

# Schooling in Perspective

Report of Ideas and Actions of Parent and Teacher Motivation Programme  
(2011/12-2015/16)



शिक्षा नीति तथा अभ्यास केन्द्र   
Centre for Educational Policies and Practices



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**Centre for Education Policies and Practices**

P. O. Box: 4555, Kathmandu, Nepal

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(2012-2016)

## परिदृश्यमा विद्यालय शिक्षा

शिक्षक अभिभावक उत्प्रेरण कार्यक्रमका अवधारणा र गतिविधिहरूको प्रतिवेदन  
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## The Context

The last few years have been the most eventful in the recent history of Nepal. After a long political transition, the country appears getting towards the end of it. On 20th September 2015, the country got the New Constitution institutionalizing inspirations of large and long political movements in Nepal: republic, secular and federal. Multi-party and mixed electoral system, bi-cameral parliament, 8 Provinces with their own government are some of the large key features. However, the constitution was already challenged by different sections of the society and the country faced strong protest by plain-based political groups. Among other things a back-tracking from the Interim Constitution was that proportional representation of certain groups of people was removed. The next highly contested issue was the boundaries of the Provinces. In less than 4 months of the promulgation of the constitution, it has been amended to go a bit back in the tack. With India reportedly sympathetic to the agitators, there was a blockade of fuel from the border between the two countries. It lasted for months. This has paralyzed the movement of people causing hardship for cooking in urban areas, causing scarcity of supplies all over the country. The recently quake-hit country stood still in pain for several months. Most hit service again was the schools that remained thoroughly closed in the entire period in the plains. School children were used by both pro and anti-agitating parties.

CEPP was engaged in rallying support for appropriate provisions of education in the constitution that was to come. The main issue was that the draft mentioned 'free and compulsory schooling' up to grade 8. CEPP wished to insert 'FREE and COMPULSORY QUALITY SCHOOLING'. The draft is also giving wider ways to the private sector in school education while CEPP advocates

for not-for-profit running of education at school level. Efforts such as that of CEPP did not bear fruit as no word was changed from the draft. Nonetheless, it does not prevent a good government to do a good job! Education has remained as the fundamental right and schooling would be free up to grade 12 and free and compulsory up to grade 8. Perhaps one critical change was that more than 10 parliamentarians who are the owners of for-profit-private schools have made it to the Constitution Assembly using the seats allocated to political parties based on proportional vote they received in the Assembly election. Allegedly, they have a mission to protect their interest and few of them have made claims that there are some 70 parliamentarians who have profiting relationship with private schools.

Despite all the odds, the government (must be mentioned the Maoist-government) stopped registration of new private schools. Perhaps, this has some influence on the performance. Analysts somehow point to the fact that it was a killing two birds with a stone strategy: while it was projected the move as pro-public, the government secured favor from the already established private schools in the country. However, if public schools seek to improve their performance, they have much more means than with private schools: ground, buildings, salary paid by the government to most teachers and some expenses for stationery etc. They need to work a bit hard to win the hearts and minds of parents so that they can augment their needs for additional resources. It's a double-edged sword: government has also started merging schools that have fewer students. It may give life to a school that was under populated of children but also could be a way to close a public school for the population. In merged areas – children are reported to have not been going to school. It's a challenging situation as many schools have no adequate children for migration: family from urban to rural areas and children from public to private schools.

Except in the last Terai-madhesh agitation, political disruption to schools was felt reduced. Leaders of major political parties had signed a pledge that abide the school to be politics free space – a zone of peace. Still, education was far from being a political agenda. Reduction of fees in private schools has remained a matter of continued attention. Student unions of different political parties get agitated to reduce fees than getting concerned with public schools where education is free!

In April 2015, a series of Earthquakes hit the eastern part of the hills including the capital of the country. Measured highest at 7.x MMS the tremors particularly that of May 12th luckily spared lives of many as it shook at around midday on Saturday when the schools were closed. It prevented the schools and colleges being centers of casualties. Even significant historical buildings were spared. Thanks to most house owners - even modern chaotic construction proved resistant to the quakes in urban areas sparing more people under its clutches. Country saw an immense humanitarian help both within home and from abroad. CEPP and partners staff also got engaged in relief work far and wide mobilizing additional and existing resources. Luckily, PTM working areas (Raigaon in Makwanpur, Pipalmadi in Sindhuli and Judibela in Rauthat) were amongst the least affected physically but they were also significantly traumatized. The quake has also brought quite some support to schools from abroad. There is big opportunity and need to lead the investment



*Photo 1: Shree Amar Jyoti Higher Secondary School destroyed by the earth quake in Nuwakot*  
in improving the quality – not confine to construction. Delay in reconstruction has indirectly directed children from public to private schools. In general, enrolment of school children has increased significantly: government figures hover around 90%. With this, attention has shifted from access to quality now. Quality of schools is a challenge to retain the enrolled children. Quality dividend appears to be a worldwide phenomenon: World Education Conference in Korea also stressed much on quality (and Lifelong -learning). This will have obvious implication at national level in the country:

Light at the end of the tunnel is that teachers had to go through a selection process for getting a permanent position. This will get a new breed of teachers who have better qualification than the previous ones – more specifically it addresses the minimum need for English in teaching. In this period vacancy was called two times by the Teachers Service Commission. It has been complemented

by 'golden hand shake' for old teachers who wish to take early retirement although it has not been selective to less competent teachers. Nonetheless, it has caused some stir but they are also not getting proper orientation as they should have. Some more interest is being built around the parents. People are increasingly realizing that without their active engagement improvement of public education is a mirage. To this end, CEPP is also working with two new born dormant federations of School Management Committees (SMCs) to activate them that is likely to cause much stir. It is discussed in the relevant section in this report.

A long-talked about change in evaluation system for final school exams is announced but without it's tooth to chew: grading system will be changed from numerical (e.g. so much percent) to alphabetical (e.g. so many As and Bs) without changing the patterns of questions (i.e. where creativity and thinking is rewarded over accurate re-production of the text). It will take some time for this transformation. Poor quality education is also costing the country very much as many young people opt to go abroad for higher studies. Education is being increasingly an import for the country (It is still a single digit but significant amount of money goes to education abroad).

