

An Evaluation of the Nepal Education Project, 2010 to 2015



Jagannath Adhikari
Thomas Robertson
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Executive Summary

Introduction

This is an end of the project evaluation of 'Nepal Education Project' implemented between 2010 and 2015 in 10 districts in Nepal by Anti-Slavery International, Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), and Backward Society Education (BASE). The project was aimed at ending the cycle of labour exploitation by facilitating access to education and skills training for children of former and current Kamaiya and Haliya bonded labourers in Nepal.

Kamaiya are generally landless Tharu agricultural laborers who, unlike regular tenants, fall into debt to their landlords and work to repay the debt. In the worst cases, the debt is passed on from generation to generation. In the early 2000s, there were roughly 19,000 Kamaiya families.

The Haliya of far-western Nepal are agricultural labourers, generally illiterate untouchable dalits, who have become trapped in debt and caste obligations to higher caste landlords. Despite significant recent changes, the Haliya--like all dalits in the mid West and far West--often face very harsh caste-based social discrimination: they are denied education, government services, and face poor treatment wherever they go. In the early 2000s, there were approximately 17,000 Haliya families.

Both the Kamaiya and the Haliya have benefitted from freedom movements during the last two decades, led by NGOs and the people themselves. After many years of grassroots organizing and political lobbying (led in part by one of the partners for this project, the Backward Society of Nepal or BASE), in July 2000 the government declared freedom for Kamaiyas. The Nepali government declared their freedom in September 2008 and passed a Haliyas (Labour Prohibition) Act in 2010.

Although the political movements and government proclamations have helped, real freedom is not possible without economic independence. Government programs have been established but they have brought only limited improvements.

The situation is particularly worrisome for the children of ex-Kamaiya and Haliya. Historically, large numbers of Kamaiya and Haliya children have not attended school. Their lack of literacy and numeracy have contributed to their exploitation. Although this situation is changing, many Kamaiya and Haliya face big obstacles in attaining an education. Many have either never enrolled in mainstream schools or have dropped out due to work pressures or poverty – families migrate for seasonal work, families are unable to afford school uniforms and supplies, as well as pressure to assist their parents through work both in and outside of the home. Additionally, Kamaiya and Haliya children who go to school often face discrimination based on caste and gender.

This Evaluation

The major objective of the present assignment was to assess the difference the project has made in the lives of ex Kamaiya and Haliya children and make recommendations for strengthening the project.

Methods and Approaches

The study uses both primary and secondary data, both quantitative and qualitative. Work began with review of the relevant programme documents from BASE and INSEC.

Fieldwork was conducted from July 19 to August 8, 2015. Six districts of the 10 project districts were selected for the field study, three from each area. Major tools used in the data collection included FGD, Key Informant Interview (KII), Observations, and informal chitchat. Separate checklists were prepared for each data collection tool.

Immediately after the completion of the fieldwork in each site, preliminary observations and major findings were shared among the concerned staffs of the respective partner.

Once the draft report was prepared, it was circulated among ASI, BASE and INSEC. Feedback and comments thus collected are incorporated in this final report.

Findings and Results

In terms of achieving the numerical targets set for each year, both partners have been successful. However, some gaps were identified.

Overall, the theory of change focused on education has worked. The education of children of Kamaiyas and Haliyas has helped these communities in not becoming dependent on higher caste or their masters even for small things like writing a letter, an application, filling a form, reading and understanding the notice, and for simple calculations.

The programmes are doing good work at a reasonable price.

It seems the programmes are just hitting their stride (the administration and implementation is getting better as all staff, facilitators, and students are getting more experience), so it would be unfortunate to abandon them now.

In addition, there are many children that the program has not been able to reach yet. Many children have gained from the program, but many other children could benefit if the programme could continue.

Outcome 1. Children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and their parents are empowered to understand, assert, and claim their right to education.

Finding. The ASI NEP programme conducted by BASE and INSEC has contributed by emphasizing that ALL children have a right to go to school.

The main tool used in the NEP programme to increase student empowerment, the CRAG, has attained significant student empowerment, although for a small subset of the student population. Some students, especially older students who received training through the Child's Rights and Awareness Group (CRAG), are able to verbally articulate their rights

in a basic way, and some in a sophisticated way. But not all CRAG members can do so effectively, some remain hesitant, especially younger ones.

CRAG groups mostly discuss general school concerns. All the groups have discussed social inclusion problems but concrete action has been more sporadic, although sometimes quite impressive. Within the CRAG groups, the Kamaiya and Haliya children are involved but they are generally less vocal and less assertive compared to others, despite consistent improvements in their expression.

The ASI NEP programme has made laudable, important first steps in spreading student participation and decision-making.

The ASI NEP programme does not directly train and equip parents, although the programme has worked to create some opportunities for Kamaiya and Haliya parents to voice their concerns.

Outcome 2. Out of school male and female children of former bonded labourers (8-15 years old) in the project areas are able to access and continue school education with progression to higher classes starting with bridging and preparatory courses (provided outside of formal education setting).

Finding. Interviews with students, teachers, and district officials (a relatively small sample size) suggests the preparatory class has helped prepare both Kamaiya and Haliya participants to attend regular classes but that monitoring of their progress once in regular classes is low and inconsistent. It is clear that preparatory class did help in re-enrolling students and in refreshing what was learnt before. Once in school students in both BASE and INSEC programs have a high pass rate.

Data on drop outs is scarce, both among government officials and in the program. More and better tracking of students would yield big benefits.

The overall reach of the project was reasonable given the funding, but small given the problem. Many more at risk children from these marginalized groups could be reached.

Outcome 3. Children outside of school aged 16 – 18 in the project areas gain enhanced employment opportunities as a result of vocational and skills development training.

Finding. During the project, 361 youth (108 Boys, 253 girls) received vocational skill training, and 300 Haliya youths (120 boys and 180 girls).

Most trainees are reported to be employed or to have work (see below for BASE and INSEC). Some trainees reported a good income –about double of what they could earn as daily wage labourer (about Rs 9000 a month compared to 4500). In Nepal's most successful training programs like Employment Fund (implemented by HELVETAS – a well-known I/NGO in skill training and supported by Swiss Govt), the average income of all trainees increased by three times.

Improvements in selection of trade and support for initial investment would help increase the number of vocational trainees finding solid employment.

Three months is generally not enough time to make trainees ready for independent business, unless there's a chance for apprenticeship. Generally two rounds of training, totaling six months, are better than one longer training.

The overall reach of the project was reasonable given the funding, but small given the problem. Many more people could be reached.

Outcome 4. Duty bearers in the project areas are responsive to the needs and rights of the children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and take measures to increase their access to education.

Finding. Visits to governmental offices in two districts revealed knowledge of the ASI NEP program, some collaboration, and general responsiveness. The Watchdog groups are active and have made many requests to district officials. They are representative of all settlements, active, committed, and effective but there is room for improvement-- They could meet more regularly and be more organized about how they identify and analyze problems, prioritize them, create related strategy, assign tasks, etc.

Value for Money. BASE and INSEC have carried out their activities at reasonable cost. INSEC in particular has a difficult task working with widely dispersed Haliya groups in the hills.

Programme Sustainability. In a context where very few programs in Nepal last on their own, the NEP faces many difficulties. On an individual level, the students and vocational trainings are likely to use many of the skills they have gained from the program. Some of the teachers will. Despite the positive results of the program, the CRAG groups and Watchdog groups might grow inactive once the program ends, as most committees do in Nepal once the funding ends. Their roots need more time to grow deeper. That said, there were signs that some of the groups and some of their activities might persist.

Recommendations Regarding CRAG

1. **Improve CRAG with more training and more regular meetings.**
2. **Open CRAG groups in more schools.** Because the CRAG groups are doing good work both for the students involved and the school and local community, it would be good to spread the programs.
3. **Expand the base of Expert Teachers at each School.** Where possible, have the CRAG facilitator and the prep class teacher be separate people.
4. **Provide Training/Discussion for other teachers in children's rights and children's participation.**

5. **For BASE: Have CRAG teacher teach a class a month on child rights, as INSEC does.** This is a low-cost and efficient way to spread the message of children's rights to education, the problems of social exclusion, and general importance of children's participation in decision making to many students.

Recommendations Regarding Preparatory Class and Schools

1. **Make sure the Bridge Class is the full period per day, and the proper number of months. There should be no shortcuts.**
2. **Create Better Evaluation/Tracking of attendance and achievement.** A separate file should exist for each student with information added every three months on attendance, family problems, strong subjects, weak subjects, etc. This is feasible given the resources of the programme and very desirable. It will allow earlier interventions where there are problems and better understanding of problems such as who is dropping out and why.
3. **Funding permitting, expand the Prep/Bridge classes to other schools.** The programme has generally been effective, but its reach so far has been small.
4. **Incorporate low cost programs that have shown success in Nepal:** pre-school programs, regular health programs (worm medicine is free and very effective but often not given regularly), tiffin meal programs, vision checks.
5. **Develop more understanding among teachers and other educators about the psychology of marginalized and at risk students.** Teachers should have much greater awareness about the bigotry of low expectations, and the need to create a supportive environment for at risk Kamaiya and Haliya children, especially those facing big obstacles at home. One big problem is unnecessary scolding of students.

Recommendations Regarding Vocational Training Program

1. **Create Better Tracking of achievement.** The partners do lots of monitoring and collect information about the participants regularly. The process could be improved with 1) more systematic compiling of the information (in one overview document) and 2) breaking down the category 'employed.' The categories monitored should be more than just 'employed' and 'not employed.'
2. **Look for opportunities to provide trainings in construction fields needed for earthquake reconstruction.** The April 25 earthquake damaged more than 85,000 buildings in the 14 most-affected districts and the government has aimed to train 60,000 construction professionals--carpenters, masons, etc.--in disaster-resilient building skills to address the shortage of trained workers. Many of these skilled labourers earn excellent wages. In some cases ex Kamaiyas already go to Kathmandu to work in these fields. These connections could be expanded.

3. **Expand programme of career planning and career counseling before trainings.** The better the discussion and preparation before the training, the better the results.
4. **Diversify the skills training area.** Continual research is needed to determine new skills needed in the market and to avoid market saturation.
5. **Give longer trainings where possible.** In general, longer trainings get better results, unless an apprenticeship can be arranged.
6. **Add training in business skills and finances.** Some business/financial skills should be in every training, as this is lacking in the present training course.
7. **Provide Seed money for trainees, if possible, or help create savings/credit groups.** Providing seed money with no interest for two years to start a business can help trainees establish businesses. Many interviewees pointed to this problem. One idea is to create savings/credit groups among the trainees. They could save together and share ideas.
8. **Considering giving bonuses to training instructors if the trainee gets a good paying job.** Other training programs do something like this with very good results.
9. **Provide certificates for all trainings.** A certificate from an accredited institution is especially useful in overseas employment but also within Nepal. This is especially so in case of BASE. Trainees in INSEC areas often received certificates because they participated in government trainings. Note that certificates can also be given based on skill-testing.
10. **Study the possibility of making a 'Job Centre.'** A job centre might help connect trainees to jobs.
11. **Expand the Age Groups involved in trainings.** Many stakeholders wanted to expand the age group to 16-25 so that many more youths can be engaged in enterprises and get skill-based employment. Younger trainees also have trouble getting resources from their family to start a business.
12. **Make better relations with Small Business, Animal, and Agricultural government offices.** Help trainees fill out the forms for these offices and explain the process. This will allow them to be invited for programs.

Recommendations Regarding Duty Bearers

1. **Make Watchdog Committee more organized and systematic.** Push to make the Watchdog group meet more than once every 3 months to create more momentum and make work more systematic and organized. Every 2 months would be better.
2. **Provide more training for Watchdogs committees on children's rights, children's participation, and effective advocacy.** The Watchdog groups were better informed on general Kamaiya and Haliya concerns--less so on children's participation.

3. **Expand the Watchdog Network to the VDC level.** Although much of the key advocacy and information-gathering work needs to happen on the VDC level, district level Watchdog Groups have neither the time nor the funding to do this except in maybe one or two VDCs. If existing institutional structures are used (that is, existing committees), expansion can happen with little cost.
4. **Create formal sharing opportunities between the Watchdog group and the political parties.** Both Kamaiya and Haliya/Dalits are substantial voting blocs yet that power is not represented in the political process.
5. **Create Semi-Annual Watchdog meetings with government officials and political parties.** The parties need to know that there are organized, active groups that they will hear from.
6. **Provide funds for Watchdog district committees to make visits to programme schools and trainings.** The Watchdog groups often had little contact with the grassroots parts of the programme (CRAG, Prep, and Vocational).
7. **Make effort to get exceptions for school fees for Kamaiya and Haliya children.** It may be impossible to end the system of fees (school is supposed to be free), but it might be possible to create exceptions for the poorest of the poor.

Recommendations--Other Subjects

1. **Create more Haliya leaders.** Strategic scholarships at the high school and college level could make a big difference.
2. **Improve project management by:** 1) providing timely delivery of funds to the district offices from ASI/head office/regional office, 2) providing some flexible funds at district level so that district programme assistant can fund creative ideas that could come during the course of implementation of the program, 3) harmonizing the yearly programme cycle (eg mid-July to mid-July) according to the government so that co-ordination or joint activity (eg training for skill development) can be undertaken effectively.
3. **Provide more advocacy at the central (Kathmandu) level:** Some issues (eg scholarships for ex-Kamaiya boys) and livelihood support for the parents (so that they can support their children) related to the government require advocacy at the central level as they are decided at this level.
4. Programme directors/M&E evaluators' **regular field visits** (covering all districts, especially remote ones) is important. This is required for both understanding the ground reality and to liaise with line agencies.

