

**Project Title –"Partnership with Religious Network and Structure to End
Child Marriage and Other Harmful Practices"**

Quarterly Report

(June 2014 to September 2014)



Implementing Partner:

National Inter Religious Network Violence Against Women – Nepal

Funding Partners: UNICEF & UNFPA

Project Title	Partnership with Religious Network and Structure to end child marriage and other harmful practices.
Reporting Period	1st Quarter (June to September , 2014)
Goal	Enhance a safe and enabling environment to adolescents at all levels
Objective	To accelerate involvement of religious leaders to reduce violence against children and adolescents by addressing the harmful norms and practices especially child marriage

1. Background

Child marriage is recognized as one of the human right violations and considers as a form of gender based violence because child marriage exposes girls and women to undermine their reproductive right. Girls and women who were married as children face significant coercion and violence within the family and from society.

This project aims to build and strengthen partnership with Religious Network and Structure to end child marriage and other harmful practices, particularly in Dhanusha, Saptari, Humla, Mugu, Accham and Bajura. The project has selected five VDCs in each project district to implement its activities. The project is mainly focused on mobilizing local religious leaders for raising awareness and making effective advocacy for addressing issues of child marriage, gender base violence and other harmful practices.

NIRN, Nepal has been implementing the project for the period of June 2014 to June 2015 from the financial and technical support of UNICEF/UNFPA. The main goal of the project is to reduce child marriage through mobilizing religious leaders to raise awareness among communities and advocate with the concerned government authorities to take effective measures to address the issues. The project has targeted to those children who are highly vulnerable for child marriage and gender base violence.

2. Progress of this quarter

Planning vs. achievement:

During this quarter, NIRN, Nepal has implemented following activities to achieve the intended outputs outlined for the project. The detailed information regarding activities implementation is also given below:

SN	Activities carried out during this quarter
1	Quarterly coordination meeting of Interfaith network
2	Discussion and denouncement on child marriage in weekly prayers, festival and religious event
3	Formation of Technical Advisory Committee
4	Identification of district level based inter faith organizations and leaders
5	Development of public article, cover stories, opinion and column on denouncement on child marriage and other harmful practices from religion perspective

Activities carried out during this quarter (June-Sept 2014)

Activity 1: Quarterly coordination meeting of Interfaith Network

The project has organized a coordination meeting of interfaith network on 21st June, 2014 to discuss and review the project activities implementation, take strategic decision and provide policy feedback for effective project implementation. In the meeting, the Project Coordinator (PC) presented the project progress, issues and challenges while implementing the project and upcoming activities of the project. The meeting was also focused on strengthening working relation with inter religious leaders, FBOs, religious communities, local authorities and other civil societies. This is the first quarterly meeting for the project. The primary focus of Inter faith coordination meeting is to regularly discuss the child marriage issues among religious community leaders and the FBOs and mobilize them to make effective advocacy and lobbying to stop child marriage practices.

Inputs/Participants

The quarterly interfaith coordination meeting took place at the resident of Narendra Pande on 21st June 2014 which was chaired by Seema Khan, chairperson, NIRN Nepal and participated by Ms. Seema Khan, Ms. Roshani Karmacharya, Dharma Murti, Vikchu, Father Bill Robins, Dr. K.B. Rokaya, Dr. Narayan Maharjan, Mr. Ram Chandra Bhandari, Mr. Najrul Hussien and Mr. Narendra Pande. The meeting decided to organize next meeting at the office of Nepal Muslim women welfare society.

Agendas of the Meeting:

a) Vacancy Announcement for project staff hiring

The meeting decided to make vacancy announcement for project staff hiring following the norms and practices prevailed in the organization for project staff recruitment. A staff recruitment committee represented by the board members was formed to initiate the whole process systematically from preparation, advertisement, interview and final selection of the staff for hiring within a given time line.

b) Preparation of the first quarterly action plan

The meeting also decided to have the quarterly action plan to implement the project systematically. For which the project coordinator has been assigned to prepare action plan under the guidelines of proposal.

c) Selection of the five VDCs in each project district

Achievements

1. Project staffs for the implementation of project are selected.

The project has selected the suitable candidates to implement the project. The selected staffs have already started their work for the project effective from June 2014. The selected staffs and focal persons for center and district level are given below.