School education is being marred by its increasing involvement in corruption as flow of funds at local level increases. These include inflating the number of students for scholarship etc, embezzling funds allocated for construction of school buildings etc. A major contestation between the SMC Chair and the Head teacher is said to be the unsettling of the share of 'embezzled funds'. Media report on corruption in education has increased in recent years.

## Working Area and Themes

CEPP works with a bi-pronged approach: intensive integrated field work in the interface of teachers and parents to support schools and engagement in policy dialogue in the main issues of concern. It exclusively works on software aspect of schools. CEPP works with 33 schools in three adjoining VDCs of Sindhuli, Makwanpur and Rautahat (SiMaRa) districts. It started working with 16 schools of Raigaon VDC of Makwanpur phasing over to a locally-based NGO Shramjeevi Yuva Manch. After some two years of work in Raigaon, it spiraled out its operation in two more VDCs of two more districts (Pipalmadi of Sindhuli and Judibela of Rautahat that has now changed to a municipality – urban area, ward no. 7) adjoining the area of Raigaon VDC. The first two are among the middle and the last despite being bisected by the east-west highway among the low scoring districts in human development index. Schools when we started were among the low performing ones.

Geographically, it's in the hinterlands of the hills and the plain –referred as inner terai along seasonal rivers originating in chure hills. Bagmati that borders Pipalmadi and Raigaon is the biggest river in the area originating in higher hills. Its climate is sub-tropical or sub-temperate with 4 seasons: dry cold winter (Nov – Feb: night time temperature reaching under 10 Celsius), hot dry spring (Feb – May: day time temperature reaching close to 35 Celsius), and hot wet monsoon (June-August) and pleasant autumn (Sept-Nov). It is primarily inhabited by larger indigenous groups such as Tamangs, Rai and smaller groups such as Pahari and Majhi who speak a different language from Nepali – the language of instruction in public schools. There is a small madheshi population in Rautahat along with migrated Aryan groups along with migrated population from adjoining hills. Raigaon that is also said to be the Karnali of Makwanpur has seasonal vehicular access; so has Pipalmadi. Few schools can be accessed only on foot as many as 4 hours.

## Activities and Achievements

Broadly, PTM/CEPP works around human aspects of schooling with a view to improve the quality of education in public schools. It mainly works in the interface between teachers and parents and raises issues felt significant in the course of practice for policy attention. Below are presented major achievements presented along major areas of CEPP's interests. Activities and output is put as the annex of this report.



*Themes of CEPP's engagement are dealt in the Work and Achievement section of this report.*

## Parents and School Management Committees (SMC)

### Context:

CEPP views School Management Committees (SMCs) as the representatives of parents and thus the custodians of rights to education of their children. In Nepal, the organic link between the community and schools was broken in the process of the nationalization of Education system in the 70s. People seem to have lost means of asserting ownership of over fully - government

funded schools with a combined wave of migration to cities and consequential mushrooming of for-profit private schools and social segregation. Even the blanket approach of making schools free-for-all also has taken away a reason for parents to ask any question about the school. However, the role of parents was not all forgotten whether it was in the reigns of autocratic monarchy or in the democratic era. Realizing the importance of parents in running of schools, the 7th amendment of the Educational Act gave much power to School Management Committees to oversee the matters in schools. Owing to a number of reasons including resistance from unionized teachers, politicization of SMCs along party-lines and wide gap of formal knowledge between teachers and the SMC members it has not been effective. One more reason is that it came about the same time

when a World Bank project supported 'handing schools over to the community' when left ideology was getting stronger in the wake of Maoist insurgency. Deprivation of opportunity to show up as a leader and not holding the election for long made SMC

the only battle ground for local political outfits. Parents did not visit the schools even once a year as they were considered both by themselves and others as uneducated and thus inferior to keep interest on education. Some even think they have no right to say anything since they do not pay anything while others think its teachers domain and they should not poke their noses.



*Photo 2: Mother parents participate in a school meeting at Bishnu Lower Secondary School, Saleni, Raigoan .*

### Type of Work:

CEPP had two strands of work: First at school level was to underscore the importance of parents with schools, train and equip SMCs so they mobilize parents and support the schools in the working area; second was to help them to come together so that they have collective bargaining power. The first strand of activities were started immediately with a hope that we can create a snow ball effect from the area. Main areas of activities

were to train SMCs and follow them up, work with teachers to get parents in schools. General and class wise meetings of parents, particularly of mother parents. Point of discussion in the meetings was that the money in the school comes for their children – it's up to them how much they take care about it; if private schools can function covering cost of building to teachers' fees, a small attention could take them a long way, if paid a bit their school would take off . . .

### Results and Reflection:

#### School Level SMCs

People in general are talking about school education in the villages as our staffs make school- to- school and door –to- door visits. There is spring not too far in the air that people in general have raised some faith in public schools. Involvement of parents particularly that of mothers has risen significantly. There are a number of parental meetings – school wide, class wise. Parents hardly visited the school – now the aim was to get them in schools at once least in a quarter.

The School Management Committees are getting more involved beyond construction issues. On an average SMCs have met 6 times a year. Although few SMCs have met more than six times – the minimum number of times expected by the law, many have met just two times a year. Most of their decisions are of administrative nature. Mostly they meet for constructions, for the appointment of teachers and for the distribution of scholarships. They still have to get engaged in improving the learning environment in the schools. Many parents are just getting to know that a school committee exists to manage school affairs. In some schools the chairpersons have been active and influential. It is still a long way to function systematically as a committee. Some stressed has also been placed in conducting Social Audit of the

schools as a way of enhancing credibility of SMCs and building ownership in the schools. It is often done in paper and reduced to rituals as it's a requirement for getting instalment from DEO.