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Glossary

Drop Outs

There are many categories of drop outs--drop outs from the ASI NEP programme's preparatory bridge class and drop out from school once participants have been enrolled. Students who never participated in the ASI programme but who have left school are also called drop outs.

Haliya

The Haliya of far-western and mid-western Nepal are agricultural labourers, generally illiterate untouchable dalits, who have become trapped in debt and caste obligations to higher caste landlords, often for generations. The term Haliya derives from the Nepali term *halo*, which refers to the wooden plough normally pulled by oxen or buffalo. The *hali* is the man who ploughs. Dalits also provides other caste services like tailoring, blacksmithing, and leather works (particularly shoe making) to higher caste households and are provided with kind support at the end of the year. People providing these services under the traditional system of yearly payment have also been included as Haliyas by the government.

Kamaiya

This term can be confusing. It is a general term for a Tharu agricultural worker, but in recent years it has come to refer to the Tharu bonded labourers--labourers who work to pay off an often unpayable debt--in the districts of Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur in Nepal's mid West and Far West Nepal. Under the system, the entire family is expected to provide labor to the landlord, including children. In the worst cases, the debt is passed on from generation to generation.

Out of School Children

Following on from the Mid-Term review BASE and INSEC have agreed on the working definition of out of school children as those that do not regularly attend school, whether they have been previously enrolled or not (the government of Nepal defines out of school children as only those that have never enrolled, not including those that have dropped out).

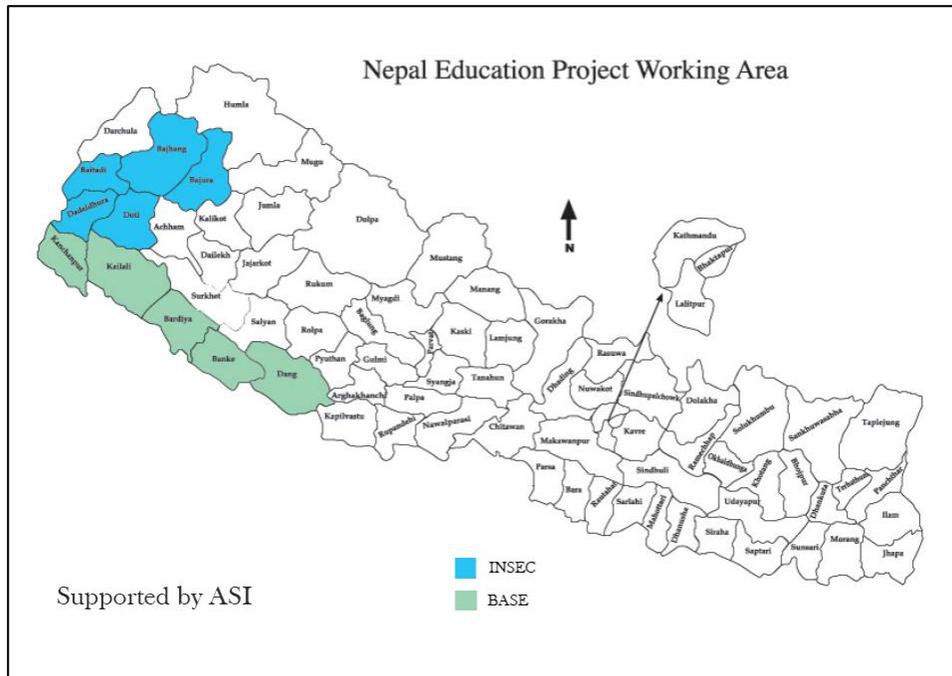
Background

This is an end-of-project evaluation of 'Nepal Education Project' implemented between 2010 and 2015 in 10 districts in Nepal by Anti-Slavery International, Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC), and Backward Society Education (BASE). The project aimed to end the cycle of poverty and labour exploitation by facilitating access to education and skills training for children of former and current Kamaiya and Haliya bonded labourers in Nepal. Access to education is a critical component in the fight against slavery and discrimination because it helps to erode the traditional economic and social barriers. It provides a gateway for expanded economic opportunity, a platform for the assertion of other basic rights, and a focus for community organisation.

For decades, the Kamaiya system has been a prominent aspect of social relations within the ethnically Tharu areas of the western terai plains, particularly in the districts of Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur. Kamaiya are generally landless Tharu agricultural laborers who, unlike regular tenants, fall into debt to their landlords and work to repay the debt. They borrow money for many reasons: for food, medical treatment, festival celebrations and marriages. Under the Kamaiya system, the entire family is expected to provide labor to the landlord, including children. In the worst cases, the debt is passed on from generation to generation. In the early 2000s, there were roughly 19,000 Kamaiya families.

The Haliya of far-western Nepal are agricultural labourers, generally illiterate untouchable dalits, who have become trapped in debt and caste obligations to higher caste landlords, often for generations. The term Haliya derives from the Nepali term *halo*, which refers to the wooden plough normally pulled by oxen or buffalo. The *hali* is the man who ploughs. According to Hindu tradition, brahmins (*bahun* in Nepali) are prohibited from plowing so as not to exploit the cow or harm the earth. Often the hali is dalit, and part of the caste system's patron client relationships in which higher castes give blacksmiths, tailors, and leather workers grains and food in exchange for work. In recent decades, in central and eastern Nepal, halis often work for wage labor or yearly payments. But in much more conservative western Nepal (mostly in 12 districts of the mid West and Far West), until recently haliya have usually been bonded to unfair and unpayable debts. Unlike the Tharu Kamaiya, the haliya farmer tends to live on his own land, often a tiny parcel. In addition, despite significant recent changes, the Haliya--like all dalits in the mid West and far West--often face very harsh caste-based social discrimination: because of their caste, they are denied education, government services, and face poor treatment wherever they go. In the early 2000s, there were approximately 17,000 Haliya families.¹

¹ Bal Kumar KC, Govind Subedi, and Bhim Raj Suwal, *Forced Labour of Adults and Children in the Agricultural Sector of Nepal: Focusing on Haruwa-Charuwa in Eastern Tarai and Haliya in Far-Western Hills* (International Labour Organization, 2013), 91. Also see Sigdel, K.R. 2010. "20,000 Haliyas Await another Tragedy in Nepal after Kamaiyas." *The Kathmandu Post*. April 20, 2010. Some reports put the number of Haliya households over 19,000.



Map Source: Dhakal, Mid Term Report, Anti-Slavery International, 2013.

Both Kamaiya and Haliya fall under the government of Nepal's definition of bonded labor, as defined in the the Kamaiya Labour (Prohibition) Act, 2002. The Act has defined the term 'Bonded Labour System' as follows:

- A forced or partly forced labour system in consideration of an advance obtained by him/her or by any of his/her lineal ascendants and in consideration of the interest, if any, due on such advance, or
- Labour rendered in pursuance of any customary or social obligation by himself or by his family members for a specified or unspecified period either without wages or for nominal wages, or
- Forfeiture of the right to move freely and forfeiture of the right to appropriate or sell at market value any of his/her property or product of own labour or the labour of a member of family or any person dependent, or
- A system that denies a choice of alternatives and compels to adopt one particular course of action requiring labour or service.

During the last two decades, both the Kamaiya and the Haliya have benefitted from freedom movements, led by NGOs and the people themselves. After many years of grassroots organizing and political lobbying (led in part the partners for this project, BASE and INSEC), in July 2000 the government declared freedom for Kamaiyas. 18,400 families gained their freedom. Of these, about 13,500 were landless. The average



Photo: Haliya village in Baitaidi

duration in bondage was between 10-15 years.²

Because the government's action for Kamaiya did not address the problems of the Haliya system, a separate freedom movement emerged. INSEC and a Lutheran NGO (the Lutheran World Federation or LWF/Nepal) played very important roles. The Nepali government declared their freedom in September 2008 and passed a Haliyas (Labour Prohibition) Act in 2010. Of the roughly 17,000 Haliyas, 10,622 have been certified by the government and 7,372 have received ID cards.³

Although the political movements and government proclamations have helped, real freedom is not possible without economic independence. "As long as they have no economic base," one government official familiar with Kamaiya told us, "they will need more assistance." To that end, in 2001 the Nepali government developed a programme of giving up to 10 katthas of land (0.35 ha)--usually less--to each landless Kamaiya family with financial support to build a house. The government has made promises for the rehabilitation of ex-Haliya but the programme itself has moved very slowly. Only a handful of families in each of the affected districts has received any land or assistance.

Both groups have been thrown from a feudal set of relations--dependency on a landlord--to a rudimentary form of market-based capitalism dominated by competitive wage labor.

Today, the situation for both former Kamaiya and Haliya is improved but tenuous. Kamaiya have moved to camps where land was provided or where they have been able to settle on public land. They are generally very aware of their rights yet face very difficult economic hurdles. They lack economic resources, education and training, and social and political connections. Despite the government's programs, many Kamaiya are still not formerly rehabilitated.

The situation may be worse for Haliya. Many Haliya have not received ID cards and have not been provided with any rehabilitation packages by the government. Without

² BASE, "Baseline Survey--Protecting Nepalese Children from Bonded Labour through Education Project," Draft Report, 2014.

³ MoLRM, GoN. 2072 (2015). *Freed Haliya Rehabilitation and Livelihood Development Program. Annual Progress Report*. Page 16. Table 1.

other good options, some continue to work as bonded labour. They would prefer some other arrangement but have no good alternative. Unfortunately, solid information about both Kamaiya and Haliya--even basic numbers--is very hard to come by.

The situation is particularly worrisome for the children of ex-Kamaiya and Haliya. Most Kamaiya and Haliya cannot read or write and have not sent their children to school. Their lack of literacy and numeracy have contributed to their exploitation. The situation is changing, but many Kamaiya and Haliya children still face big obstacles in attaining an education. Many have either never enrolled in schools or have dropped out due to work pressures or poverty – families migrate for seasonal work, families are unable to afford school uniforms and supplies, as well as pressure to assist their parents through work both in and outside of the home. Additionally, Kamaiya and Haliya children who go to school often face discrimination based on caste and gender. (For example, at one of the schools we visited, all of the dalit students were forced by other students to sit in the back rows.)

To provide more educational opportunities to the children of former Kamaiya and Haliya children, Anti-Slavery International has joined forces with INSEC and BASE on a five-year project in 10 districts of Nepal. It partners with BASE in the five districts where Kamaiya live in large numbers and with INSEC in the five hill districts with high numbers of Haliya.

The partners are working towards four outcomes:

1. Children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and their parents are empowered to understand, assert and claim their right to education.
2. Out of school male and female children of former bonded labourers (8-15 years old) in the project areas are able to access and continue school education with progression to higher classes starting with bridging and preparatory courses (provided outside of formal education setting).
3. Children outside of school aged 16 – 18 in the project areas gain enhanced employment opportunities as a result of vocational and skills development training.
4. Duty bearers in the project areas are responsive to the needs and rights of the children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and take measures to increase their access to education.

Outcomes 1 and 4 were added at the start of year 4 because of a need to increase awareness of the importance of education among the Haliya and Kamaiya communities and among key stakeholders including local government and schools. (See Appendix A for the original 2010 key outcomes.)

This assessment was conducted in July and August 2015. According to the Consultants contract, the main purpose of the evaluation is to

1. Assess the achievements of the project and identify its impact;

2. Ascertain whether funds have been used effectively and efficiently;
3. Share lessons that have been learned around the project design and management, and
4. Provide recommendations pertaining to this project and the wider issue of addressing bonded labour in Nepal.

Background on Project Partners

BASE (Backward Society of Nepal) is a mass membership organization that played a central role in the freedom of Kamaiyas. It has 300,000 members at present. It is also a rapidly expanding organization, which now works in 17 of the country's 75 districts, but focuses mainly on mid western and far western regions of the country.

According to its reports, it envisions the creation of an exploitation-free society in Nepal. It has a mission of building equitable, peaceful and advanced society in Nepal through advocacy, socio-economic development, human resource and institutional development, and cultural, environmental and human rights protection and preservation. Its main goal is to promote the accessibility of socially disadvantaged communities to ample opportunities and raise their living standards for the creation of an equitable and progressive society. BASE has realized that lack of basic education was a key factor for the exploitation of disadvantaged communities like Tharus. Accordingly, in its efforts to improve the socio-economic status of Kamaiyas, BASE has given priority on the education of Tharus. Its aims are to:

- Ensure the rights of deprived communities
- Improve the economic status of freed Kamaiyas and deprived people.
- Promote government's accountability towards the indigenous and marginalized people.
- Ensure quality of formal and non-formal education for all.
- Protect and promote the traditional culture and natural environment
- Improve the organizational capacity for its long term sustainability.
- Improve community health.

BASE has its own governance system composed of committees at village, area, district and central levels. The central level committee has 11 members, of which 4 are women. This committee looks after the every day administrative matters at the central level. The district committee similarly looks at administrative matters at district level. It also has its own administrative and financial policy to ensure the good financial management and quality implementation of the projects. The Executive Director has the overall role in administration and implementation of projects. Programme Co-ordinators are responsible for the overall implementation of respective projects they look after.