For centre level staff

1. Mrs. Nahida Banu, Project Coordinator
2. Mr. Piya Ratna Maharjan, Finance officer
3. Mr. Tulisi Maharjan, Assistant

For district level focal persons

1. Mr. Dandi Raj Joshi (Member, SanatanVedic Dharma), Achham district
2. Ms. Sunita Verma (Shree Krishna Pranami), Dhanusha district
3. Mr. Tsering Paldon Sherpa (Gumba Member), Humla district
4. Ms. SamjhanaShah (Secretary, SatyaSai), Mugu district
5. Mr. Dil Mahammad (Secretary, Islam Sangh), Saptari district
6. Mr. Dharma Raj Padhaya (Jain, Member), Bajura district

2. The Quarterly Action Plan of the project prepared and submitted

The project has developed the first draft of Quarterly Action plan which was prepared and submitted to UNICEF Pulchowk by Mr. Narendra Pande.

3. Selection of VDCs in the project district is completed

The project has selected following VDCs in the project district for project activities implementation. The VDCs were selected in close coordination and consultation with local scouts, Red cross societies, partner organizations and District Development Committees

SN	Name of the District	Selected of VDCs
1	Saptari	Banuali, Patharagada, Kabilas, Jamunimadhepura & Fersedh
2	Achham	Morku, Sukot, Siudy, Toli & Kuki
3	Mugu	Kimari, Shreenagar, Ruga, Gumtha & Karkibada
4	Humla	Chhipra, Hepka, Shreemastha, Simkot & Syadi
5	Dhanusa	Laxmaniya, Shantipur, Begadawa, Buchakrapur & Bhabouli
6	Bajura	Baddhu, Rugin, Gotree, Kolti & Bai
7	Kathmandu	Thankot, Matatirtha, Devichour, Laiai

Challenges

- Due to low level of awareness among religious leaders, there is a challenge for making effective mobilization of religious leaders.
- Some of the project districts like Mugu, Humal are geographical remote and conducting regular meetings with different religious leaders is really a difficult task.
- There is no orientation about project in the project district stakeholders so it is very difficult to communicate and inform the district level stakeholders on project objectives, implementation modalities and expected results.

Activities No 2: Discussion and denouncement in weekly prayers, festival and religious event

Religious leaders are considered respected personalities in the society and they can easily make use of their moral and spiritual influence in all communities who have important roles within faith communities especially those with an organized hierarchy and formally designated to represent their communities. So the voices or speeches of religious leaders are easily accepted in all communities on the occasion of festival and religious event. Most of the marriage ceremonies occur in the presence of religious leaders in religious places like temples, mosques or church. As the main person of the marriage ceremony, religious leader can play the most powerful role is in facilitating dialogue, reflection and action regarding prevention of child marriage and gender base violence. Realizing this fact, the project has organized orientation programs on prevention of child marriage and gender based violence on the following festivals and religious events.

Festivals/Occasions

SN	Date	Venus	Sermon	Festival	Participant Number
1	10 th August 2014	Surya Ghat	Keshab Chaulagai	Jana iPurnima	50
2	6 th August, 2014	Islamic Sangh	Nazural Husan	Eid	60
3	17 th August, 2014	Imadole Krishana Mandir	Mahananda Maharaj	Shree Krishana Astami	1000
4	28 th August, 2014	Santi Sewa Asram	Dr Chintamani	Tej	180
5	15 th September, 2014	Humla	Lakpa sherpa	Raring	200
6	20 th September, 2014	Calvary AG Church , Bajura	Paster Kapur Bishwokarma	Weekly Prayer	20