### ***Federation of SMCs***

The 'ideal' process of building from the ground did not appear feasible for some years for the hardship of the area. In the process of look out two committed groups of people were found working to federate schools at about the same time. Both had ideals and enthusiasm – a history of struggle to establish the organizations. It must be mentioned that there are others too who have initiated such processes for some years. Quite some time was spent in an effort to bring them together as one organization but the effort was delaying the process further. Urgency was felt because SMCs continued to lose power and people now even talked about getting rid of them altogether. Keeping the need for uniting them in mind but feeling their need for visibility faster, CEPP started working with both of them, both agreed that they keep the unification process on and will not form district units in the same districts.

The two federations formed in the cloud of ideas now have roots in more than 40 districts. The first lot was in the aftermath of the quake and the next wave amidst fuel crisis. This has taken us to a different direction for the thrust of the project. Major two events to train the already constituted district federations and a national conference on the governance of schooling have been completed.



*Photo 3: A moment of discussion to SMC leaders in Taplejung.*

### ***Teachers and the Quality of Teaching***

#### **Context:**

No other sector suffered more politicization of institutions (note: not the issues have been politicized) than education. Neither there is more chaos amongst professionals rather than with teachers. Let the issue of capacity alone. Historically, teachers were managed by the elites of the villages including the teachers themselves: they identified them, appointed and set the conditions and kept them accountable. With the nationalization of education, the government provided teachers' salary, set minimum qualification but also moved the accountability from the village to the district headquarters. The government could provide training in rhetoric but not coaching and supervision.

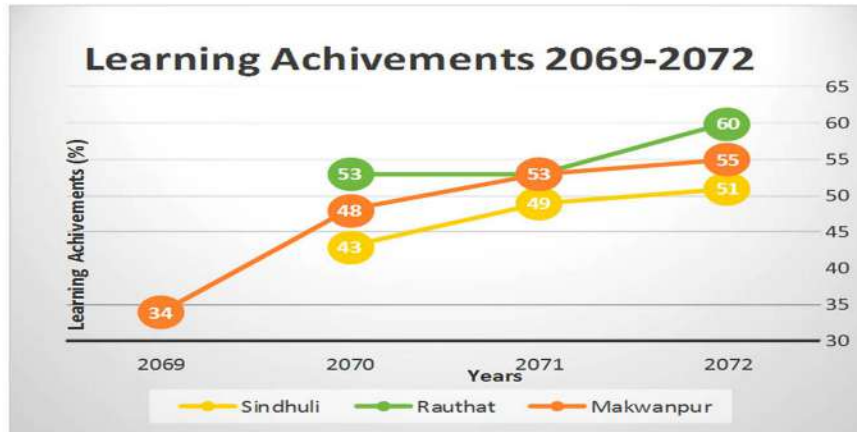


Figure 1: Score-based indicator of learning achievement in all schools has steadily progressed and comparatively better than other rural areas of the districts.

Soon schools became the recruitment centers of politicians of all shades and colors. Under a combined effect of urban migration, English driven attraction of for-profit private schools, isolation of teachers and political protection of teacher along loyalty lines of political parties (in fact, all major ones), the quality of learning in public schools has gone much down although the number of schools, teachers, students and any variable of educational statistics has gone up. Now the private and the public schools appear to have locked in a negative cause and effect vicious circle. Most of the children from well-to-do families may those be politicians, bureaucrats or NGO workers including those of teachers go to private schools. A similar vicious circle is going on between the teachers' performance and their social status.

### Type of Work:

CEPP considers it more a political/attitudinal problem rather than that of skills. It has taken a pronged approach: motivational aspect of teachers is highlighted by helping them realize their importance in the society on the one hand, on the other,

teachers' performance. CEPP has conducted modular trainings starting by addressing attitudinal aspect (e.g. conducting a reflection workshop: Appreciating Yourself as Teachers'). They are further rewarded with trainings and exposure visits if they have tried their best to implement some of the activities that can be done without spending any money. (The same is done with SMCs). Next modules are more focused on skills. They are followed up by CEPP or partner staff and supported by international interns to augment their skills.

### Results and Reflection:

Some progress is seen amongst the teachers that it is in their hands to improve the schools (provided resources continue to flow at this level through the government). There has been a fair effect of the training in most schools in general. Perhaps the common evidence of the change is the change in seating arrangements: from rows to circles or in the shapes of letter C or letter U; lower grades from benches to floor sitting positions. Teachers are at least considering that it is important for the children to feel happy in schools. One of the reasons for the relative success in our working is that there are fewer teachers who have 'fixed positions' i.e. became permanent. This change was also supplemented by volunteers teaching English and changing classroom interiors.

It is still a long way when teachers have lesson plans. We could not meet our nominal target

that 30% (50 out of some 150), teachers would have lesson plans for 10% (around 20) of days. Importance of pre-plans for the improvement of quality need not be re-iterated.

### NGOs and Education

#### Context:

Nepal is considered a land of NGOs. It reached to a peak by the millennium following the open environment created by the people's movement. Many political activists, mostly left-leaning, found this as a way out of politics and work with people. Joining in the global mainstream, the flow of funds of NGOs was also high. It started with the idea of supplementing services where the government could not reach - resource wise, due to remoteness, for the lack of service orientation and so on. There is hardly any place in Nepal where NGOs have not set their feet. However, they appear to create an illusion that they can deliver services better but it is not for long. Still one came after the other with massive duplication-people got projects more easily often not having to keep any records. It only has not jeopardize government organs but any systematic work is almost impossible. Training participants would not move without allowance. Donating labour for a project work is a story once upon a time....Nonetheless, they have helped create awareness amongst people - may it be on environment, gender, HIV and so on. Many are unanimous that the insurgency fed on the frustration created by raised expectation from NGOs and heightened

awareness of rights. There was a time when no one would qualify to be an NGO if they were not doing two basic activities: savings and credit and adult literacy. This still goes on with a bit reduced emphasis. NGOs would be happy to run literacy classes as if they would not get the clients if they worked in children's schools. Perhaps if even a portion of the resources was put into primary education instead of obscure literacy programmes, the



Photo 4: Orientation to NGOs in Taplejung – there were few NGOs working around education, none in school education.

face of the country would have been different. Now when literacy is not so much in fashion, a few NGOs are involved in children's education. Many of them when they are working around children's education, are working on infrastructure and to a lesser extent on teachers' training. Some are working on specific themes such as nutrition and girls enrolment etc. CEPP intended to get NGOs interested to work on fundamental education in general and also help in the working districts to support SMCs.