INSEC (Informal Sector Service Center) is one of Nepal's largest and most well established NGOs. It aims to protect and promote human rights, contributing to an improved state of human rights and social justice in Nepal. INSEC is a watchdog, lobbyist, policy interventionist, and an empowerment and mainstreaming agent. Core competencies include organizing campaigns, awareness creation and education programs for building people's capability to assert their civil and political rights, documentation and dissemination (nationally and internationally) of information on the human rights situation, education, monitoring, lobbying, advocacy, research and training on issues related to human rights. Work is focused on disadvantaged groups, particularly agricultural laborers, underprivileged women, and socially discriminated people including Dalits and children. (ASI Application to Comic Relief International).

In addition, INSEC has been implementing specific Human Rights awareness and capacity development programs targeting marginalized people including Dalits,

women, and ex-kamaiyas and ex-haliyas bonded agricultural labors and children, especially at grassroots level. In 1991, INSEC came to recognize the problem of bonded Kamaiya labor existed in Nepal's Mid-Western and Far-Western regions. It joined the struggle launched by the bonded labors and succeeded in compelling the state to declare their emancipation.

INSEC has regional offices in all of the five regions of the country, and also maintains a field office in the headquarters of all the 75 districts of the country, including the 5 districts where the NEP was conducted. Regional offices are given overall responsibility to implement projects. INSEC is known for its strong advocacy capacity in Nepal, and maintains a close links with government offices.

Anti-Slavery International, a charity organization based in the United Kingdom, is the world's oldest international human rights organization. It works at local, national and international levels to eliminate all forms of slavery around the world by supporting research to assess the scale of slavery in order to identify measures to end it, working with local organisations to raise public awareness of slavery, educating the public about the realities of slavery and campaigning for its end, and lobbying governments and intergovernmental agencies to make slavery a priority issue and to develop and implement plans to eliminate slavery. This organization places strong focus on programmes and advocacy.

Comic Relief International has supported NEP financially.

Methods

The Evaluation had five objectives (as defined in the Terms of Reference):

1. Identify the impact (positive and negative direct and indirect consequences) of the project.
2. To learn about what has been achieved through the project and the challenges encountered in implementation.
3. □o share lessons learnt with internal and external stakeholders.
4. □o account to local stakeholders and funders for the project's achievements.
5. Ascertain whether funds were used effectively and efficiently to deliver results.

The study was based on both desk study as well as interviews in the field (focus group discussions or FGDs and in-depth interviews) and both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Bond's criteria for voice and inclusion, appropriateness, triangulation, contribution, and transparency were used wherever possible.

The desk study involved project progress reports from BASE and INSEC. This helped determine what data already existed, primarily quantitative data. The remaining data were collected with the help of project's monitoring officials. Information was collected from different sources in order to triangulate.

Based on the desk study and general discussions with project officials (Kathmandu/Dhanagadi in case of INSEC and Dang in case of BASE), checklists were developed to guide the interviews and FGDs. These meetings and discussions were also useful to understand the project and how were they implemented and problems that arose during the implementation.

While in the field, we interviewed various beneficiaries representing different skills, locations and genders. Beneficiaries interviewed included

- children taking part in preparatory class,
- enrolled and continuing students,
- drop-out students,
- CRAG members representing both children of target group and others,
- parents,
- and children trained in vocational skills who were employed as well as those who were not employed.

Stakeholders interviewed included

- CRAG mentors,
- teachers who teach preparatory classes,
- other teachers,
- members of School Management Committees,
- Watchdog Committee members,
- and various related government officials and NGOs.



Photo: Evaluator team meeting with Prep course students

FGDs were held with students taking preparatory classes, CRAG members, teachers, and Watchdog committee members. Community members from the target population were also visited to understand their concerns.

Two research assistants from the target community (Tharu and Haliya – one male and one female) were employed.

So far as possible, we tried to reach as many as beneficiaries as possible and to take interviews in an independent and congenial manner. In many cases, children of target groups (eg Kamaiya and Haliya) were separately interviewed so that they are not overshadowed or guided by others about what to say. Attempts were also made to maintain independence and so many groups were met without the partner project officials.

Initially partner project officials developed field visit plans. We revised these plans based on the methodology and the need to meet a diverse type of beneficiaries. While in the field, as various knowledge gaps emerged, we made further adjustments.

The field study was conducted in six districts – three of BASE (Dang, Bardia and Kanchanpur) and three of INSEC (Dadeldhura, Baitadi and Doti). Initially, there was a plan to visit Bajura. But, because of the weather condition and landslides, researchers were advised that it is rather risky to visit Bajura at this time. So, instead, Baitadi was included in the study.

Limitations. Despite efforts to use methods to get unbiased and accurate accounts from the field, there were a number of limitations. First, most of the places visited and interviewees were selected by the partner organizations. Since the evaluators did not

know the beneficiaries, they had to stick with the interviewees selected by the partners.

We addressed this in two ways. In some meetings, partners' personnel from the partner organizations were present and in some they were asked to leave. This was to get free opinion from the interviewees. In other occasions, these personnel were present, because this was also a learning experience for them – learning about evaluation.

Also, as the fieldwork continued, evaluators asked to meet other beneficiaries that could help fill in the gaps in our understanding. We also asked to meet the beneficiaries that did not perform according to expectations like those who did not use the skills in which they were trained. Evaluators also asked to go to schools where results were not as expected. Evaluators also visited beneficiary communities (whose children went into the school through the program) and other similar communities who did not benefit. Even though these visits were brief they helped the evaluators to understand the situation.

Second, another limitation was that fieldwork was done mostly in accessible districts, especially in case of INSEC, which was unavoidable because of the short time duration of the fieldwork and roadblocks due to landslides. In case of BASE, evaluators did reach remote and marginal locations within the districts.

Meetings--Kamaiya Districts (Dang, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur)

1. CRAG: 3 groups
2. Parents: 2 small groups
3. Prep Class Teachers: 3 teachers (2 locations)
4. Prep Class Students: 4 groups
5. Vocational: 1 motorcycle repair group (males), 1 carpenter group (males), 2 mason groups (males), 5 sewing groups (all female and 1 male) plus (and 1 tea shop--outside BASE). We saw some in session and some already completed.
6. Watchdog Groups: 2 committees
7. Duty Bearers: 2 DEO Meetings, 1 WD, 1 Land Reform

Meetings--Haliya Districts (Dadeldura, Baitadi, Doti)

1. CRAG: 5 groups
2. Parents: 3 groups
3. Prep Class Teachers: 5 males (5 schools)
4. Prep Class Students: 5 groups
5. Vocational: 2 mobile repairs (all male), 3 groups hand hosiery (all female), 2 groups house wiring (working) 1 group house wiring (not working), 1

tailoring (all female)

6. Watchdog Groups: 3 committees
7. Duty Bearers: 3 CDOs, 3 DEOs, 3 Land Revenue Officers, 2 Haliya Mahasangh.

The specifics of whom we met are given in the appendix.

In addition, case studies of different types were produced. These case studies illustrate success, problems, challenges as well as future guidance if such projects are to be implemented again.

After visiting three districts of BASE, a debriefing session was organized in Dhanagadi with BASE's main officials. This two-hour session led to a good discussion and learning on both sides – project officials and evaluators. Evaluators presented their findings and gaps in data and information, which were then collected by project officials. Similar sessions were organized in Dhanagadi after the field visit to INSEC's area, and in Kathmandu at the INSEC head office.

While in Kathmandu, different projects implementing educational (basic and vocational skill) activities for the marginalized and oppressed people were consulted to discuss different approaches. Similarly, other stakeholders like Department and Ministry of Education and Ministry of Land Reform and Management (which has project/commission on Kamaiyas and Haliyas) were consulted.

Apart from project partners (BASE and INSEC) in Nepal, related officials in ASI and Comic Relief International were also consulted regarding the initiation and management of the project over five years.

Findings and Discussion

Outcome 1--Empowering Kamaiya/Haliya Children and Parents to Claim Rights

Desired Outcome. Children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and their parents are empowered to understand, assert and claim their right to education.

The Context: Education in Nepal. It now seems a widespread norm for younger children in Nepal to attend school, even in the target areas. This norm has been established across Nepal, but it has needed reinforcement in isolated areas, such as Nepal's mid-West and Far West. Schools are relatively new in Nepal overall and in these areas in particular, literacy rates are low, there's tremendous geographic and social isolation and longstanding patterns of social deference, especially within the target groups. The efforts of many governmental and NGO programs have brought about these changes. The ASI NEP programme conducted by BASE and INSEC has contributed by emphasizing that ALL children have a right to go to school.

Importantly, most of the focus and activism has been on access to education. But nobody should have any illusions about the extremely low performance of most government schools in Nepal.

Student Empowerment. Interviews with students through FGD suggests that nearly all target group children have a basic understanding of their right to education. Children assert their rights through their actions (by going to school). But many older students drop out. (More explanation later in the document.)

Some students, especially older students who had received training through the Child's Rights and Awareness Group (CRAG), are able to verbally articulate their rights in a basic way, and some in a sophisticated way. As one CRAG teacher put it, "Now they are not afraid. They complain, make demands. It's different than before." But not all CRAG members can do so effectively, some remain hesitant, especially younger ones.

CRAG Formation and Activities. The main tool used in the NEP programme to increase student empowerment is the CRAG. CRAG (Child's Rights and Awareness Group) is a school-based group of 11 to 15 students selected by students (mostly by consensus but elections were held in very few cases) with mandatory participation/representation of children from the target group. They meet to make decisions about policies and activities that affect students and children. They were founded in schools through the efforts of the ASI NEP program. They generally meet weekly to organize extra-curricular activities on Fridays, and monthly to discuss various issues faced by students.

All the CRAG groups make suggestions to the school about student activities (such as quizzes, debates, and sport competitions), the school environment, and better school management. CRAGS also have been involved with school enrolment campaigns, and following up on children who are not attending school regularly. Some are more

independent, active, and ambitious than others. All the groups have discussed social inclusion problems but concrete action has been more sporadic. Some CRAGS have met VDC level authorities, in some cases with the help of School Management Committees (SMCs), to request funding for CRAG activities. We heard of two cases where CRAG members have taken action on caste discrimination (in INSEC case) and one case (Kamaiya site) where these students collected Rs 5 from interested students to support other students who did not come to school because of lack of dress.

Within the CRAG groups, the Kamaiya and Haliya children are involved (INSEC requires that 40% be from Haliya groups) but they are generally less vocal and less assertive compared to others, despite consistent improvements in their expression. They also usually take fewer leadership positions. BASE and INSEC have encouraged participation by everyone but full equality won't happen overnight.

It is important that non-Kamaiya and non-Haliya are involved in these groups; they can do a lot to raise awareness about caste discrimination and change practices.

Children's Participation. Student participation and decision-making is a laudable but ambitious goal in Nepal. In general, across Nepal children are expected to be quiet and do as they are told. Student-centric teaching was not seen in the targeted schools; it is generally very rare in Nepal, despite many years of government-sponsored trainings.

The CRAG facilitators generally understand the concept of children's participation but most ordinary teachers don't. There is also a feeling among other teachers that it is the job of CRAG facilitator to look after all the children's rights and awareness to education.

CRAG students are generally excited about the ability to have more decision-making authority. Older CRAG students understand the idea of student participation in decision-making, but the general student population does not.

For this reason, more training and follow-up is probably needed to deepen the understanding of facilitators and encourage more widespread implementation of the approach in more classrooms and more daily activities.

Parents Empowerment. Our limited sample suggests that many Haliya and Kamaiya parents understand children's rights to go to school and get quality education in a basic way and some have found ways to assert their rights (sending their children to school, asking for their scholarships), but they have very limited time and capacity. Much of their understanding has increased from other interventions (by the government and NGOs). The ASI NEP programme does not directly train and equip parents, although it does sometimes have meetings for and with them. In addition, some individual CRAG students have had discussions about children's rights with their parents and invited parents to CRAG events. That said, the programme has worked to create some opportunities for Kamaiya and Haliya parents to voice their concerns.

Outcome 1--Empowerment of Kamaiya Children and Parents--BASE

CRAG Formation and Participation. According to Base, 573 (291 Boys and 282 Girls)

are directly involved in CRAG activities through the 41 CRAGs. Of these, 218 (38%) are Kamaiya children (118 boys and 100 girls).

CRAG Voicing Concerns to SMCs. This differed from school to school. The most common requests made were the need for a toilet, drinking water taps, sports equipment, the leveling of school grounds, and the absence of teachers, and absence of other students in class. CRAG members and CRAG facilitator are invited to School Management Committee (SMC) meetings if important decisions are to be made, but present SMC guidelines do not include students as members. Some CRAG groups work with SMC to monitor student attendance and encourage students from poorer background to attend classes regularly (eg Bhuri village in Bardia).

Parents Empowerment. Parental involvement in School Management Committees has increased from 104 to 138. The numbers seem skewed by district. There are 2 in Dang and 16 in Bardiya but 41 in Kailali and 50 in Banke. The increase was small in Dang (from 0 to 2), Bardiya (from 15 to 16), and Kanchanpur (from 28 to 29). (Source: BASE). With parental involvement of Kamaiya, the location of the school is very important. If the school is located in the ex-Kamaiya camp, then the SMC generally has more ex-Kamaiya members. Involvement is a first step in the empowerment of parents in school management. They must also speak up and demand their rights. This is especially challenging in schools where there are fewer members from the targeted group.

