers. After I took part in different games and interaction programmes, I have learned that I need to speak up and be active. I am inspired by my Big Sister to study hard and take part in extra activities. Today, I am regular at school and very happy to be in the school. I like to study and be with friends. I dream to be a teacher and serve in my community.



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ICS for Child Friendly Tap in School



“WATER IS THE DRIVING FORCE OF ALL NATURE”

Manila Limbu, Singa Hounn, Shrijan Mali, Daniel James Woodus and Bishal Subedi are a team of action learners from ICS and I-MOVE. ICS/iMOVE volunteers have been working with schools and communities in Gumi, Surkhet. Work has included providing infrastructure support in the school and community. Drinking water has always been a major concern for the large number of students, with 700 students drinking water directly from the pipelines in the school. As such, the team initiated a child friendly tap using our community infrastructure development

budget. The child friendly tap has many beneficiaries: first and foremost, these are the students of the school, then the community who are residing nearby. This will have a long-term impact because the school has taken the responsibility of ownership with commitments made by the teachers and students.

English and Digital for Girls' Education (EDGE)



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In partnership with British Council Nepal, English and Digital for Girls' Education (EDGE) programme has started implementing as a component in the latter's wider Sister for Sisters' Education II this June. This aims to improve the life prospects of adolescent girls in socio-economically marginalized communities in Nepal. The programme focuses on enhancing participants' English proficiency, digital skills and social/life skills; all key skill which have been identified as lacking in the labour market in South Asia. EDGE also focuses on improving girls' awareness of social issues. As a result of skill development, they will be better able to make more informed and independent life choices, as is their right, in order to contribute more fully to the family, the economy and society. In addition, EDGE aims to improve the leadership skills of a smaller group of peer leaders drawn from the same communities of adolescent girls.

Initial Training for Peer Group Leaders was conducted in Birendranagar, Surkhet during 24th to 28th May, 2018. Total 60 girls attended the training in 2 batches: 30 in each. 4 Master Trainers from British Council Nepal delivered training to each 30 cohort of girls in 2 venues.

The girls were selected from the cohort of Sisters for Sisters Education-II Big Sisters and Little Sisters who will then cascade the English, digital and social/life skills learning to the club members in EDGE clubs. Global Action Nepal (GAN) took the initiation in selecting PGLs using tools



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developed by the British Council. Out of 101 girls, 60 girls were selected by using selection criteria which measured their English and Digital tests scores, willingness and self-reflection, apart from their educational level.

4 Master Trainers from British Council delivered 4 days training to the girls where they were facilitated on learning different skills. The training was successful in terms of delivery. Majority of the girls mentioned about learning English, digital and developing communication skills, when asked about expectation of the training. The girls were acquainted with training schedule and were given different tasks to do based on the English and digital skills they were provided.

School events in Lamjung

School events were conducted in 12 schools during the period of January to March 2018 with the purpose of enhancing skills and promoting the interests of school students. Different activities such as girls and boys volleyball, football competitions and drawing competitions were held for all the students in school.



Dhading school events

School events were conducted in 13 schools in Dhading district. The events were planned according to the grades. Primary grades students participated in handwriting competition.



Clean Surkhet initiative

Big sisters in Surkhet district has started school cleanliness campaign together. In order to manage the garbage scattered in the school, big sister has initiated making natural disposable container in the school land by digging a large pit in the ground corner.

The school and the students have supported this initiation of Big sister.





कसरी नियमित गराउने बालबालिकालाई विद्यालयमा ?