#### Type of Work:

The plan was that meetings of the NGOs would be organized for networking and the NGOs would be given orientation to work on

education if necessary. The expectation was that NGOs would support SMCs to get organized and take the issue of education forward. However, experience showed that there are in fact almost no NGOs that entirely specialize and work around the education sector. Most NGOs have education as a fringe or minor activity. We had to review this idea of expanding PTM activities through NGOs. First CEPP wished to demonstrate the models that can show the difference. So, it only worked with one NGO in Makwanpur. It was not able to take the issue of education at a political level even in one VDC/District. As mentioned earlier – SMC federation encountered appear to have higher capacity to take it to political level than NGOs.

### Results and Reflection:

The results of CEPP's work with the NGOs is not known yet. A total of xx participants from xx districts took part in the orientation held in Hetauda and Dolakha. The major content was to discuss the scope of education and identify and prioritize issues of education for NGOs to work on. The first was organized by SYM – CEPP's partner in Raigaon and the second was organized with SEF – an ally with whom it rallies together on the Teachers Can Make a Difference campaign. Enthusiasm was much higher in the second one.

Another orientation was organized in Dolakha for the NGOs in the surrounding districts. Very few had education as their major engagement. Many were associated with schools after the earthquake. Most of them however, appreciated the programme and got interested to repeat the same in their respective districts. It's a huge task to get them capacitated and organized.

A training was also organized for the workers of NGOs as a part of a course on social transformation including CEPP's own staff.

### Policy/Opinion Makers

#### Context:

Nepal is in a tricky phase as far as the policy is concerned. Most of policy and opinion makers' children go to for-profit private schools. As many as 13 principals and proprietors of such private schools are in the parliament most of whom made this journey on a fare paid to political parties for seats on proportional representation. The same members claim that nearly a 5 times of their number have beneficial relationship with private schools. Policy, nonetheless is steered by the bureaucrats at the central level and the country has one of the best educational policies on paper. It badly suffers from the lack of political commitment for obvious reasons: politicians have nothing at stake. They thrive on blanket promises such as free schooling for all. In fact, it's the free-for all provision that has crippled public schools. Although most performing public schools raise fees from parents, the preventive fee waiver becomes an escape goat for non-performing schools to produce a series of excuses for not having resources. Donors against whom there are many suppressed voices are oblivious to real change to take place. They keep on investing on education whereas they know that there is massive inefficient use of resources. Only 13 out of 100 children enrolled in grade one make it to grade ten. Parents are using their last pennies to educate their children in a private establishments.

The media have been slightly improving over the decade, focus sing on building and benches – on text book unavailability at best. They do not speak out about the unionized teachers' non-performance or on such issues as mentioned above. The number of education focused online media is increasing and they are found to be relatively progressing in picking up the issues. CEPP also collaborates with the Shikshak (Teacher)



Photo 5: A policy dialogue on the need for public education

Monthly in bringing out issues around teachers and on the issues of school governance in its radio programme – ShikshaSambad (Educational Dialogue).

### Type of Work:

It holds at least one annual dialogue on a relevant topic on education. It seeks to work with the median in deepening issues on education. It also has a fairly good association with educational journalists and their association. CEPP's leader is regularly published on the issues mentioned here in the media. CEPP is also trying to monitor the media of its realization but is seriously hampered by the lack of appropriate personnel to do the job. Its preliminary findings is that reports in the media on corruption in education have increased.

### Results and Reflection:

The following events were organized on average some 30 parliamentarians and policy level bureaucrats and media person took part in the gatherings.

- 2013: Privatization of Education: Extent and its Side Effects
- 2014: Public Education: Why and How? (Also has an audio proceeding)
- 2015: Education in the New Constitution
- 2016: School Governance in Nepal: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Proceedings to be published)

People are speaking out– taboo around fees, privatization and so on, has broken. Perhaps, writing in the media had more impact than these dialogue sessions. A study tour for the journalists to a 'model' school appear to have larger impact in media reporting. The effectiveness of a media programme to address the issues of parents is yet to be seen. It is felt that it has to be appropriated to suit the parents of our working area.

## Additional Contributions

### Working Model

CEPP has a two-pronged approach: working in the field and feeding it into the main stream and bringing the main stream into our work. For example, we work together with SMC in a school at the same time, we work with SMCs to get bargaining power by being organized and responsible. On policy work, it conducts annual workshops or seminars on a related topic, takes part in appropriate forums, and works with media – as a contributor or as an influencing agent on the cause.

Both government and non-government institutions wish to work in improving the quality of public schools. Mostly, experiment is done in one school of an area. CEPP seeks to work in one area with few schools so that a pattern can be observed. In most cases, many end up doing one part of the education and they do not have a framework to work comprehensively around a school. CEPP worked in such a way that both teachers and parents are addressed and general issues of a school are addressed holistically.