Prep course irregularities. Through students we learned of the following possible problems.

Jana Chetana Pra Vi: 5 months but only 1 hour a day in year 4 of the program (the year before this one)

Shree Balkalyan Upper Secondary School, Samaiji, Dadeldhura: 1 hour a day for 4 months, Dadeldura

Sarada Ni Mabi, Baganaha V D C -1 Sahipur, Bardiya , 1 hour a day for only 3 months. The teacher added 2 months of volunteer teaching to make 5 months.

Perhaps these were schools where the Bridge course was only supposed to be 1 hour.

Outcome 1--Empowerment of Haliya Children and Parents--INSEC

CRAG Formation and Participation. Of 450 children targeted in 25 schools, 327 (164 Boys and 163 Girls) are involved in CRAG activities through 25 CRAG groups. Of these, 98 (30%) are Haliya children (52 boys and 46 girls).

CRAG Groups in Haliya Areas

District	Total Member			Haliya Member		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Baitadi	30	41	71	11	4	15
Bajhang	32	33	65	15	13	28
Dadeldhura	29	34	63	4	13	17
Doti	42	28	70	13	11	24
Bajura	31	27	58	9	5	14
Total	164	163	327	52	46	98

(Source: Insec)

CRAG Concerns to SMCs. CRAG groups raised the following concerns in School Management Committee (SMC) meetings: educational and sports materials, scholarships for dalits, timely distribution of textbooks, caste and gender discrimination in school. CRAG committees are also invited to participate in SMC if important decisions are to be made.

Child Rights Classes. In addition, CRAG facilitators give monthly lectures/discussion about child rights to general school students, usually meeting with a different grade level each month. These discussions are useful but provide only a quick introduction to the subject. Increasing the number of discussions would improve understanding but require more time from the facilitator. Partner organizations should insist that facilitators teach the required number of sessions.

Parents Empowerment. 97 Ex-Haliya parents (M: 65, F: 32) are the members of the school management committee in INSEC's 25 working schools. Before the project, there were 69 (see chart below).

Ex-Haliya Parent Participation in School Management Committees

District	Project Beginning			2015		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Baitadi	13	7	20	17	11	28
Bajhang	15	5	20	19	9	28
Dadeldhura	9	4	13	12	6	18
Doti	5	2	7	9	4	13
Bajura	6	3	9	7	3	10
Total	48	21	69	64	33	97

(Source: Insec)



Photo: Parents from Kamaiya community at a participating school

Outcome 2--Preparatory Class--General

Desired Outcome. Out of school male and female children of former bonded labourers (8-15 years old) in the project areas are able to access and continue school education with progression to higher classes starting with bridging and preparatory courses (provided outside of formal education setting).

Preparatory Class: The ASI NEP programme uses 'Preparatory classes' as a way to prepare out of school children in the target groups to enroll in school again and continue education to higher classes. Both BASE and INSEC provided preparatory bridging courses to students. The basic norm was to provide two hours class for five months for children in off-hours (morning and evening) of the school by a school teacher who was trained in multi-grade teaching by the project (although for INSEC it was 3 hours for 4 months). However, there were variations to this norm--shorter hours per day and fewer months--depending upon the availability and willingness of the teacher and school. After this class, students were enrolled in the grade in which they had studied before.

Overall Finding. Interviews with students, teachers, and district officials (a relatively small sample size) suggests the preparatory class has helped prepare both Kamaiya and Haliya participants to attend regular classes but that monitoring of their progress once in regular classes is low and inconsistent. It is clear that preparatory class did help in re-enrolling students and in refreshing what was learnt before. In some cases, individuals improved greatly. But, as preparatory course was short and the teacher had to teach to many levels at the same time, the prep class was generally not enough to significantly improve the competency of the students, except in some individual cases. Also, there were some problems with inconsistent implementation of the training and insufficient monitoring, such as short teaching period (1 hour per day) and short duration (3 months instead of 5 months). The problems with the preparatory class helps explain the low performance of these students in their regular class but they also face a very poor school

system and come from families without literacy. There were also low attendance rates among these students in their regular class.

Outcome 2--Preparatory Class--BASE

Access to Formal Education. BASE conducted 52 prep classes over 4 years. 880 ex-Kamaiya children (404 Boys and 476 Girls) successfully completed their preparatory class and entered school as regular students. In addition, a special campaign gained admittance for 171 ex-Kamaiya children into schools directly. (BASE information)

Drop Outs. According to BASE data, 65 of 880 (7%) have dropped out (of school after bridge programme or from bridge programme itself).⁴ However, the data do not appear to be consistent. BASE's central report lists 3 dropouts in Kanchenpur, yet the BASE Kachanpur district report lists 44 drop outs.

Reasons for Dropping Out (of school after bridge programme or from bridge programme itself): no money for fees; seasonal migration; no oversight of children; older students feeling uncomfortable being placed with younger children; marriage; lack of sanitation facilities at schools, especially for girls.

Quality of Educational Performance. Of the 880 students enrolled, 817 took the exam this year and 801 passed (98%). Of 986 total students (prep class and students from the enrollment campaign) (437 boys and 549 girls) who took the final exam this year, 967 passed, and 19 failed and were held back (2% today, 6 boys or 1.4% and 13 girls or 2.4%.) (Source: BASE)

However, although almost all the programme participants pass their exams and move up to higher grades, discussion with the students and teachers (based on only small sample size) suggests that their performance is low compared to other students in the same schools. Class attendance is generally low. In general, SLC performance for Tharu children is below the national average for government school students. This is mostly because of the lack of literacy at home and the very poor performance of government schools. More regularly monitoring of education performance besides just exam pass or fail would help (see recommendation), as would coaching, if there's budget. Some organizations have had good luck with low cost 'homework clubs' organized in nearby homes (not far away in schools) to give students a chance to help each other. Not enough data exists to compare Tharu children in the programme and out of the program.

The programme facilitator usually informally monitors the progress of students and sometimes provides assistance. But the monitoring is unsystematic and there's no formal programme for extra help. (See recommendation.)

Coverage/Unreached students. According to BASE data, the programme has reached

⁴ No data we saw distinguished between dropouts from school after the bridge program and dropouts from the bridge program. This would be useful information. But anecdotal evidence suggests that generally students dropped out not from the bridge program but from school after finishing the bridge program.

55 of 395 (14%) of Kamaiya settlements in the 5 districts (12 of 15 in Kanchanpur and 17 of 184 in Bardiya). Population numbers are not available. Rough estimates were requested but also not available. This coverage was very reasonable for the current programme and its financial outlay, but could be expanded if the programme is continued.

Project Coverage--Settlements Not Reached

District	Total Ex- Kamaiya Settlements	Ex Kamaiya Settlements in NEP Project	Ex-Kamaiya settlements Not Reached by NEP Project
Dang	65	10	55
Banke	22	6	16
Bardiya	184	17	167
Kailali	109	10	99
Kanchanpur	15	12	3
Total	395	55	340

(Source: BASE) Note: No information available about relative settlement size.

Outcome 2--Preparatory Class--INSEC

Access to Formal Education. 671 (284 Boys and 387 Girls) participants successfully completed their preparatory class. (INSEC Tracking Report June 2015)

Progress/Retention at School. According to INSEC, over the course of the program, 491 of the 516 who completed the bridge course AND enrolled in school have passed their exams and advanced. 25 (5%) have dropped out. This is a high pass rate and a low drop out rate. (The data here is only partial--516 not 671--because in the 1st and 2nd year of the program, not all who completed the bridge course enrolled in school. Many participants were on a vocational training path. In the last two years of the programme vocational training participants were not placed in the bridge course.)

Progress of Students from Prep Class to School and Pass/Dropout Rate

Activities	1st Year		2nd Year		3rd Year		4th Year	
	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Preparatory class	91	111	100	104	63	70	30	102
School Enrolled	51*	34*	78*	97*	68**	61	25	102
Progressed to higher class	50	30	73	93	66	58	24	97
Drop Outs from enrolled	1	4	5	4	2	3	1	5

* in the 1st and 2nd year, many prep course participants were vocational participants, not students headed for regular enrollment.)

**Some of these students took the prep class the previous year. (Source: Insec)



Photo: Boy from Haliya family who benefited from the prep course.

Students who completed Prep Class who later Dropped out of School

District	Project Year				Total
	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Baitadi	-	-	1	-	1
Bajhang	-	-	2	-	2
Dadeldhura	-	6	2	3	11
Doti	-	-	-	3	3
Bajura	5	3	-	-	8
Total	5	9	5	6	25

(Source: Insec)

Reasons for Dropping Out (of school after bridge programme or from bridge programme itself): No systematic study has been done by the implementing partner (or anyone else) but the following reasons were mentioned repeatedly: No money for school uniform and supplies (notebook, pen); no money for school fees; need to support family, especially in care of young children; early marriage for girls; migration of older students to India for work; migration of parents to India; inadequate sanitation facilities for girls, older students who missed several years dislike being much older than other students. In addition, in 2 schools a somewhat unfriendly environment for dalit students (dalit students sit in the back) may contribute to drop out rate.

Quality of Educational Performance. Out of total 127 enrolled children in the last year of the program, 121 have progressed to higher class (INSEC Tracking Table, April-June,

2015).

Ex-Haliya Children School Enrollment and Advancement, 2011-2014

District	Enrolled Students			Drop out Students			Students Passing Exams		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Baitadi	51	58	109	1	0	1	50	58	108
Bajhang	33	65	98	1	1	2	32	64	96
Dadeldhura	36	54	90	3	8	11	33	46	79
Doti	47	60	107	0	3	3	47	57	104
Bajura	53	59	112	4	4	8	49	55	104
Total	220	296	516	9	16	25	211	280	491

(Source: Insec)

Coverage/Unreached Students. The programme has reached 5 schools in 5 districts (a total of 25) out of roughly 100-150 or more schools in each district. No population numbers were available. This coverage was very reasonable for the current programme and its financial commitment, especially given the geographic obstacles, but could be expanded if the programme is continued.

Outcome 3--Vocational Training--Overall

Desired Outcome. Children outside of school aged 16 – 18 in the project areas gain enhanced employment opportunities as a result of vocational and skills development training.

The Context. Vocational training has great potential in Nepal in general and specifically for Kamaiya and Haliya children. Beneficiaries as well as stakeholders see vocational training as the best route, under present circumstances, to the financial independence that is so important to preventing Kamiya and Haliya families and children from going back into ‘slavery’. Because the schools are so poor, even those who have finished grade 10 often need vocational training.

There is real potential for jobs for those with training. As western Nepal increasingly becomes less dependent on agriculture and as agriculture in western Nepal becomes less dependent on unskilled labor, skill training is increasingly important. Kamaiya children also don't have much land of their own. It appears there is both a need and a capacity for expansion of the vocational program.

There are many individual cases that show the importance of income from trainings. For example,

- a women in Kanchanpur helped her family’s livelihood through tailoring when her husband was disabled by injury.
- a 19 year old carpenter in Dang (Deukhuri) who is supports his family when his parents are sick.

There are also cases of house wiring in Dadeldhura and Doti, mobile repair in Baitadi, and hand hosiery in Doti (Haliya's case), where the income from the work has been useful to make a livelihood for the family.

Overall Finding. Most of the persons trained in ASI's NEP are reported to be employed or to have work (see below for BASE and INSEC). Some trainees reported a good income –about double of what they could earn as daily wage labourer (about Rs 9000 a month compared to 4500). In Nepal's most successful training programs like Employment Fund (implemented by HELVETAS – a well-known I/NGO in skill training and supported by Swiss Govt), the average income of all trainees increased by three times.⁵ Care should be exercised in making comparison of two projects, as the contexts could be different; the type of training and training methods including the guarantee of employment provision could also be different. The rough comparison here is just to suggest that income level could be increased significantly through skill development training.

However, many of those who fall into the category 'employed' are not fully employed. For instance, many girls who trained in cutting and sewing and hand hosiery (most girls were trained in these skills – see data below) use their skills for family and neighborhood needs, and make some income, although small and not well documented.

Challenges/Problems. Improvements in three areas-- training methods, selection of trade, and support for initial investment--would help increase the number of vocational trainees finding solid employment. Trainings were generally short (3 months) and curriculum lacked essential aspects like business skill. There was little market assessment of the skills, and there was little counseling of the students regarding the skill, enterprises and business. In this project (NEP), no trainees were found to avail credit or initial seed money to start the business, although tools were often given.

In addition, there were good provisions for the monitoring of the trainees but a need for better definitions of what employed means and more systematic compiling of information. In both cases (INSEC and BASE), the district officer used telephone to monitor the trainees every three months. In Dadeldhura, we were also given the stories of such trained people, mostly successful cases in changing the life of these trainees. In case of INSEC, the Regional ME officer frequently visited the districts. In both cases, a separate file for each trainee was maintained and the information on these files recorded after the monitoring. Despite these monitoring, those who had gone to India or married were out of touch. These might have used the skill they got from the training in new places, but we could not meet such individuals. District-level officers told us a

⁵ Paudel, Bal Ram; Jenny, Bettina; Hofstetter, Sonja; Porten, Peter from Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation (Nepal and Switzerland). Not dated (accessed 31 Aug, 2015). Skill for Gainful Employment. The Employment Fund in Nepal. <https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/deza/en/documents/Projekte/Factsheet-Skills-for-gainful-employment-employment-fund-nepal.pdf>

few cases of those trained persons deriving good income in India (also in Kathmandu) because of the skill.