मुनीलाल बैठा

पर्सा (प्रतिक दैनिकमा प्रकाशित)

प्रत्येक शैक्षिक वर्ष बैशाखको पहिलो र दोस्रो हप्ता नियमित विद्यार्थी भर्ना हुन्छ। त्यसपछिको तेस्रो र चौथो हप्तामा विद्यालय स्वागत तथा भर्ना अभियान अन्तर्गतका कार्यक्रमहरू वि.सं.२०६१ साल देखि नै संचालन हुदै आइरहेको छ। जसको कारण विद्यालयको रजिस्ट्ररमा विद्यार्थीहरूको संख्या भयाइ नभयाइ देख्न पाइन्छ र यसैको आधारमा विद्यालयले विभिन्न सेवा सुविधाहरू पनि सरोकारवाला निकायहरूबाट पाइरहेका छन् तर त्यही संख्या पहिलो त्रैमासिक परिक्षामा एक तिहाइले घटेको हुन्छ र अन्तिम परिक्षामा यहि संख्या एक तिहाई भएको पाइन्छ। भर्ना भएका सबै बालबालिकाहरू विद्यालयमा किन हुदैनन् ? के साच्चिकै बालबालिकाहरू पढ्न नचाहेका हुन् त? की विद्यालयको वातावरण नै बालमैत्री भएन जसको कारण विद्यालय नगएका हुन्? यी प्रश्नहरूको जवाफ खोज्दै जाँदा र विभिन्न सरोकारवालाहरूसँग छलफल गराउँदा, कसैले अभिभावकलाई दोष दिन्छन्, कसैले विद्यालयलाई। अधिकांशले

सरकारलाई नै दोष दिइरहेको हुन्छ।

कसैले पनि बालबालिकाहरू विद्यालयमा नियमित नहुनुमा आफ्नो दोष देख्दैन सबैले अरुलाई नै दोष दिइरहेको हुन्छ।

नेपाल सरकार शिक्षा मन्त्रालय शिक्षा बिभागको तथ्यांक २०७४ अनुसार प्राथमिक ९कक्षा १ देखि ५० तहमा खुद भर्ना दर ९७.२ प्रतिशत भन्ने आधारभुत ९कक्षा १ देखि ५० तहमा खुद भर्ना दर ९२.३ प्रतिशत मात्र छ अर्थात देश भरिमा ३१३२८९ बालबालिकाहरू विद्यालय भन्दा बाहिर छ। प्रदेश नं. २ मा मात्र विद्यालय भन्दा बाहिर रहेका बालबालिकाको संख्या दुई लाखको हाराहारीमा छ। पर्सा जिल्लामा ५ देखि १२ वर्ष उमेर समुहका ११ हजार बालबालिकाहरू अझै विद्यालय भन्दा बाहिर छ अहिले विभिन्न निकायले विद्यालय बाहिर रहेका बालबालिकाहरूलाई जोड जुल्म गरेर विद्यालय भर्ना गराए पनि ती बालबालिकाहरू विद्यालयमा नियमित नहुनु अर्को ठूलो चुनौतीको रूपमा देखिएको छ।

विद्यार्थी कक्षा नियमित गराउन केही महत्वपूर्ण उपायहरू ः

क) विद्यालयको कक्षाकोठा, खानेपानीको धारा, शौचालय, शैक्षिक सामग्री लगायत शिक्षण कृयाकलापमा समावेश हुने सर्ण सामग्रीहरू बालमैत्री हुनु पर्दछ।

ख) शिक्षकहरूले पुरानो शिक्षण विधिहरूलाई सम्पूर्ण किसिमले त्यागेर बालमैत्री सिकाई पद्धतीलाई अपनाउनु पर्दछ।

ग) बालबालिकाको इच्छा, चाहाना अनुसार उनिहरूलाई ममतामई वातावरणमा शिक्षा दिने महिला शिक्षक प्रत्येक विद्यालयमा अनिवार्य रूपमा व्यवस्था गरिनु पर्छ।

घ) बालबालिकाहरूलाई आफै गरेर सिक्ने वातावरणको सीर्जना गरिदिनु पर्छ।

ड) विद्यार्थीहरूको मनवाट परिक्षाको भूत भगाउनको लागि नेपाल सरकार शिक्षा मन्त्रालयले लागु गरेको विद्यार्थी निरन्तर मुल्यांकन पद्धतीलाई पुर्ण रूपमा लागु गर्नु पर्दछ र अरु परिक्षा प्रणालीलाई निरुत्साहित गर्दै जानु पर्दछ।



"Everyone's desire: free basic Education"



©ASN/Parsa 2018

VSO Nepal has actively supported the "School enrollment campaign 2018" of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Nepal through Sisters for Sisters' Education Project II in four district through implementing partners, Global Action Nepal and Aasaman Nepal. This campaign aimed to increase the net enrollment of students from the existing 97.2 percent in Nepal. The slogan for this year is "Everyone's desire: free basic Education".