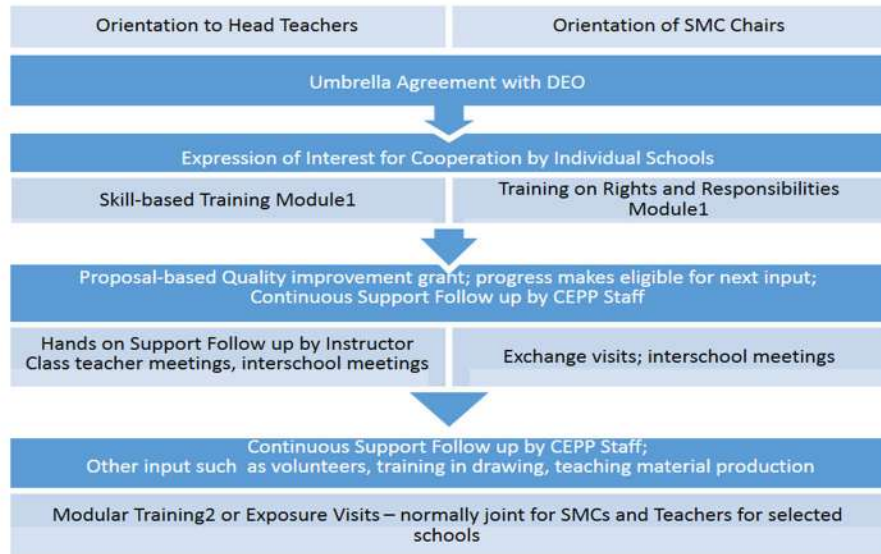


Diagram 1: CEPP's Working Modality

### Un-tabooing Fees Issue

Even the founders of CEPP took part in the processions with placards for free schooling. Maybe it was desirable for some time to get children enrolled in schools. However, when it came to quality of public schools, it realized that free schooling had a couple of negative consequences:

- It changed from demand driven schooling to supply driven creating negligence from parents;
- Since it was for free and parents did not have to pay, they also did not find a way to assert their belonging to a school;
- because it was free – parents thought it to have a poor quality as there are few parents who have taxable income and can see a relationship between free schooling and taxes;

- d) A country such as Nepal did not need to make it free for all – it should be targeted and selective – there is hardly a sizeable section that is limited just by school fees;
- e) Poor quality was given as government discouraged collecting fees but there was no enough grant to deliver quality – schools were broken after the fee-free wave; and
- f) Almost all public schools that delivered a level of quality were raising money under different names and parents were paying without objection.

However, no body particularly in NGOs spoke out on negative effects of free-schooling. Now at least it has not remained a taboo and now a section of people have started talking about it.

### **Bringing out side effects of for-profit schools**

At present, there are two main streams of thoughts around private education:

- a) government or so called community schools cannot deliver quality education and private schools should be encouraged—even supported by the state if necessary and
- b) they have commodified education and should be shut down and government should take over. The situation has demonstrated that both are not true. The public spends money in both streams: the government spends billions of rupees in great inefficiency (out of 100 children enrolled in grade one ten years ago, less than 14 children passed school leaving exam!), parents pay to private schools from their thin pockets. The irony is that public policy is formulated and followed by people who send their children to private schools.

Many leaders of political parties are known to own private schools – directly or indirectly. Many teachers from public schools run or have their share in private schools. The option of private schools evades pressure to improve public schools. There are more than ten proprietors or owners of for-profit private schools who are openly admitting that they paid money to different parties to secure the membership in the parliament claim that there are more than 60 parliamentarians having beneficial relationship from private schools. It is also known that many leading for-profit private schools offer ‘free seats’ for the children of policy-making bureaucrats. CEPP has been bringing this out systematically although the issue has gone only to the deaf years of policy makers for obvious reasons. There is some window-dressing by some sections of the society – parents associations, student unions - asking for the reduction of fees in private schools whereas ‘free-for-all’ schools are closing for the lack of adequate number of students. Its only strong will and optimism that inspire one to work in public schools.



*Photo 6: A dialogue was held with policy makers on the extents of the side-effects of private schools in 2014*

### Interns and Volunteers

CEPP has been mobilizing interns of European teachers colleges to help teachers teaching better. They help doing hands on work such as improvement of classrooms making them more pedagogically tuned, working together in teaching English, improving drawing skills and producing teaching material locally. Of course, their contribution is much appreciated and has improved a level of teaching in many schools in our working area. Their presence also gives a hope to the parents that public schools too can be improved. CEPP has developed skills and expertise to mobilize interns and volunteers and is seeking to mobilize Nepali volunteers particularly to work as counterparts. So far some 20 volunteers and interns primarily from Belgium and Switzerland have been engaged in improving teaching and learning in most schools of our working area.



Photo 7: Interns from Artevelde Teachers College share a moment of accomplishment after they have worked to improve the classrooms with the teachers and the community in Janata Lower Secondary School in Ratnapur in Sindhuli.

### Mainstreaming Parents

The role of parents has remained passive particularly since the nationalization of education in the beginning of 70s when demand driven education changed to supply driven. Although the state input rapidly expanded schools in the country, it also de-linked the community and the schools. Despite all rhetoric on grassroots democracy, organization of rights holders, parents as the users of educational services have remained isolated and unorganized. They are scattered and have no time. They have been bearing the brunt of unionized teachers and the low accountability of bureaucrats. Some Kathmandu-based efforts are focused on reducing fees from for-profit private schools. To this end, CEPP has supported the federation of School Management Committees. It is still a long way to go but federations are formed showing presence in educational gatherings.

### Action on Earthquake

CEPP got involved in quake relief activities around schools. It had two major areas of involvement: a) organizing the volunteers to dismantle dangerous school buildings and constructing temporary class rooms and b) delivering a package aimed at teachers in handling emergencies in reference of the earthquake. Mobilization of volunteers was done together with the Association of Youth Organizations of Nepal (AYON) and we worked together to set up a system to prepare volunteers for the field: physically and mentally and that it is a two end action of giving help and educating the youth.

Delivery of the package was well received by the teachers. Particularly three elements were appreciated: ways of helping recovering from trauma – taking it as an integrated way; integrating the quake in existing curricula – moral education to mathematics; preparedness –at least identifying a place to gather at the time of emergency. One of our trauma recovery activities was based on the principle that you get over fear by being familiar with the source of fear in this case understanding how earthquakes occur. Out of 120 teachers to whom the package was delivered directly, less than 10 teachers had clear enough idea what tectonic plates were. A significantly small number of teachers had an understanding of the movement of tectonic plates. To our surprise, most of psychological training was confined to singing and dancing rather than studying. Many also had the notion that if you talk about it, it keeps on bothering you. We stressed on bringing it out emphasizing that getting scared and selfish in such ‘to the edge of life situations’ is normal. It sparked lively sharing amongst the teachers too.

On popular demand from the teachers the training package is published and kept in publicly accessible depository.