Achievements

- Religious leaders have been working to make effective advocacy and orientation activities in their communities to address issues of the child marriage, gender base violence, harmful practices and child abuses. During the spiritual speeches in the religious and social events, religious leaders speak out publicly against the child marriage and gender base violence. The leaders express their sincere commitment to work against the child marriage and harmful practices. Religious leaders and FBOs are interested to support and work collective to address child marriage and child abuses.
- Since, in all holy script, women are given respectful position in the society so religious leaders are citing those phrase to convince communities to understand the important role of women in the society. There is no child marriage mentioned in any religions so these practices should be abolished which many religious do not allow.

Challenges

- Child marriage is still a common problem in many societies under holocaust religious beliefs. It is a big challenge to convince the people who believe that they are doing under their religion.

Religious Events

SN	Date	Venue	Event	Sermon	Total Participation
1	10th July	Patan, Kathmandu and Pokhara	Theological Workshop	Dr. Fletcher Tink	230
2	27 th July	City Hall	Barsik samara of Badri Thapa	Dr Chintamani	300
3	15 th August	Jain Bhavan	Interaction program with Religious leaders to end child marriage	Dr Kul Chandra Gautam, Indira Manandhar , Narendra Pande, , Dr. Chintamani, Nazural Husan and Father Bill Rabbins	55
4	August 26 th 2014	Martin Chautary	Interaction with religious leader about child & women	Seema Khan. Ram Chandra Bhandari	25
5	21 st Sep2014	Santi Sewa Asram	International Day of peace	Dr Chintamani, Narendra Pande, Bishwo Nath Upadhaya, Keshab Chaulagai,	
6	6 th Sep 2014	St. Xavier School	Silver Jubilee of Caritas	Chindra Satyal, Bill Rabbins	250

Activity 3: Formation of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

A Technical Advisory Committee has been formed at national level to guide the project through research and study of religion scriptures and doctrine that can be used to combat child marriage. The committee will be responsible for providing insights from religious scripture and text on what religious has to say about child marriage and other harmful practices.

Achievements

The Technical advisory committee has been formed under the leadership of Dr K.B Rokaya in September 2014 with the facilitation support of NIRN Nepal. The TAC has comprised with 11 members and represented by inter faith leaders. TAC formed at national level to guide the core program through research and study of religion scriptures and doctrine that can be used to combat child marriage and for the effective implementation of project through regular policy, feedback review of the project progress. The 11 members who are in the TAC are as follow;

1. Dr K.B. Rokaya (Protestant)
2. Father Bill Rabbins (Catholique)
3. Dr Chintamani Yogi (Hinduism)
4. Bharat Datt Koirala (Bahai)
5. Gyani Guru Box Singh(Sikh),
6. Vend Dharma Murti (Buddhism)
7. Dr Anoja Guru Ma (Buddhism)
8. Bhanu Prasad Dhakal (Astrologer)
9. NajuralHussan (Islam)
10. Swami Binod Sharma and (Hinduism)
11. Keshab Chaulagai (Hinduism)

The first meeting of the TAC has been carried out on 15th September 2014 at Juist office in Senepa. During the meeting, Dr K.B. Rokaya suggested that TAC should be focused on building understanding and general consensus among religious leader for FBOs grant management and project implementation.

Challenges

- The mobilization of inter religious leaders and making them responsible to combat the child marriage and gender base violence itself is a challenging task as they are from different societal background and engage in other different activities.