However, sometimes the category 'employed' was too broad and included those who were making money but not very much. Also, the information from the forms should be organized in a clear systematic way so that evaluators and observers can get a good picture of what is happening at a glance. Much more detail is both desirable and possible (See Recommendation).

Vocational Training and Women's Roles. An additional concern with the trainings is the potential to reinforce traditionally narrow gender roles in Nepal. While of course the ASI NEP programme needs to be realistic, it also doesn't want to unnecessarily circumscribe career paths for young women. Most of the women in NEP vocational training were in two subjects: sewing/cutting and knitting. A handful did other things, such as mobile phone repair training. The Woman's Development Officer in Dang said that unconventional career paths might work in Kathmandu, but there's a need to be more careful in rural areas. However, we heard of one woman who does motorcycle repair near Lamahi, Dang. Several masons told us that girls can do 95% of masonry work and are working in some places as masons. It seems that other options exist. When I asked Hari Kumari, a female sewing/cutting trainer who has trained Kamaiya as part of the NEP training, what she thought about motorbike training for girls, she replied: "If they get opportunity, girls can do everything."

Duration of Trainings. Three months is generally not enough time to make trainees ready for independent business, unless there's a chance for apprenticeship. One or two exceptional cases can start without apprenticeship. Generally two rounds of training are better than one longer training. Six months total is good but it depends on the subject.

Outcome 3--Vocational Training--BASE

Number of Children who have received training. 361 (108 Boys and 253 girls) received vocational skill training, which is 72% of the target (500) as specified in the log-frame. The target achievement was higher among the girls than the boys – 92% compared to 48%. The main reason for slightly lower than the full achievement of the target is that the first year training was cancelled as time was needed to set up the program, and in the final year, the training period was lengthened but for fewer students. These were the reasons for the less achievement than what was originally planned.



Gaining Employment and starting business post-training: Data from BASE reveals that 220 of 361 trainees (61%) (62 boys and 158 girls) are involved in their own enterprises, but this is only 63% of the target number of individuals (500) that were to be employed.

61% of trainees finding employment is generally good. This compares to 58% in a Nepal government (and ILO-) run training for Kamaiya and Kamaiya children during the last 12 years. In this training of 14,062 trainees, 8, 203 have employment. Several of these trainees have established large businesses but it has usually taken many years, many more than have elapsed in the case of the BASE trainings.⁶ Data were not recorded as to how the trained people were employed – by establishing shops or by work at home. Field observation revealed that only a few established the shops. In case of sewing and cutting, which employed most of the girls, it was mainly the home-based work in the village. The monitoring of the trained people was done through phone calls as explained above and the main concern was whether they are working or whether they are using the skills and how much they had earned. It looks like a process was followed to monitor the trainees, but again the confusion of understanding who is employed or not could have been different between district officer and the trainees.

Vocational Skill Trainees and Employment of Trainees - BASE

BASE	Participants (2011-2015)			Trainees Employed (2011-2015)		
	Target	Actual Number	%	Target	Actual	%
Boys	225	108	48.0	157	62	39.5

⁶ Ministry of Land Reform and Management, Committee on Freed Kamaiya Resettlement Problem, "Annual [Nepali Language], Kathmandu: Government of Nepal, 2014 [2071], 38.

Girls	275	253	92.0	193	158	81.9
Total	500	361	72.0	350	220	62.9

(Source: BASE and log-frame)

Selection of participants and training process:

The BASE programme has improved its selection process overtime. In the first year, BASE was not able to reach the appropriate candidate and that trainees' employment rate was low. It then started using the Watchdog committee to help advertise and select candidates, and this contributed to fairness also. BASE has learned how to improve training outcome (employment) of trainees. Their results have improved significantly over the time – from 51% (employed among the trained) in the first year, to 75% in the second year and 91% in the third year. This was achieved because BASE improved the selection process. In later years, BASE started organizing a whole day discussion with applicants who applied for the training, and then the real commitment of applicants was examined here. It then gave much more information about the relevance of skills, importance of attending regularly, and the possible cost that could be imposed if the training is not completed and work is not done according to skill gained. BASE would select the trainees after sometime giving them a chance to review their decision to participate and which skill to take.

BASE mostly used the private workshop or trainers including those shops (mostly in case of cutting/tailoring) which were run by former Kamlari or Kamaiya children, who were trained some years ago. This had an advantage too, as this was flexible and BASE negotiated for a longer training periods and then, sometimes, persuaded the trainer to employ trainees. On the other hand, there is a problem of certificates. Even though BASE gave a certificate on its own with insignia of BASE and ASI (for example as seen in Kanchanpur), these certificates are not recognized in the market or government. BASE also has some collaboration with government offices for training, especially in the past, but in recent years, it used more of private sector for the training purpose.

Trainings came in a small range of topics that are well established but run the risk of oversaturation. The average monthly income varies from skill to skill – which is as follows (based on field interviews):

Masonry	Rs 10,000 -15,000 (Rs 500-600 per day)
Carpentry	Rs 10,000 -15,000 (Rs 500-600 per day)
Sewing/tailoring	Rs 5000 to 6,000

A few trainees were given training on topics like mobile repair, computer repair, motorcycle repair and beautician. Girls were given trainings mainly on sewing/tailoring.

Coverage: The overall reach of the project is small; BASE has reached 55 Kamaiya settlements in five districts (out of 395 settlements). But the training of 361 persons within the budget limit and in four years is significant given that other projects (like Employment Fund of Swiss Government, and Nepal Government's Cottage and Small Industry Development Board) have higher costs in individual training (see below).

There is still a lot to do in this area. It is likely that there are still many Kamaiya children in the target age group (16-18) who would benefit from similar vocational training. We were not able to determine the population of drop out students in 16-18 years age group but we were told by many people that the demand for training is high. The government plans to give training so as to have ‘one employment to one household’ for Kamaiyas but it has not been able to do so. There are about 27, 500 Kamaiya households in Nepal, and more trainings are needed to reach them. As the SLC pass rate in government schools is low (for example, 21% in Kanchanpur district) even those who go through grade 10 will be needing skill training. Many people suggested giving training to older children (up to 25 years) would be good. Older children need skills and are in a better position to take advantage of the training. Some families are reluctant to give start up money to younger people and some are not able to do that. This calls for links to financial institutions for start-up funding at low interest rate, for which advocacy is important. BASE officials get more applications than they have space for in the skill development trainings showing that there is demand and interest from the target group. This could be one of the strong points for advocacy to expand training opportunities and to create links to financial institutions for start-up money.

Outcome 3--Vocational Training--INSEC

Number of children who have received training. During the project, 294 youths (128 boys and 166 girls) were trained. The target was 300 (135 boys and 165 girls). (The initial target of 500 trainees was revised later on as INSEC did not offer trainings in the first year as there was no budget for this, and then, in the last year as it decided to give retraining (refresher) in order to enhance employability.)

Vocational Skill Trainees and Employment of Trainees - INSEC

INSEC	Trainees (2011-2015)			Trainees employed (2011-2015)		
	Target	Actual	Percent	Target	Actual	%
Boys	135	128	94.8	96	61	63.5
Girls	165	166	100.6	114	104	91.3
Total	300	294	98.0	210	165	78.6

(Source: INSEC)

Gaining Employment and starting business post-training. Of those trained/retrained (294), 165 trainees have found work according to INSEC's tracking tables and reports. This (about 78.6%) is a significant achievement. But based on target of number of trainees (210; see above Table, which is based on their log-frame) to be employed (or those who get work), achievement is 63.5% in case of boys and 191.3% in case of girls). However, it all depends on the definition of ‘employment’. Even though, all those trained had used their skill in one way or other whether they were in Nepal or India (a few had gone to India too, and a few girls had been married and gone away and were not tracked – it is not known how they used the skill), not all of them were found to have earned

income from their skill. Field investigation revealed that only about half the trainees were using their skill professionally either through establishment of business/shop based on the skill or employed fulltime. These employed youths were also able to support themselves and their families. For example, in Baitadi, a youth was able to run a mobile repair shop and then earn money to meet his expenses for higher studies. In other cases in Dadheldhura and Doti, we met two persons who had training on house wiring who were able to give some money to his parents to run the household. This situation is also similar to BASE. We did not get data on how many had shops/businesses and how many self-employed in the villages for the household or neighbour's needs, but the cases of having a business (shop) based on the skill is rare. We just met one person who had mobile repair shop, and all others were operating from home. The monitoring was done through phone calls – we were told. Whatever the employment – formal or informal, skill training did help many to improve their condition even though it could be marginal for many.

Selection of participants and training process. The trainees' selection process was effective. Watchdog Committee members were mobilized to identify needy trainees. Other NGOs like Haliya Maha Sangh was also consulted. Because of the dispersed distribution of Haliya families, it was rather difficult to find and identify Haliya youths in the age group of 16-18 years. In addition, INSEC organized in its final year (2014) refresher training for already trained persons based on the experiences of the beneficiaries and Watchdog committee members suggesting this. All those who had refresher training got full employment – except one who had a job in the army.

INSEC mostly used the government's training mechanisms or its resources for trainings. They co-ordinated with the Cottage and Small Industries Development Board (CSIDB) sometime before the training. In such cases, CSIDB would organize the training with its resource persons and let INSEC's trainees to participate. In such case, a part of the cost (eg resource person) would come from CSIDB. In a few other cases, where co-operation was not possible, INSEC used the trainers of the CSIDB. This helped in getting the certificate issued from CSIDB, which gave additional advantage to the trainees. CSIDB has a long history of training and its resource persons are experienced, and so it was additional benefit for INSEC to work with government agencies, and, it is also possible to include Haliya children as target groups of CSIDB after NEP is over.

Training Subject Areas INSEC gave training in seven areas – mainly on knitting, sewing and house wiring. Candle making, radio-TV repair, and knitting trainees were employed in high proportion. But, some of these like candle making, radio-TV repair, mobile and wire wiring also have a possible of market saturation if the trainees are to stay in the village or small market only.

INSEC VOCATIONAL TRAININGS, 2012-2015

Training Area	Participants			Trainees Finding Employment			% employed
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Knitting	6	76	82	5	50	55	67%
Mobile repairing	47	1	48	15		15	31%
Radio/TV repairing	10		10	8		8	80%
Sewing	6	74	80	2	32	34	42%
Bag Sewing	1	43	44	1	11	12	27%
Candle making	8	4	12	8	4	12	100%
House wiring	70		70	29		29	41%
Total	148	198	346*	68	97	165**	47%

(*this includes trainees in refresher training also.

**these includes only those fully employed).

Income from jobs varied from job to job and within the same job as most of them were working as self-employed. Average Monthly Income was as follows (based on field interviews):

Sewing/tailoring	Rs 5000 to 6,000
Knitting	Rs 10,000 -15,000 (Rs 500-600 per day)
Bag Making	Rs 6,000-8,000
Mobile Repair	Rs 5,000-7,000
House Wiring	Rs 7,000 to 10,000

Many of those employed are engaged in subsistence work, i.e., using the skill at home and for the neighbours during otherwise free time. It was not possible to get data by the type of employment (i.e., having shop/business, home-based work, or formal job). Only a few cases of having shop/business were reported in the field study. An overwhelming of those recorded as employed were working as home-based work.

There is an interesting pattern in the Haliya trainings – boys (6 sewing and 1 bag sewing) going into tailoring (compared to 1 boy in BASE) and girls into mobile repair (1), and candle making (4). This could be because some Haliyas also do tailoring as traditional occupation and both male and female undertake this almost equally. Bag sewing, sewing/tailoring and knitting are mainly targeted to girls.

Why trainees don't find employment? There is a range of reasons including:

- No investment money to establish the business/shop after the training. There is no formal linking of trainees with the financial institutions for cheap loans. Trainees also do not have business skills as they were not trained for that.
- There is no mechanism to link between the training institutes and employment places – this requires a strong advocacy with the financial institutions.
- Initial money from menial labor jobs is about the same money and easier and so did not motivate to pursue the skill-based work. It was told in Doti that they earned Rs 400 as daily wage in government project (this was somewhat higher

wages because of government rate – we were told) and this is slightly less than what they would have earned using the skill, as skilled works (like house wiring in which they were trained) are not regularly available.

- Some didn't learn the skill well/were not committed from the beginning.
- Many of the trainees go to India where there are high wages. This is especially for the males.

Various stakeholders pointed out that INSEC gives training in limited fields. They pointed out that in the hills, the following could be new areas for the training as there is market for these skills. These are: haircutting (Doti), leather goods, computer operation and repair, TV repair, mushroom farming, beekeeping (1 week is enough) and commercial vegetables (through leasing of land)

The beneficiaries and the stakeholders felt that it is important to give modernization training in traditional skills such as sewing, metalwork, shoe-repair and leather-making, so that Haliyas or their children can move into business using this modern skill.