*Photo 8: Work Camp Volunteers breaking down a dangerous section of a Buddhabhimeshwori Secondary school, Mali destroyed by the earthquake in Dolakha*

## Major Challenges

Of course, money is the main problem but we need money when these problems are alleviated to certain extent. We have been lucky enough to find an understanding partner. They have been considerate to extend the project period so we were not circumvented to spend money even when things were not going alright. Below are the problems mentioned with this note that we have had adequate resources to take the project forward for the last 4 years. Including due to earthquake and fuel embargo, the three year project was extended nearly for 5 years at no extra cost.

### Getting Appropriate Human Resource

Appropriate human resource is the foremost challenge we face as an institution. We may claim to be relatively better workers, staff competence is a major challenge. Major reasons are put forth below:

- a) Our working area is relatively less accessible: it's a long drive from Kathmandu and staff have to walk for several hours to the working area depending on the season. No 'educated' people are willing to go and work in such remote areas. As soon as it is outside Kathmandu, people are not willing to go give even relatively high pay – their expectation is raised too high. We have had a survey of other peer NGOs and they were getting a bit less than what we offer and they were more competent.
- b) Our working modality is integrated and complex. Many development workers are used to work in adult literacy where some training can equip a person with a couple of trainings. Few have knowledge and willingness to work with schools. Schools are demanding as they have to face the teachers who are 'educated' and can defend themselves well among other issues. This person is expected to have a formal degree gener-

ally higher than that of teachers in general. Such a person is not willing to go to remote places. People from other faculties are not so familiar with teaching and schooling to the level of supporting teachers. Products of the Faculty of Education (Pedagogy/Teaching) are limited as many enroll in the faculty for it being flexible to attend and can avoid English to a great extent. Their competence is not to an acceptable level. This is why working with the education faculty is one of our long-term mission if the country is to increase the standard of education.

- c) There may also be management issues: skills of managers and style of management. It has been lately realized that the language of communication between the coordinator and the staff was not appropriate – it was abstract for them. And some key positions are part time – culturally part-time positions are considered to have lower status than the full-time ones. Appointment of part-time positions are output-based. They could not deliver results in an expected time. This is also new to Nepali culture.



Photo 9: Scaling up even this level of improvement is a challenge – not just resources but commitment of the Shree Bagmati Secondary School, Raigaun, Makwanpur.

Scarcity of human resource also needs to be seen in the context of general brain-drain in the country. Marked scarcity can be felt. Lately, employment opportunities created now by relief and reconstruction work has inflated wages and reduces competition. Mainly proper documentation of our work both electronic and generative, analysis of the media, deepening of dialogue with the community and even administration has suffered for the lack of proper personnel.

### Scaling Up

We have started improving classrooms from grade 1 – one grade a year. Some schools now have as many as three classrooms while most have only one improved classroom. Demand for such improvements has been rather slow in the sense that the school itself is not taking enough initiative to improve the other grades although few have done so quite enthusiastically. CEPP has been criticised for improving only one classroom but the idea was not to provide resources and push for it.

CEPP hoped that these ideas normally appreciated by the DEOs have not been adapted to other areas of the district. Perhaps it is even far to be adapted in another district. It demands systematic sharing of our experience and changes made.

### Uniting SMC Federations

Towards the beginning of 2015, CEPP started working with two federations of SMCs that came into contact with CEPP. As mentioned earlier, an intense effort was made to bring them together but to no avail. Obviously, both have strengths and weaknesses. However, visibility of two federations will not make the case strong in favour of SMCs. How to support them appropriately particularly to come together is a big challenge. It should be noted that high unionization along party lines of students' or

teachers' organization has been quite a difficult issue to handle for the nation. A huge task lies ahead of building the capacity of their local units – particularly when SMCs tenure is terminated every two years.

### Preparations from Teachers

It has been learnt that quality of teaching rests on the preparation by teachers – even more than knowledge and other skills. After all when children are put into a learning environment, they learn by themselves. This has been the hardest thing to achieve. Teachers already feel burdened when they are expected to teach properly. The best teaching so far was doing their best based on text books – making the facts memorized is the best our teachers are used to. It demands a significant transformation and when teachers start doing so they qualify for higher salaries and Nepal's schools take off to deliver the quality.



*Photo 10: Participants of SMC DToT in Hetauda – priority issues and their roles and responsibilities was part of the training agenda.*



Photo 11: There is unlimited need and scope of improving learning in schools – a class of a Shree primary school in Shakhatar in Raigaon, Makwanpur

## Future Vision of Engagement

### Deepening and Widening the Field Work

There is the need for deepening the work in these 33 schools where CEPP is working with them. This includes improving the ambience of classrooms and schools premises – transforming these as the rays of hope to the community. More effort is required to generate support from the parents. The head teachers need to be better equipped. Above all, schools need to be convinced that there is no option other than going to grade teaching for the improvement of quality in lower grades. More dialogue is required with political parties and support from the youth is necessary.

If resources permit, CEPP is asked to cover an area under one

Resource Centre (Lowest unit of school support headed by a resource teacher). As part of our contribution to the earthquake reconstruction, we also wish to work in a few schools of quake-hit districts.

### Civil Monitoring of Education

While continuing our engagement at policy level in the themes of our interest, new need and opportunities have emerged. The portrayal of education by the media needs to be strengthened and we want to promote it to monitoring the whole of education from a civil society perspective. NGOs are felt to be reached and orientated on the issues of education. More work with the media on the role of parents is also felt necessary – both in the direct working areas and in general.



Photo 12: Monitoring of the media on education that CEPP is striving to upgrade

### Working with New Teachers

After several years, vacancy for teachers has been called. Many new teachers are being posted. There is a need for engaging with new teachers to keep their inspirations high before they are frustrated – as early as possible.

### Strengthening Ourselves

We need to build a strong cadre of field and policy activists if our aspirations have to be realized. This has to be given due priority.

### Post-Quake Engagements

CEPP is not an institution to engage in hardware. Earthquake means reconstruction of schools. In this context, we intend to get engaged in constructing school buildings appropriate to meet the climatic conditions and pedagogical needs as examples. CEPP was already engaged in getting alternative models of school types approved by the government.