Activity 4: Identification of district level based inter faith organizations and leaders

Faith based organization are defined as faith influence non- governmental organization which are often structured around development and social welfare program in religious prospective. Local religious communities include informal and formal worshipping communities. The project has completed in identifying the district level based inter faith organizations and leaders which are given below;

The lists of the FBOs and religious leaders in the project districts are:

SN	District	Faith base organization	Religious Leader
1	Achham	Om Shanty Kendra, Santa Nirakari Mission, Madrasa Darud Kuran, Vaidya Nath Asram, Kalika Devi Samiti, Bagayshowari Mandir Samiti	Pandit Balram , Shuva Shree Bhattari, Kasim Haq,
2	Bajura	Pandusan Gumba, Bichhay Gumba, Kalma Majid, Martadi Church Mandali, Gress Church, Satan Hindu Mandir Samiti	Pujari Krishana Pandit, Maulana Maksud, Pema Lama, Pasetrkapur bishop Karma

3	Humla	New Vision Simkot Church, Guru Mandu (praying place for traditional healer) Kharpunath Mandir Samiti, Tumkot Monastery, Rally Monastery, Shiva Mandir, Rinchening Monastery, Tumkot Monastery	Lakpa Lama , Ram Prasad, Ishak Shah, Dolma Tsering
4	Saptari	Madrasa Iqratah feezil , Jamia Riyajul Uloom, Shree Raj Devi Mandir, Zain Panta Bhawan,	Mr Hari Prasad Shah, Rameshwar Yadav, Sunil Jain, Md Ataulla Khan, Md Irshad Khan
5	Dhanusa	Aatama Gyan Satsangh , Sant Nirakari Mandali, Mithila Santi Mandali, Radha Madav Sewa Samiti, Shiva Churha Samiti, Om Santi Samiti, Radha Swami, Satya Sai Sewa Kendra, Krishana Pranami Sewa Samiti, Islamic Sangh,	Suresh Prasad Yadav, Bajur Razzak. Indra Nepali, Maharaj Dukidas, Maharaj Ram Giri, Ramji Prasad , Amarnath Gupta, Bishnu Devan and Abdul Rahaman
6	Mugu	Om Shanti Geeta Pathsala, Patanjali Yough Samiti, Shanti Kunja Samiti, Gopal Samiti, Baudda Samaj, Sanatan Dharama Samanaya Samiti, Om Satya Sai Samiti, Gossamiti,	Tilak Prasad, Jay Bahadur Malla, Chetana Shahi, Raju Malla, Sonal Lama, Tirtha Raj Chaulagai, Yam Halim, Prakash Malla, Bhim Prasad Chaulagai
7	Kathmandu	Kabir hermitage, World Hindu Federation, Vaidik Satan Karma Kanda Sangh, Sulakchhena Bihar, Sagarmatha Church, Islamic Sangh, Satya Sai Kendra, Caritas Nepal, Bahai National and Regional Centre, Brahma Kumari Raj Yog Kendra, National Christian Federation, Art of Living , Rastriya Mahila Jotis Sangh, Shree Krishana Pranami Sangh, Nepal Magar Samaj, Art of Living Myanner temple,	Hari Prasad Phandey, Joshi Ven Piyadarsi, B.K. Ram Singh, Lila Lamichana, Dr. Isu Jung Karki, Mira Sharma, and Matrika Pyakuryal,

Activity 5: Develop public article, cover stories, opinion –ED and column on denouncement on child marriage and other harmful practices from religion perspective

NIRN Nepal conducted the desk review of the religious scripture, text and saying to generate evidence and linkage on child marriage and other harmful practices to develop article and cover stories.

During this quarter, the project has published three articles on child marriage and other social evils. Most of the concerns related to child marriage and other social harmful practices are covered and highlighted into the articles along with the goal of NIRN Nepal and role and responsibilities of religious leader to end child marriage.

Below are the listed of Newspaper in which the articles were published

1. On 12th September 2014, the article entitled "Dharama Ko Gyan Lai Babaharma Utarau" written by Dr Anoja Guruma at "The Commander Post".
2. On 20th June, the article "War on social evil" in the Republica.