The Constitution of Nepal, Article 31 has guaranteed the right to education as a fundamental right of every citizens which include right to access to education, right to compulsory and free basic education, and free education up to the secondary level.

Currently, Nepal's school system has 7.24 million students. Only 3.1 % school from age 5-9 are out of school. Although Nepal has made tremendous progress in enrolling school students from 80 per cent ten years ago, the dropout and class repetition rates remain too high.



Community mobiliser from Parsa-Manju Raut has successfully encouraged enrollment of the most marginalised (Dom) community in school at Sarada secondary School, Bahuari.

The students enrolled never went to school. Manju kept on visiting their houses and convinced parents to send their children to school.

The news was published in Onlinekhabar.com

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Theatre for a Change



In partnership with Theatre for a Change, VSO held an Interactive Theatre workshop aligned with Sisters for Sisters' Education Project II from 19th-28th February, with follow-up implementation of the workshop learnings in each district. Interactive Theatre was focused for

advocacy and behaviours change related to VSO's adolescent youth sexual and reproductive health and rights programming. Twenty participants from four districts were trained to perform and facilitate Interactive Theatre.

The main objective of the training is to increase the level of confidence of the participants to be an interactive theatre performer and facilitator. Moreover, it is also focused in affirmative behavior change and equal gender participation.

All the participants were able to



devise a pertinent story from their community and perform interactive theatre. They were also able to facilitate it's process and discussion following the performance.

Do No Harm for Programme Management

Four days 'Trainers Training on Do No Harm for Programme Management' was conducted by VSO Nepal from 5th to 8th February. The major sessions covered by the training included: the concept of 'Do No Harm', context analysis, threats, risk and vulnerability analysis, analysis of dividers and connectors, redesign of the activity weak dividers and strengthen connectors.

Child Protection and Child Safeguarding

Three days workshop on Child Protection and Child Safeguarding Policy and It's Implementation for the staff and partners of VSO Nepal on 11th to 13th March 2018.

The main objective of the workshop was to provide conceptual clarity on child protection, child protection mechanisms, standards in new state structures and also to educate on standard case management process.



What is Interactive Theatre?

Interactive theatre is always based on the experiences of the group, and the facilitator leads the group through a process of making the play together out of their experience. They are the experts in their lives, and they are the ones who are best placed to tell their own story. Interactive theatre is therefore never scripted. As it is based on participants' lives, and it is made by them, the words need to come from them, and stay with them.

Interactive theatre focuses on one person's story, and the risks and challenges they face. This has to be built into the devising process right from the start, so that there are plenty of opportunities for the audience to empathise with the protagonist, and help her or him find different approaches to the dilemmas she or he is facing.



Menstrual Hygiene Day



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Menstruation is a natural and biological process that is a part of women's reproductive health. Yet in Nepal, it remains taboo, stigmatized, hidden and rarely discussed. Cultural beliefs, social norms and taboos may also contribute to poor menstrual hygiene management (MHM), through the perpetuation of misinformation or unhygienic customs.

May 28 has been celebrated as MHM day since 2014. The theme of the 2018 menstruation hygiene day was **#NoMoreLimits**

VSO-Nepal's Inclusive education program, with the advent of ASRH integration, it is now a member of the MHM Practitioners' Alliance. On 28th May VSO Nepal joined in hands for Menstrual Hygiene day celebration with the theme of **NO MORE LIMITS** participating in National and district level events.