### Working with IT

Electronic information technology by some is taken as the ultimate response to all the evils in education – from the absence of teachers to the lack of learning material. CEPP is relatively hesitant in this matter. It believes that you need a reasonable capacity to make technology work in the context. However, it appears to have developed to the extent that technical complications are minimal. CEPP seeks to experi-

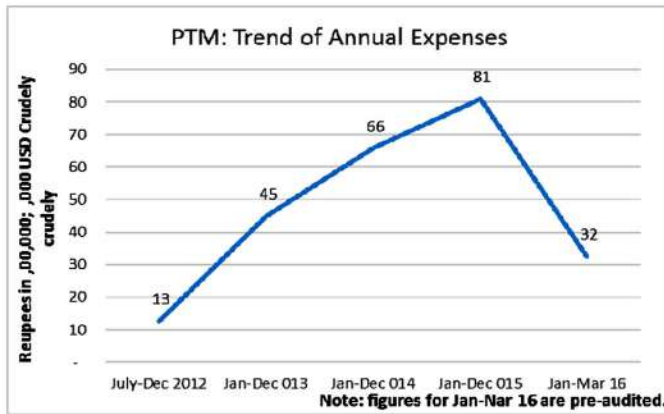


*Photo 13: Students learning draw leaves in Surya Secondary School, Raigoan: when learning from the surrounding is yet to be established, it's questionable if thrust on IT alone can improve the situation.*

ment with the use of IT in a few remote schools starting with English that has discouraged many aspiring youth of the country. IT also needs to be improved for CEPP for sharing knowledge and communication. The CEPP website is in the first list to be improved/updated in this direction.

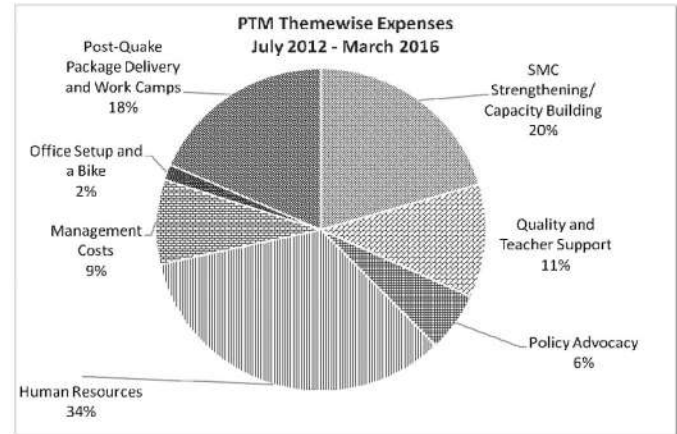
## Finance

The initial years of funding were realized with the volunteer efforts and monetary contributions of the founders. Later, a small amount of money was raised by the teachers and students of Gijzegem High School in Belgium – they still do it. Since, 2012, structural funding was obtained from Misereor/KZE from Germany. This report primarily focuses on the resources



Graph 1: Trend of expenditure over the years; high expenses in 2015 is due to quake related activities. One year no-cost extension was sought as activities were delayed by the quake and later by the fuel crisis.

received from this source. A significant portion of non-monetary support is received in terms of volunteer work by the nationals of Belgium and Switzerland in improving classrooms. Volunteer work by Nepali youth is not accounted in monetary terms. So is the expertise provided by the board members. Attached at the end of this report as Annex II is the cumulated Balance Sheet and the Statement of Expenditure for exact figures.



Graph 2: Our significant time and effort goes to improving classrooms. It is not evident here as they are done by volunteers and our staff. Comparatively, we have not been able to put as much effort on SMCs in out-of-field activities although expenses are seen high due to high financial lay-out to their organizational process. Management cost primarily includes Kathmandu and contact office (in Chapur).

Audited reports are available on request to view. These have not been provided here for their length as they have been audited in every six months and every year. The last quarter of expenses are yet to be audited. Separate details are available for post-quake activities. A summarized financial statement is put as Annex II at the end of this report.

## The Partners and the Institution

### Artevelde Hogschool and Sint Lucas School of Arts, Gent, Belgium



We now have welcome some 20 interns from the two schools so far and have on understanding for cooperation at least for the next two years. Their interns mainly help designing classrooms, help teaching English and figure drawing.



### Misereor Hilfswerk, Germany

Misereor and KZE is the main partner of CEPP. They provided the first structural financial support. Besides, financial support, we found common concern with the work we do and allowing attitude from their staff. They have also extended the term for next three years with some 50% increment in the budget. They have also supported in running the work camps and delivering the post-emergency package to teachers.



### Post-quake Partners

After the earthquake, the Association of Youth Organization of Nepal connected initially through one of their members Samrat Katwal has become a good partner to mobilize youth around schools. They have recruited young volunteers and we have hosted them in the schools in the quake hit districts. We also collaborated with one more NGO in Dhading to expand the delivery of the package: Integrated Community Development Campaign (ICDC).

### Shikshak (The Teacher) – Monthly

They have also been our strategic collaborators in the front of teachers. A collection of responses on an opening article on the issue of teachers has been jointly published with the book. Now we collaborate on a weekly radio programme Shiksha Sambad (Educational Dialogue) to build parents perspective on their teacher dominant radio-magazine.



### ***Shramjivi Yuba Manch***

This Raigaon-based NGO was started when the current head was a youth. Now, we collaborate in undertaking the field work in Raigaon.

### ***Sunrise Education Foundation, Nepal***

We started collaborating as part of the “Teachers’ Can Make a Difference” Campaign. They have remained an ally in many fronts to work together. We make use of the teacher motivational material they have produced and help us document programmes of common interest audio-visually.