Achievement: Most of the concerns related to child marriage and other harmful practices were covered in the articles to aware the communities on child marriage. The articles also covered the goal of NIRN Nepal and highlighted the important role and responsibilities of religious leaders to end child marriage

Photo Features



Figure 1 Rally against Child Marriage in Bajura district



Figure 2 Interaction taking place about Child Marriage in Humla



Figure 3 Religious Leaders giving speech on the issue of Child marriage in Dhanusa



Figure 2 Bakhar Eid Namaz's Fatwa in Saptari



Figure 4 Interaction Program In Jain Bhawam



Figure 5 International Day of peace in Shanti SewaAsram



Figure 7 Participants during orientation program



Figure 6 Interaction program on child marriage among religious leaders

धर्मको ज्ञानलाई ^{अज्ञात - मोक्ष} व्यवहारमा ^{अज्ञात मोक्ष २६ २०६९} उतारौं ^{September 12th}

नि,
स्थ,
हे मयह,
देवित (सकजात्रिणी २५)
पय, जाति भाइ, जन्म सखी
का जाति मो कम जगज्जना
कास, क्षात्री मोहि तपाईलाई
तान्म, मुद्वेदी विष्णुकी एकाई
मलाई नलाई दिनुतोस ।
मलाई अलिकति धात छ
बळण हो भवने :
हमेकवेश, जितेरित साधुतर
तब धम्ममाण, त्व हि कि

(४०) धर्मको रस जन्मन्त उताम
 जुले आजा हनुमएको धर्म
 जुले आजा पाएको छु यदि
 उपभोग दिना तपाईं मलाई
 यी । राजाले भने है साध्वी
 भए महान्त्र भने फुजा जग
 अहः सुविधा, धाद, नभु सनै
 नरन भाएको नु तपाईंलाई
 यो शरीर तात्केक अने वंकी
 हे भन्यो त्यसो भए अहिनै
 हे म तिमी शरीरको मानु
 । भोक मेडाउछु, रगत पिछर
 भन धर्मको कुल सुनाउछु
 । पदेस सुनाउन म सकिन
 । तपाईं मलाई छानु हनुछ भने
 छु सुनाउने ? त्यसकरन

पहिला धर्म तपस्येना हिनु ज्ञानि मनाई आनु ।
राखल्ले भय्यो मवाई माणिकेचो विव्हास ।
समजून कृपा सुनिकेचोचो भाव जाणवु । राजाले
राखल्ले भय्यो विव्हास विव्हासगुणभरी । राजाले
आजुको विव्हास दुस्रो पठाई बायलो र राजाजो
लखको दुसऱ्या जेजीव मनी र आणु पठाइल्ले
तुन उगयो र मनी म मुखा ओ गडु । तिमी
मार्गनाई हायकना, तिमीने हायकनाको र
मैले मुखा पावलो हायकना म तिमीलाई धर्म
जुपनास गर्मलु । सम्यो दुई जनालाई काढदा
ह्वाज, तपस्योलाई धर्म जुपनास र मवाई राजल
र मानु । जो कुरा मुखा रवना पवनास जालु
मै हायकनाचु । त्यही सम्यो कुराधारी राखल्ले
समजाले मुखा भावो र माणिकेचो

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डा. भिक्षुणी अनोजा गुरुमा

म शुद्धिरीत्यादयो वाच्येभ्य एतन्मै सुतम भाष्येण
कार्यकारण भन्वा म सत्त्वं छिन्नं हास्यो विनियोगो
वाच्यकीर्तिं प्रवर्तयतां अस्मि मांश्च जगत्तु छन्द
नान्मै पुनश्चातं गच्छन्तु । त्वार्थं पार्थिवं भवन्तु
जस्तौ विद्यो जगत्तु जे क्षाए भाषाणि वरिषास्तु
सुते भाषाणि विष्णु । त्वो जगत्तु भाषाणि वाच
कार्येभ्य । म म मेरा हास्यो विनियोगो जगत्तु
गच्छन्तु । त्वस्य चन्द्रकीर्तिं भाषा जगत्तु कार्या
विष्णु भन्ते पार्थिव विद्यो त्वो मन्वादि वाच्यं छिन्न ।
तत्त्वो ग्रन्थ भाषाणि वरिषास्तु गच्छन्तु ।