VSO Nepal also received letter of appreciation on its participation to

mark the day from Minister for Water Supply and Sanitation minister Bina Magar.

To emphasize on Menstruation hygiene and its importance a day event was organized in Rastriya Ma V at Dhading district. Documentaries and different stalls were presented in the school. Reusable pads making session was also conducted by Big sisters and little sisters and distributed to the girls in school from grade 6-10.

VSO Nepal promotes the message that effective, hygienic management of menstruation is essential for women and girls to participate in society with dignity and comfort.

"Girls deserve to be in school every school day of the month"

Tell us why Menstruation matters to you on Twitter with the hashtags:

#MenstruationMatters
#VSONepal

Breaking the Silence

Menstrual Hygiene Day



Empowering girls in Parsa

Rolf Pfothenhauer—Teacher Trainer (International Volunteer Expert)



In Nepal, as elsewhere, VSO seeks to address rights violations by empowering citizens to exercise their voice, claim their rights and hold people in power to account. That is, *“social accountability is a process of change that empowers poor and marginalised people to lead their own development by exercising their voice, claiming their rights and holding those in power to account”*. In light of this

definition, the concept of teacher training must shift from **didactic** literacy pedagogy to **authentic** literacy (progressive) pedagogy including **functional** literacy and **critical** literacy, when it comes to empowering the poor.

In April 2018, three people—one from Aasaman Nepal and two from VSO Nepal visited a total of eight schools in the Parsa district. At each school one question was posed to the participants, Big Sisters, Adult Champions and Teacher champions of the school: *“what are the problems that the Little Sisters face?”* While attending each school we experienced much—from the state of the school, to the issues that the little sisters were facing. Common themes seemed to weave their way in and amongst the schools:

- * Every school has irregularity of attendance to school of students (or students staying for just half a day)
- * 7 out of 8 schools flagged early child marriage / dowry system / cultural practice as a problem
- * 5 out of 8 schools flagged discrimination between son and daughter for education as a problem
- * 5 out of 8 schools flagged menstruation problems and health and hygiene as a problem
- * 5 out of 8 schools flagged LS weak in English, Nepali, and Maths (girls know only mother tongue Buspuri) as a problem
- * 5 out of 8 schools flagged that parents required children to contribute to household work (because of parents absence from home) as a problem

The Big Sisters, by encouraging the Little Sisters to exercise their voice in the most simple of ways, enable a chain of events to unfold leading inexorable from voice to empowerment, from empowerment to independence, from independence to freedom.

“The whole person needs a safe, clean and inviting school primed for the idea that a healthy body engenders a healthy

To date most efforts to promote Inclusive Education have focused on skills for accessing, interpreting, and critiquing the content of child friendly teaching at the school level. However, if we are to support students in developing themselves as 21st century Nepali citizens, high school educated, and critical thinkers, we should shift our attention to the whole person. The whole person needs a safe, clean and inviting school primed for the idea that a healthy body engenders a healthy mind. A school ground where boys and girls can play and not be subjected to bullying, teasing or intimidation. A teacher who is ready to teach not only subject matter but is vitally concerned about his charge.

Perhaps once we have asked what LS and BS are interested in, and gained clarity into their future learning direction in SfSE II, we will clearly see that the biggest impact SfSE II (and hence BS) has had with most areas of learning, but in particular traditional thinking, revolve around three (3) core concepts--**Storytelling**, **Games**, and **Theatre** (street drama). Each of these concepts have already seen dramatic shifts in community attitudes.



Farewell to Meng

We bid farewell to Meng— Melinda Amihan, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager for Sisters for Sisters' Education in Nepal Project. Her technical expertise, guidance, enthusiasm and nurturing of team spirit has created a lasting impact in the way VSO's Inclusive Education programme and more especially, the Sisters for Sisters' Education II has been molded and implemented.

We wish her all the best!

Upcoming events

Civil Society engagement and learning sharing National Event: 29th June 2018



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