### ***Svi Geijzegem School, Aalst, Belgium***



Connected by a Nepal-minded teacher, Carine Verleye, the secondary school of sint vincentius Gijzegem in Aalst in Belgium are the first source of outside money. They have not only valued the work their principal Hilde said “Your approach of valuing teachers; can be a source of inspiration to our teachers; no government in the world gives enough money that teachers expect”. Teachers and students have organized events on International Teachers Day, have produced waffles and sold small handcrafts collected money, developed educational materials for Nepalese Primary Schools and continually exchanging views with CEPP on educational matters. This has now rolled out to another cooperation with interns with two high schools in Gent.

### ***The Government***

Definition of partners is rather difficult. In many contexts, it may mean donor and recipients. For us, it means those who share our values and vision and collaborate materially and non-materially. Most of our partners below do not provide us money nor do we give to them. We also collaborate with the government units that include concerned District Education Offices and schools as well as appropriate units in the Ministry and Department of Education. This relationship is outlined in our working model in the Activities and Achievements section.



Government of Nepal

**Ministry of Education**

### *CEPP – the Institution*

The Centre for Educational Policies and Practices (CEPP) was established to take forward the learning from an action-research, 'Education-for-all-Chepangs' carried out in 16 primary schools in 4 Chepang-dwelling districts: Dhading, Gorkha, Makwanpur and Chitwan. It promotes basic education as rights and seeks to bring peoples' dimension at the Centre (over current trend of buildings and the benches). The Centre views education a foundation for progress as 'the great equalizer' of uneven social relations. It is an NGO registered with the District Administration Office in Kathmandu in 2009 dedicated to basic-education-for-all. Given that the government continues to provide current level of expenses, improvement of the quality of public schools remains in the hands of teachers and parents. Practically, it seeks to strengthen the interface between the parents and teachers – an environment of appreciating one another. It is composed of a voluntary board and a staff force of 10 individuals. Three work in the field and three in Kathmandu and two doing back and forth.



## Abbreviations

<b>CEPP</b>	Centre for Educational Policies and Practices
<b>PTM</b>	Parents Teacher Motivation
<b>SMC</b>	School Management Committees
<b>SiMaRa</b>	Sindhuli, Makwanpur and Rautahat districts
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committees
<b>DEO</b>	District Education Office/Officer
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>SYM</b>	Shramjivi Yuba Manch
<b>AYON</b>	Association of Youth Organizations of Nepal
<b>ICDC</b>	Integrated community Development Campaign
<b>KZE</b>	Katholische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe e.V
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>SEF</b>	Sunrise Education Foundation

## Annex 1: Categorized List of Activities

Outcome Category	Activities	Units			Remarks
		No. of Schools	Location/Time	No of Participants	
Parents and School Management Committees (SMC)	Orientation to SMCs	3		58	
	Training to SMCs	16	2	46	
	Study Tour to SMC Members	13	2	13	Mixed with Teachers
	Social Auditing Training to SMC Members	32		106	
	Class Wise Mother-Parents Meeting Conducted	32	34	1780	
Teachers and the Quality of Teaching	Orientation to teachers	3		60	
	Continues Assessment System Orientation	14		38	
	Grade Teachers meeting conducted	33			
	English Training to Teachers provided	16	2	60	
	Teacher Refresher Training conducted	16		29	
	English Teaching training for Teachers	16		30	
	Quality improvement grants provided	32			
	Floor Sitting	7			
	Ceiling improvement	5			
	Program Attendance "Teacher Make Different"		7		
	Study Tour SMC +Teachers	32	2	68(teachers 55, SMCs 13)	Mixed with SMCs

Outcome Category	Activities	Units			Remarks
		No. of Schools	Location/Time	No of Participants	
NGOs and Education	Orientation to NGOs		3	80	Dolakha, Makwanpur, Taplajung
	Introductory meeting with stakeholders	2		55	
Policy/Opinion Maker	Science Technology and ED Parallel seminar		1	50	
	ED in New Constitution		1	20	
	Policy Dialogue on Public Education		1	40	
	Policy Dialogue on Private Education		1	35	
	Policy interaction why training could not get in classroom?		1	33	
	Radio TV interview(BBC, Radio Nepal, News 24)		3 Dailies	3	
	Articles in the newspaper			6	
	Paper on role of parents		1		
	Policy Dialogue		2		Program attended
	Study Tour for the media		1	28	
Others	Staff review meeting		3	CEPP+ Partner staff	
	Fallow up?	16?		6/month	6/month
	Post Quake support Package Delivery		5 districts	758	
	Work Camps	11	3 districts	144 (108 male, 36 female)	

## Annex II Financial Statements

Center for Educational Policies and Practices (CEPP)  
Parent and Teacher Motivation Programme (PTM)  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of End March 2016

Liabilities	Nepali Rupees	Euros
Reserve/ Deficit	(18,417.79)	(153)
Capital assets fund	1,726,252.24	14,328
Payables PAPS	1,531,136.00	12,708
Other payable and current liabilities	162,887.92	1,352
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,401,858.37</b>	<b>28,235</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
	<b>Amount</b>	
Furnishings, power back up system, Laptops, portable projector, photocopier	454,924.24	3,776
Vehicle	1,105,328.00	9,174
Motorbike	166,000.00	1,378
Cash Bank	1,268,072.13	10,525
Advance	407,534.00	3,383
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,401,858.37</b>	<b>28,235</b>

**Statement of Income Expenditure**  
As of End March 2016

Income	Amount	
Received from MISEROR	28,802,445.75	239,060
Bank Interest	183,642.73	1,524
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,986,088.48</b>	<b>240,585</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
	<b>Amount</b>	
Mobilizing Partners' Organization as Custodians of Right to Basic Education and Motivating Teachers for Quality (PTM)	23,668,068.27	196,445
Post-Quake Action Package for School (PAPS)	5,336,438.00	44,292
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,004,506.27</b>	<b>240,737</b>
Deficit - Presented in the balance sheet	(18,417.79)	(153)
Capital assets purchase	1,726,252.24	14,328

- Notes: 1. Statement is prepared on cash basis system.  
2. Accounts for the first quarter of 2016 is not audited.  
3. Figures converted at gross exchange rate of May, 2015.



शिक्षा नीति तथा अभ्यास केन्द्र  
Centre for Educational Policies and Practices