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एक दिन आता पक्काजत जाता थात उठाएली
त गेटेवाकरी दुली संप जरी राखली पाए ।
त्येवेला मैम कळकळुन पाहते गरी संधीकरी
हेरिरे सारंगे पनि मलाई हेरिवाकरी । खडपाड
सकदा सकी सारकें कात गयो यी मलाई
कात गेल । त्यसवेला आत र बुझीको रायप
बहत गेली हुन । त्येवेळीच भागना बुझले
भणुनपायले छ कि गरी र पुरुषमा केरी करक
हेत केजत बुझे मात करक छ । होत दांडमा
पासपास पडिवात छ सकित पनि आत ज्ञान

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भयने गभीरिदम् । रत्ना पनि रागय निकली
रागय बेकार गयोली भगवान् बुझ्यो राजेश्वर
सुन जना तथे । महापत्नी भलीका भगवती
चिन्त । एक दिन राजा जयन्त एकै ठाउँ पुगेका
सुनिश्चये जेना एक जना सेवक अस्तर राजाको
माथमा बुझ्नुन भयो महाराज महापत्नीको
पुगीको जम्ब दिनुनएको छ । राजाले एकै
अस्ता राखेकोले पुगी जम्बको कुरल्ले मम मम
गन गन र सुखी भयोका सुनयनमा पर्योस्ती पेंथियो ।
ठिक त्यसैलेका भगवान् बुझ्यो भगवान् नारी
र एकभौकी भारीक लेकी भगतमात्रको छ
कोनै कुरामा कोनै फरक छैन । राजाकोना
पाउनपनि जल्दी भयो । विद्या राजकोनालाई
विद्य भगवान्को विद्या पनि भयो । सधैरै

[illegible]

कायभा मेसिन में
ठिकते गवा हासों में
आउछ। छोरासे
है नायक पाउने छै
होने पाउने नहार्ने।
मेरा सानो कदा मेरा
मेरी बुलावाई सिउ
मेरो कोबुभएली
भीयसी राधकसी पि
मेरो बुलावै सगना न
बक्यो। पायो किना
कि भनी आउ। रहे
कठिन को-कठिन छै
सगल पाउने छै।

भाव आनाको दुःखः
 पालन पोषण पणि न
 छन् । छोरी, जुहारी
 सबै रूपमै रहन्छन् ।
 भगवान् मुद्धले
 भामा सम्मान, श्रीम
 साधीजस्तो हँ सैयक
 पुरुष मित्रा समान भ
 समान सेवक अस्तो
 श्रीमती केवल मुष्ण ।
 सुख, दुःख बाँडो सा
 हो । भारत नै नेपाल
 जमै न जाउँ जर
 गाउँमा भक्ति प्रति :
 पुरुषले ए मित्र रा
 अत्याचार नै गरेका

War on social evils

Interfaith alliance to take on the ills of society

SANGEET SANGROULA
KATHMANDU, June 30

Among various social evils prevalent in the Nepali society in the name of religious belief, tradition and culture, the practice of child marriage is one of the most concerning ones.

Despite the legal prohibition of marriage below the age of 18, two out of five girls are married off before they turn 18, according to a study conducted by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The UN agency estimates that if the present trend continues 688,000 of the young girls born in between 2005-2010 will be married off before they become 18 years old by 2030.

Similarly, caste-based discrimination still pervades the country though the government has already outlawed any form of discrimination based on so-called caste. Members of the Dalit communities are still marginalized in society due to the deep rooted religious ills.

Likewise, violence against women especially in rural areas on the allegation of practicing witchcraft continues unabated. Witchery is also a concept deeply engrained in the religious sphere among some of the major religions practiced in Nepal.



Representatives of National Inter-Religious Network, Nepal (NIRN) discussing ways to tackle social ills being practiced in the country in this recent photo.