Coverage: The project now covers only a small geographical area and only children 16-18 years of age. Calculations reveal that NEP has covered 7.7% of the Haliya population, in terms of VDC (geographical area) coverage and 15% of the total out-of-school children (16-18 years) in the five districts.⁷ This coverage was very reasonable for the current programme but could be expanded if the programme is continued. On the other hand, as explained below, there is cost effectiveness in the training programs in NEP.

Outcome 4--Responsiveness of Duty Bearers

Desired Outcome. Duty bearers in the project areas are responsive to the needs and rights of the children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and take measures to increase their access to education.

Governmental Officials--Plains Districts. Visits to governmental offices in two districts revealed knowledge of the BASE program, some collaboration, general responsiveness, and a willingness for more coordination to avoid duplication. The district offices run their own programs for ex-Kamaiya. The Watchdog groups are active and have made many requests to district officials, some of which have been met, such as fee cancellation and a scholarship for an ex-Kamaiya with HIV. The frequent transfers of government officers

⁷ The Government of Nepal has identified 16, 953 Haliyas (families) in 12 districts, of which about 63% live in the five project districts. NEP has been implemented in 25 of the 205 VDCs in these districts (12.2%). Because this is almost 2/3rd of the total Haliya population, NEP has covered 7.7% of the Haliya population, in terms of VDC (geographical area) coverage. For population numbers, estimates were used. In the field studies, stakeholders have often told that there are at least 8-10 students who have not gone to school or school dropouts, and would not like to continue school study because of the advanced age. Most of them go to India. A rough estimates reveals that there are 40-50 such students in each VDC, or . 2,000 to 2,500 in the five districts. INSEC monitoring data reveals that NEP has trained only 294 such individuals or the 15% of the target population.

also mean that some of them (especially newly arrived officers) expressed that they did not know NEP. In a few cases (for example, Kanchanpur), the government's district level planning has accepted the idea (as contained in the district plan) that they have to support the out-of-school Kamaiya children. The government officials also realize that the government is not able to support boys' education in the Kamaiya families, and believe that there is some adequate support for Kamlari girls (for Kamaiya girls who work as domestic worker in other's houses).

Governmental Officials--Hill Districts. Overall, government offices in the hills seem less responsive compared to the situation for Kamaiya. There's little work on the rehabilitation of ex-Haliya. There's little data. The situations are different because the most Kamaiya did have their some agricultural land after rehabilitation, while 93% of Haliya have none.⁸ District level officials have little authority on Haliya issues; all the decisions and policies come from the Center. This is different from the Kamaiya case. However, in hill districts, some individual government officials try to be helpful in small ways. The Hill Haliya Watchdog groups make frequent requests to the district offices. As in the plain districts, some government officers expressed that they did not know NEP and that there is not much collaboration. In Doti, the Education Office has clear idea about NEP and its activities and wanted to help through a development of a 'permanent fund', which was just in conceptual phase. Response varied from district to district, as did the activity and enthusiasm of district level workers and regional level officials.

VDCs. In some hill VDCs, 10% to 15% of the budget has to go to welfare of children and there is Children Welfare Committee at VDC level locally called 'Bal Club'. In these clubs, there is also representation of CRAG member(s). These CRAG member(s) have requested that this budget goes to children welfare rather than other activities like school-building construction, road construction, or for school management.

Fees. In all districts, even though school is supposed to be free, there are many fees. In some cases, exceptions are made for exceptionally poor, including Kamaiya and Haliya.

Scholarships: In many the distribution of scholarships is a problem. Sometimes not enough scholarships are given because the districts send in their numbers before registration is finished. In some places, scholarship money is often not given directly to parents but used by the school for expenses. (One DEO says that the policy is to give out scholarship money for dalits only in front of a local dalit leader.)

Watchdog groups. Watchdog groups are district-level committees made up of activists, civil society representatives, media members, and government officials. They are charged with monitoring the situation within the district for Kamaiya and Haliya and pushing for their interests in district offices. They also monitor out-of-school children and how

⁸ Based on the study by Rastriya Dalit Kalyan Sangh (National Dalit Welfare Association) and Lutheran World Foundation, which did a study in 54 VDCs of the Far West including 2176 households. According to a government survey, 56% of Haliyas have land, but this land is just a housing plot. Those just having land and no house)are placed in 'C' category and the those having both house and land in 'D' category. (Freed Haliya Rehabilitation Program, Annual Progress Report, Land Reform Ministry, 2014, p. 15).

schools are distributing scholarships. WDC's sometimes influence allocation of funding of VDCs. They also help with identification of Haliya and raise concerns about rehabilitation and discrimination.

Meetings with Watchdog groups showed they are representative of all settlements, active, committed, and effective. As one Watchdog group member explained, 'Because we have an organization, a committee, it's a lot easier to go to the DEO and other officials with complaints'. Kamaiya representation on the Watchdog groups is good but Haliya representation is low. In organization, there is room for improvement. The groups take minutes and list decisions but they don't appear to be systematic about their mission. Everyone thinks of the committee as a 'loose forum.' They could be more organized about how they identify and analyze problems, prioritize them, create related strategy, assign tasks, etc. More regular meetings would help.

Role of media: Both BASE and INSEC have brought media person(s) in the watchdog committees also. In addition, they have arranged/requested media persons to visit the field sites and report on the condition of education among these children and on the impact the NEP has made, and on other challenges. The published accounts of these field visits have influenced the government and other stakeholders. For example, in Kanchanpur, a HIV affected children was barred from attending the school, and when it was made public, action was taken to make sure that he could attend the school. A media report in Doti helped to solicit funds for a child who could not buy bags and dress for the second year. Media also helped to make government officials aware that scholarships and other support meant for targeted students do not go to the students but used for other purposes. All watchdog committee members that there is some positive change in this respect. BASE was also found to use media person to teach students about writing articles in their wall-journal and on how to put this journal together.

NEP's Contribution to the Goal of 'Education for All by 2015'

Nepal has adopted the policy of Education for All by 2015 according to the six goals set by the Dakar Forum for 2015, and has added another goal on 'ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue.'⁹

⁹ These goals include: expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; ensuring that 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality; ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and like skills programmes; achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in, basic education of good quality; improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring

A recent (2015) government report prepared to evaluate the achievements of the Education For All 2015 policy revealed that although a majority of the primary school age children are now enrolled in school (95% in 2012), one of the crucial challenges is how to reach the unreached – disadvantaged, marginalized and minority groups.¹⁰ The first requirement in reaching the unreached is to identify the population, their whereabouts, and their needs. There is also the problem of poor quality and low relevance of education. This is important in early grade education and primary education as these levels bring consequent hurdles at the higher levels. The consequences include low regularity in attendance, high failure rate, grade repetition, and high dropouts. Despite various provisions, the primary level cycle completion rate has remained below 80%. Student scores in achievement tests in the districts and national level examination at grade 8, 10, 11 and 12 are below 50%.¹¹

Because the mainstream programs of the government are not able to reach the marginalized population, it is important that specialized education programs like NEP are implemented as they reach the ‘unreached’ sections like ex-Haliyas and ex-Kamaiyas. For example, even though Nepal is close to achieving some targets for EFA 2015, many of the indicators in the far west Nepal are still below the average. For example, the Gross Enrolment Rate for pre-Primary level was 73.7% in 2012 as compared to 80% of target in 2015, but for far west this was 66.8%. The dropout rate is nationally 5.5% in primary and around 6.5% in secondary schools.¹²

The information and data revealed from the project and field evaluation is that ASI's NEP has helped in enrolling the students from the so-called ‘unreached’ groups, and mostly the targets have been achieved. But still there are problems in the quality of education and graduation from primary to lower secondary and to secondary classes. There has been more drop outs than what the monitoring data revealed (see the case studies) and that there has been high level of irregularity in the classes. So, there is also a need to improve quality of education of enrolled children and their regular monitoring including monitoring of their performance in the school.

excellence of all so that recognized and measureable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills; ensuring the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue.

¹⁰ MoE, GoN and UNESCO. 2015. Education for All. National Review Report. Kathmandu: UNESCO. Page 81.

¹¹ Ibid. page 81.

¹² Percent of new entrants at Grade 1 with ECD/PPE experience was 55.6% against the target of 80%, Gross Intake rate at Grade 1 was 137.7 against 102 of target in 2015, Net Intake rate at Grade 1 was 91.2 against target of 98. Gross Enrolment rate of primary level 130.1 against 105. Net Enrollment Rate of primary level 95.3 against the target of 100 in 2015, Repetition rate at Grade 1 19.9 (target 10), Repetition rate at Grade 5 5.3 (target 8), survival rate to Grade 5 (84.1 against target of 90).

Gross enrolment rate in ECCC (early childhood care and education) average was 73.7 % in 2012/2013, but it was 66.8% in far west lowest in the country.

Government of Nepal has some programmes on educating in mother tongue in primary schools, but it has not entirely able to it. How far this has impacted students' performance, we do not know. But, in case of Haliyas, this is not a problem. This issue did appear (teaching in mother-tongue at primary school) among the Kamaiya children, as it could be one of the reasons for schools to be less attractive.

Value for Money

Overall. BASE and INSEC have carried out their activities at reasonable cost. INSEC in particular has a difficult task working with widely dispersed Haliya groups in the hills.

Prep Course--Value for Money. The use of a local teacher at school for the prep/bridge course is efficient and effective, as it would have cost more to organize it on a private basis or ask a teacher to teach it elsewhere. Under this system, school facilities could be used. Moreover, students could feel the school environment, which was not possible if it was organized on a private or in community.

Vocational trainings--Value for Money. BASE and INSEC have endeavored to reduce cost for training. INSEC also mostly used the government system for vocational trainings and in some cases shared the resources with that of government. DFID (UK Government's International Development Programme) had a programme for skill training – it allocated GBP 3 million to train 13,200 people through Swiss NGO HELVETAS (1-6 months training of similar nature that BASE and INSEC provided) in 2004-2008. The cost for the programme was GBP 320 per individual and was considered a very good indication of good value for money. DFID had allocated GBP 9 million to train 35,000 young people in Nepal from 2009-2013. In case of BASE and INSEC, the training cost was about Rs 34,000 (GBP 226) per trainee and Rs 45,415 (GBP 300), respectively (as compared to GBP 320 of DFID and that too in the period 2004-2008, when the prices were significantly lower).¹³ However, a great deal of caution is to be exercised to make this comparison – time, training methods, facilities to the trainees and trainers and the like can be different. However, this is just aimed to provide a perspective to show that training costs are not high in case of BASE and INSEC.

Programme Management

Monitoring and Evaluation. The BASE M&E officer was on leave and unavailable to meet. Different BASE reports gave different data, suggesting improvement in monitoring and evaluation is needed, especially in making the data and information consistent in different reports. Field visits from higher-level personnel even M&E personnel were patchy and irregular. They did have different formats to be filled regularly after the field

¹³ House of Commons. 2009. International Development Committee. DFID's Programmes in Nepal (accessed Aug 31, 2015). https://books.google.com.au/books?id=3cwAs2c4yngC&pg=PA28&lpg=PA28&dq=The+cost+of+skill+training+in+Nepal&source=bl&ots=o_ZRKw_Ri0&sig=KvO92sRvtmdoL9ghbndiyxatCuM&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCQQ6AEwA2oVChMI4Kjm17XSxwIV5OKmCh2ljQKG#v=onepage&q=The%20cost%20of%20skill%20training%20in%20Nepal&f=false

visits, but it was not clear as to how these field visit reports were discussed internally feeding back lessons to the program plans. A few examples of learning and using the lessons for further refining the programme were seen in the field, but an objective analysis of how the monitoring reports were discussed and used was not possible. In case of INSEC, monitoring was done mainly from regional office, where a M&E officer was placed, who had to visit the field regularly and submit reports to overall M&E regional officer of the INSEC, which would then would go to Program Co-ordinator at the central level. There was absence of Program Co-ordinator for some time. Like in BASE, how far monitoring reports were discussed and used internally was not clear and an objective analysis of this was not possible in the field.

Fund Management: In both BASE and INSEC, fund release had been late – usually one to two months late, which adversely impacted programme implementation. Lack of some flexible fund at district level also undermined development of creative ideas that appeared during the implementation process. Because of the inflexibility and constraints in funding arrangements, some effective activities were discontinued (eg district level conference of CRAG members, support for school infrastructure like furniture and teaching aids). In the 2nd year, BASE and INSEC had recognized the need for training for business skills, but there was no fund for this, and this idea just died out.

Responsibility distribution: BASE had a programme co-ordinator solely for NEP who was overseen by BASE’s CEO. INSEC too had a project co-ordinator solely for the NEP, but overseen by INSEC regional officer. BASE had many related projects and some of the staff members had overlapping roles. This helped implementation on the ground in some respects. It was not possible to understand delegation of decision-making power. But it appeared that very limited decision-making power was vested at the district level as district programme assistant had to take permission if any activities had to be changed or included. More flexibility would be good. Some of the requests made by district level officers never materialized. Similarly, due to lack of funds, field officers had to abandon a few effective activities like organizing CRAG conference at the district level (BASE did this in the first year) and some material support for the school (eg furniture in the class).

Harmony in planning year cycle: The government planning cycle starts from mid July, but NEP’s starts from October, making it hard to harmonize programme activities with government activities, especially for activities of similar nature (eg training for skill development).

Advocacy at the national level: Advocacy at the central level had been discontinued early in the programme because much of the programme seemed centered on the district level. That may be true, but some desirable policy changes can only come from the central level, eg. scholarships to ex-Kamaiya boys, support for the parents through speedy rehabilitation programs, and financial support for trainees of skill development.

Learning

Both INSEC and BASE improved the programme modalities in successive years based

on learning from previous experiences. BASE improved vocational training with better counseling and a skill fair. INSEC also changed the modalities of its preparatory class from community-based to school-based and changed the vocational training programme from 14-16 years of age to 16 -18 years, and also added refresher trainings. Both organizations now have much more experience administering education and vocational training programs.

Capacity/Capacity Building (Other than target group)

BASE. Even prior to the project, BASE had good understanding and capacity to address Kamaiya concerns. It has learned much more about the dynamics of dropping out of school and about vocational training.

INSEC. INSEC now has more capacity to understand and address Haliya concerns. They now look at Haliya issues as human rights issues. They have more information, more data, and more ability to lobby effectively. They know which government office to speak with. In addition, they have more capacity with general educational issues. Finally, in the five districts of this project, their total district staff has doubled (from 1 to 2--district representative and NEP staff).

INSEC Staff. Two dalit staff have gotten empowerment, one at regional level (the M&E officer hired for this program) and one at the district level. It would be good to have female dalit staff.

Hill/Plains Civil Society and government officials are now much more aware on dalit issues and Haliya issues in Hill districts and Kamaiya issues in plains districts. Government officials had some capacity for addressing Kamaiya issues prior to the project.

School Teachers. A limited number of school teachers have greater awareness and improved teaching methods on Haliya and Kamaiya issues, child's rights, and child's participation.

Challenges and Enablers

- Reaching the 'unreached' (i.e., the children of oppressed and exploited families) is still difficult, especially in Haliya's case, who face two discriminations at the same time (untouchability and economic discrimination).
- The necessity for parents to emphasize immediate income from children is a significant challenge. Parents see economic security as more important than education, which could pay only in long run.
- It is also hard to influence the government officials at the district level because of their frequent turnover.
- Watchdog committee members as well as media are enablers as they could easily put message across to decision-makers. This was seen in Kanchanpur as well as Doti, where media played a role to fulfill the rights of Kamaiya and Haliya children, respectively.
- Haliya identification is very complicated. All Haliyas do not have ID cards.

There are many who are also not registered as Haliyas but claim to be so. It is difficult to identify their status and include them in the program.

- Delay in annual planning and release of funds in time makes it hard to complete the task/activities in time.
- The planning cycle of government and schools is different than that of this project, making it difficult to include some of the projects activities within the plans of the government or schools.
- The geography is very difficult, particularly for the thinly distributed population of Haliya children.

Programme Sustainability

The field study revealed that various programs similar to parts of ASI's Nepal Education Project had been implemented in these districts before, and that very few of their activities are still continuing. A lot of them now exist only in the memory of schoolteachers and other stakeholders. Programme sustainability is a big challenge across Nepal. The NEP also faces this challenge. However, a few indications suggest that some NEP activities could continue in the future.

In general, it appears that the most likely NEP activities to be sustainable are 1) institutions which can generate resources and 2) activities that stakeholders such as the government or a school have implemented and placed in their planning cycle.

Children's Empowerment. Those children who have participated in CRAG committees are not likely to forget their greater understanding of children's rights. However, if the programs stop today they probably will grow less active.

CRAG. Many CRAG activities (such as extracurricular activities that they organize Friday afternoons – quiz-contest, essay competition, sports events) are likely to continue in many schools because they have been integrated with the school's annual plan of extracurricular activities.

The sustainability of children's participation and decision-making seems much more tenuous. They are likely to continue if the programme continues and, if so, they have a greater chance of taking permanent root so that they will persist after the programme ends. But if the programme ends tomorrow, the chance that real children's participation persists depends a lot upon the individual headmaster and the facilitating teaching. It's impossible to say how many would continue to make a substantial effort, but a good guess would be 1/4 to 1/3.

There is a moderate possibility that CRAG will influence the distribution of resources from VDC office (about 10-15% of its budget, which could range from Rs two to three million a year, is to go to the children's welfare). A few of the CRAG members have worked with VDC's Children Club. Some teachers and Watchdog Committee members are pushing that there is a formal system of representation from CRAG in the VDC's Children Club. If this happens, there will be a possibility of CRAG bringing some VDC resources into school for CRAG activities.

Bridge/Prep Courses. There appears a good chance that those who enter school after the Bridge course will stay in school, at least until the higher grades, and probably to grade 10. Close to 95% of those who enroll in school after the prep course stay in school. If the programme continues, retention rates can be measured with greater accuracy over the years. The Prep courses are overcoming one big hurdle-- getting the students caught up and interested in school. However, it should be noted, retention in school says nothing about the quality of student performance or likelihood of passing the SLC.

Vocational Trainings. It seems likely that those who have found employment with their new skill will continue with that work for some years, and possibly much longer. They were happy with their skills and income.

The programme has also left an imprint on governmental institutions. For example, INSEC has organized vocational skill training through co-operation with Cottage and Small Industries Development Board. There is some chance that the Board will continue training for the children of the ex-Haliyas.

Watchdog Groups. All the Watchdog Committees expressed interest in existing in the future. They care about the issues involved. In addition, most Watchdog members have self-interest in continuing the activities because their children also benefit. This is one advantage of having members in the committees from the target group. Unfortunately, the Watchdog groups have been dependent upon NGOs for funding, and in Nepal, once the funding runs out, committees tend to become inactive.

However, there were two promising developments. In Dang, the Watchdog committee is building its own building to be a contact office by collecting donations from households. They raise Rs 120 per household annually (Rs 10 per household per month) from Kamaiya families. This building will cost Rs 225,000. The office will facilitate continuity for the committee. In Doti, the Watchdog committee is developing a fund or endowment from donations from different agencies including the government. The interest from this fund will be used for expenses of the committee.

Duty Bearers. Many of the government officials involved in the NEP programs are transferred frequently. Some will end up in neighbouring districts where they can use their awareness about Kamaiya and Haliya concerns.

In Kanchanpur, the District Plan has taken up the issue of educating school drop-outs from Kamaiya families because of co-ordination with BASE's district office and NEP during the planning process.

Four Case Studies

Case Study #1: Experiences for Kamaiya Children After Preparatory Class

Durgapur, Rajapur, Bardia

For one month, the preparatory class ran for three hours a day but later only 2 hours. This ran for four months, initially in morning sessions but later in evening sessions. All students said that ‘parents were happy to see us going to school again’. The teacher taught sometimes from the textbook and sometimes from outside the textbooks. ‘He told us about the rights of children too, and sometimes stories,’ reported the students. He also let them play games such as marbles, ball, Kabardi, rope game, and rabbit game. Students were kept in the same room but in different groups, and the teacher would go from one group to another.

Students were then enrolled in two schools. Those in 5th class or below were enrolled in Durga Bhavani Primary School and those above 5th class were enrolled in Shree Nepal Higher Secondary School. BASE also gave the students uniforms, bags, and some stationery like notebooks, pencils, cutter, and eraser. BASE originally gave blue shirts and black pants, but the school required white shirts. So, the students had to buy white shirts.

Those in the 6th and higher grades occasionally had to pay fees for admission, examinations, and the like. In primary school, they did not pay fees except from Rs 100 to 150 when first admitted.

The students felt that preparatory class was useful for them to get prepared to study again. They had almost given up the hope of going to school again. They were able to refresh what they learned before and prepare themselves for re-entering school. If this prep class did not exist, they would be doing manual work. The girl students also said that they had to help parents at home in cooking, cleaning, and washing.

All the students were children of ex-Kamaiyas and each family had received 3 to 3.5 Katthas of land. One of the students was a Kamaiya but his family has not received land yet.

The fathers of eight students (of 12 taking part in discussion) were in India at the time of the interview. Of the others, one student's father had died, and two had fathers working in the village (one as farm labour and one as mason), and a fourth had a father working as Rikshaw puller in a city in Nepal. After planting rice in whatever land they have, the fathers go to India or to other parts of Nepal to work and earn cash income. India was very close by. The fathers return home in 5-6 months with cash to buy food and other necessities.

All students said that there is no one at home to help in their studies.

Twelve students (nine girls and three boys) participated in the discussion. They were all participants in preparatory class as all had previously dropped out of school for various reasons, mainly economic. All of them were enrolled in the school after preparatory class. But, some of them then dropped out of school. Their stories can shed light on why they could not continue at school. It also shows the low performance of those prep students who continued.

Students who dropped out after enrolling in the school (after the prep course)

- 1) Lalita Tharu (girl) was enrolled in 7th grade and went on to 8th grade, but she left the school as she was married and school was far from her new house (husband's house).
- 2) Lahani Tharu (girl) was enrolled at 7th grade after preparatory class, but then she left school. She said 'I was ashamed at going to the same school after 5 years as many of my previous friends were at some higher classes'.
- 3) Puspa Tharu (girl) was enrolled in 7th grade, but she left studies. Her father died at that time and her grand father was old – unable to do any work. She left school because she needed to support her mother, which she did by working with her mother doing wage labour. Both of them sometimes go to another district to work in a brick kiln or in city to work in house construction site. This way they can send other children in the family (her five-year old brother and six-year old sister) to the school and buy necessary food like rice and lentil. They had received 3 Kattha land from government's free Kamaiya program. Most of this land is now in flooded area and thus cannot be farmed. They need to buy most of their food.

Students who are continuing the study after taking preparatory course:

- 1) Bharat Tharu (boy) was enrolled at sixth grade and then went on to 7th grade. He did passed the exam and his highest mark was in 'Health' subject (19 out of 50). This was, in any case, below average marks in this subject in the class.
- 2) Anju Tharu (girl) was enrolled in 7th grade and went on to 8th grade. She got her lowest marks in mathematics (41/100) and highest in Nepali (60/100). This scale of marks (41-60) is far below the average of the class.
- 3) Sweta Tharu (girl) was enrolled in 8th grade and went to 9th grade and her study was going on smoothly.
- 4) Anima Tharu (girl) was enrolled at 5th grade and went on to 6th grade. She passed all the subjects and she likes 'Nepali' subject most.
- 5) Anju Tharu (girl) was enrolled at 6th grade and went on to 7th grade after passing the class with highest mark (22/50) in 'social studies', which is again below average in the class in this subject.

6) Kamal Tharu (boy) was enrolled in 3rd grade. He now studies in 4th grade. It was an automatic promotion of grade and so he does not know much about the achievement in his studies in terms of exam marks.

7) Jayaswori Tharu (girl) was enrolled in 7th grade and she now studies in 8th grade. She is good in studies except for English and mathematics. She failed in mathematics, her highest marks was in Science (63/100). Her father works in Nepalgunj (4 hours in local bus) as a rickshaw puller and he stays there. Her mother occasionally goes to Nepalgunj to stay with her father. When her mother is not at home, she needed to do all household chores. At that time, she usually does not go to school.

8) Rajesh Tharu (boy) was enrolled in 3rd grade and was automatically promoted to 4th grade. He was wearing a tattered school uniform. He looked unhealthy too. He did not speak at all. Other students said that he does not come to study often as he has to do work at home and that his father works in India. He even does the work that girls normally do, sweeping the house and plastering the house.

The case study shows the following:

- The preparatory class has helped prepare out-of-school Kamaiya children for regular school. But not all of these were able to continue their studies to higher classes. Marriage was one of the reasons for the girls to drop out of the school. Similarly advanced age in relation to the grade of study is another reason for this.
- The performance level is rather poor for many, except for a few.
- Financial problem (absence of father) is still a main problem for the students.
- There is no support and help for students to study at home.
- It is doubtful whether many of Kamaiya children will pass the SLC. Students interviewed also feel that only a very few of them could possibly pass SLC and continue higher studies. At best, this schooling would give them literary and numeracy skills, which could also help them to avoid oppressive or exploitative practices.

Case Study #2: A Partial Success Story Shows the Need for More Credit

Ranjita Khuna, Saraswoti Dwangora and Rebati Dwangora

Daiji-3, Dharampur, Kanchanpur

(Interview: July 26, 2015)

Through BASE, Ranjita, Saraswoti and Rebati received training on 'sewing and cutting'. All three have parents who were Kamaiya, none had gone to school, one had worked for several years as a Kamlari (bonded child labourer), and all had done physical labour for daily wages. The training has allowed each to start a small business in their camps and gain a subsistence income. They dream of opening a bigger shop in a bigger bazaar (market area) but low-interest loans and more experience/training.



The parents of all three girls worked for years as Kamaiya bonded workers. After getting freed, they received 5 Kattha land and other support from the government, and started an independent lives for their families. They live in a camp set up by the government as a part of rehabilitation. The area is a long bikeride on rough dirt roads to the main highway and supports corn but not rice planting.

Because their families were poor and uneducated, Saraswoti and Rebati could not go to school. From early on, they earned 150-200 rupees a day (\$1.5 to \$2.5 a day) doing menial jobs – from farming to house construction, and in brick factories. It was hard physical work. These were tough times.

When Ranjita Khuna was 9 years old, she was sent to work as household maid by her father to a banker's family in order to pay the loan he had taken from the wealthy man. She did that work for 9 years. "They put me in early," she said. "That's where I grew up." The banker's family treated her relatively well but did not send her to school or give education. "I was lucky not to be mistreated at the house where I was working," she said. "What I didn't like is that I didn't get a chance to study."

After becoming free through Kamaiya freedom movement, Ranjita's father worked hard to pay the loan he took from the landlord and free his daughter. Even though the

landlord's family were gentle as compared to others, he wanted his daughter to be free. Afterwards, she too did daily wage labor--often carrying bricks.

At that time BASE was working in the Kamaiya camp Ranjita lived in and spread word that it was organizing skill development trainings. Then 17, Ranjita thought that 'cutting and sewing' would be good for her, even though BASE officials had told her that many other girls also had similar training and there could be a glut of this skill in the market. Despite this, she thought that this could be a useful training for her. Rabeti and Saraswoti took training in a separate camp.

After taking training for 4 months, Ranjita did un-paid apprentice work for six months in a tailoring shop run by an older person she knew. Rabeti and Saraswoti also worked as apprentices in a nearby camp for over a year.

Now, all three are running small sewing shops in their free-Kamaiya camps. Ranjita had noticed that people from her village (camp) went to a nearby market center. "I thought, then, that I could save these people's time and resources if I open a tailoring service in the village itself." She also provided her service at a cheaper price compared to the market center. She earns about Rs 6000-7000 a month. (A primary teacher earns 16,000 rupees a month.) Her income generating skill helped her prospects in finding a husband. Unfortunately, her husband, a wage worker, hurt his leg while loading a truck with heavy rocks. Today he is still not able to do wage laboring jobs. 'I am now surviving because of my wife's income and support,' he says. Because she works out of her house, she is able to watch her young son as well.

By chance, Rabeti married into Saraswoti's family. Working together, they opened a tailoring workshop in their house. They earn Rs 6000 to 7000 a month each. This income is not much, but, they say that it is physically less demanding and that they are earning more than what they would have earned from the backbreaking wage labour. "This work is MUCH better than carrying bricks in the hot sun for less money." With this income, they are able to send their brothers to the school and can support parents (in other houses) in purchasing household necessities. They have attained a degree of economic independence. "Even without our families, we can stand on our feet." They are happy to see themselves transformed from Kamaiya children to entrepreneurs able to provide a useful service to their neighbors.

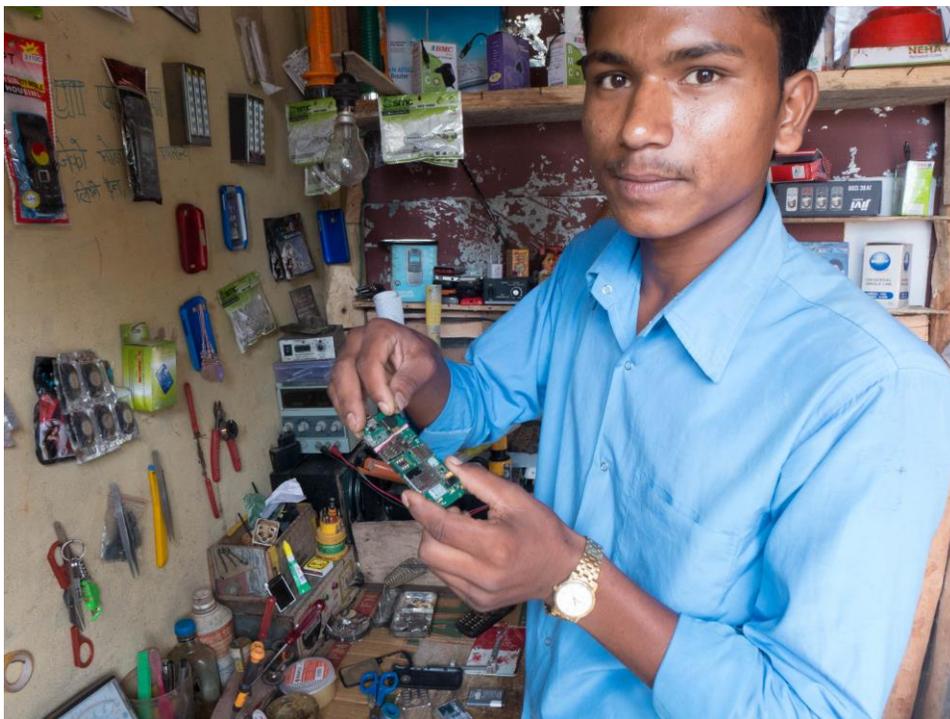
All three young women dream of opening a larger business in the market center near the village. That would bring in much more money and more satisfaction. To do so, they need more sewing and financial skills but especially credit for new sewing machines, cloth, and other equipment. Because their families had debts in the past they are very nervous about taking loans. And low interest loans are very hard to find. One idea they liked was forming a savings and experience sharing group among Kamaiya children who have opened similar shops. They could take turns borrowing money at low rates from the group. At present, they are members in two savings groups – in one they contribute Rs 20 monthly, in another they contribute Rs 50 per month. They know that this small

savings may not be sufficient to open a shop in near future. They are ready and capable to save Rs 50 per day, though. Some low risk funding source is what they need.

Case Study #3: Mobile Repairing Trainee Prakash Shows the Need for Seed Money

Prakash Ram Mahar, age 18 years and of Ward 9 in Dasarathchand Municipality, Simmalakh (Dudura) in Baitadi District, is a member of a Haliya family. His father used to do agricultural work of a landowner to pay off a debt. The family is now free from the Haliya work, but in difficult financial situation. Due to lack of land to produce food Prakash's father worked as a carpenter within the village. Prakash studied to class 10 but failed the SLC examination. Because of financial problems, he was thinking of not re-taking the examination and instead migrating to India for manual work.

Two years ago, Prakash got word from INSEC district representative Sher Bahadur Chand, who happened to visit Simmalakh for a drinking water project, that INSEC would be providing skill development trainings to out-of-school children of freed Haliya. Prakash took part in the 3-month mobile repair training. This was an opportunity for him to escape unemployment. From a young age, he had liked mechanical and electric work. The training from April 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014 gave him a good knowledge. INSEC also provided Prakash with the tools required for mobile repair.



Prakash then faced another problem. He did not have money to open a shop. He talked about it with his father. His father had earned some money from his work as a carpenter and gave his son Prakash Rs 5,000. Seven months ago Prakash opened a shop of mobile

repair. Everyday he is busy in repairing not only mobile phones in the village, but he also repairs flash lights, radios, and the like. He earns about Rs 2000 to 2500 a month. He also passed the SLC on another attempt. He is now studying I.Com. second year. He goes to school in the morning from 7 am to 10 am, and then runs the mobile repair shop from 10 am to 5 pm. His work pays his school expenses. He is no longer thinking of going to India. 'I'm happy with the training,' he says. 'Without it I would have gone to India. Because of it, I'm able to study more. If I pass, I will keep studying.'

This was made possible partly because of the capacity of his father to support financially in opening the shop. 'Without supplies and starting money, ' Prakash says, 'nothing at all would have been possible.'

Other trainees, however, have not been so lucky. Most do not have parents who can contribute much at all of the start up costs of a new business.

Case Study #4: Refresher Trainings Help

Patiram BK (22 years, male), Pokhara, Dadeldhura:

Patiram comes from a Haliya family, but his father has not been officially registered yet.

Patiram took a 'house wiring' training about three years ago for three months. Last year, he also got a chance to take a three-month refresher training on the same subject. 'I am very confident to undertake any type of house wiring work – whether in modern building requiring underground or within wall wiring or in undertaking traditional house wiring system' Patiram said. He is quite busy in his work, especially from last year. He earned Rs 65,000 last year. A house recently being built in the village needed wiring, and he undertook this task. He finished most of the work in two days and earned Rs 1,800. He gets work all the time now. This is a good income for him. He said, 'the refresher training has increased my confidence and now I can do all types of electrical work related to house wiring. His father is also a mason in the village, and earns 700 rupees per day.

Patiram's father was a Haliya, and he continues to do some Haliya work. When he has free time, he makes iron agricultural tools for 20 of his clients, all higher caste members. From this work, he gets about 2 quintals of rice every year. But, his major work is mason for which he gets Rs 700 to 800 a day. This income source has helped him to cope with many problems he faced – his father and daughter-in-law died, and then had to build a house as 'astrologer' said that his old house is in 'bad' place and so he was getting problems. He took a loan to build a new house. He had to pay the loan. 'But, with the income of his son, it will not be difficult to pay back the loan,' he said.

Trainee Who Does Not Use Skill For Employment: Irregular Attendance, Work At Home, Lack Of Monitoring Led To Low Skill Proficiency

Bishnu BK is a 21 year old male in Sanagau, Doti. His family is Haliya Category 'B' as identified and certified by Government. Bishnu completed his SLC study, which was in

itself a feat for ex-Haliyas. All told him to become a JTA (agriculture) which could give him a job. As JTA is a village level technical assistant, people knew about it. He had a relative in Dhanagadi and so he went there to explore the possibility. He wanted to study in a private college, but he could not afford the Rs 40,000 admission fee. He did not know about the quotas for Dalits in government colleges. There was a high probability for him to get admission, but he was not aware of the program.

He then went to Mumbai India with fellow villager. He stayed in his brother-in-law's place, who worked as a watchman. He got a work at a restaurant as a dishwasher and earned Indian Rs 4,000 a month (6000 Nepali rupees). After 6-7 months, he came back to the village, and worked as a manual labour. He considered studying further. Then he got this house-wiring training, which was organized in a local school near his village (Sano-Gaon).

Just before the training, his father died and his mother was sick. He needed to work at home – particularly on land they rented, and do various manual work to support seven family members.

Bishnu could not learn much in the wiring training. The training was in the village. He could not attend the training regularly. He had work at home and community responsibilities too. 'Now, I do not have confidence in house wiring' – he said. That was also the farming season and much work had to be done. His family's rented land would produce food for six months. He grows rice and wheat. Apart from this, he earns 400 rupees a day to carry rocks for watercourse erosion control projects.

'Like other youths in the village, my ultimate destination could be India,' he said. His father also had gone to India and worked there for 6-7 years. But, he could not make much income. Bishnu wants to go for another refresher training and devote his full attention to it, and see whether he can establish himself. Then, I could decide to go to India or not, but I prefer to stay here if I have some gainful employment,' he said.

Conclusions

Successful Completion of Targeted Activities

BASE and INSEC have fully implemented their activities according to the targets. These institutions have been largely successful.

Educational Programs as a Theory of Change. The premise of the programs is that targeted educational interventions for two at-risk marginalized groups--1) children of already marginalized groups (Kamaiya and Haliya) who have dropped out from school (or never gone) and 2) older children (16-18 year olds) who may or may not have completed some schooling but face a difficult transition to employment--can make a big difference in their lives and prevent them from falling into the same form of bonded labour (or something similar) as their parents.

The overall situation for Kamaiya and, to a lesser extent, Haliya has changed significantly over the last decade because of the freedom movements, much greater awareness by these groups and about these groups, and governmental and NGO programs (some of which were run by BASE and INSEC). Today few Tharu work as Kamaiya but it's possible there are some. The data is very poor. It appears that a slightly higher percentage of Haliya are working in their traditional (bonded) role, although their numbers are also much reduced. Again, the data is very limited.

The likelihood of the children of Kamaiya and Haliya falling into bonded labour seems much smaller than before 2000, although it would be hard to say zero. There is widespread desire among Kamaiya families to avoid bonded labour and generally they have other options such as wage labor or work in India. The Haliya movement has not been quite as successful creating awareness and, crucially, other options for employment in the area are more limited. Awareness is a problem because the movement was not as strong as the Kamaiya's movement and because of the general isolation of the hills and the very dispersed distribution of Haliya families (as opposed to Kamaiya, who tend to live together in camps). Additionally, unlike with the Kamaiyas, the government's rehabilitation programme has not yet been implemented in a large-scale way. That programme could take years, even decades. The lack of employment options is a major problem. Those who have options take them. For many Haliyas and their older children, India has been a savior. They used to go to India in the past also, but had to return to Nepal regularly for the work of their 'masters'. But now they can freely go to India and work for longer periods to earn income. Those Haliyas without this option continue to work in traditional bonded labour. The exact numbers are unknown. They do so because they do not have other livelihood options. If they want to or need to stay in their villages (and not migrate), they have almost no work options, which is why at least some still work for their former landlords, sometimes in order to pay exploitative debts. Haliya activists sometimes face a moral dilemma: taking cases of bonded labour to the government officials might put the labourers at risk of hunger and eviction.

Overall, the theory of change focused on education has worked. The education of children of Kamaiyas and Haliyas has helped these communities in not becoming dependent on higher caste or their masters even for small things like writing a letter, an application, filling a form, reading and understanding the notice, and for simple calculations. Haliya parents said that they were pleased that their children could read letters and other notices. These were the messages of empowerment. But, still, there is economic dependence on their masters.

Once in regular school, the educational performance of the Kamaiya and Haliya children is low due to complex challenges of running preparatory classes, very inadequate public schooling, and most important, the lack of education at home. Despite this children have attained literacy and numeracy skills that has helped in reducing exploitation for the family and in increasing the awareness of children and their parents about their rights.

Youths who were successful in getting employment after vocational training were able to earn for themselves as well as support the families and educate their children. This was a case of economic empowerment, a very significant advance toward breaking the cycle of enslavement. However, many trained people did not earn much because they used the skill only for informal, irregular home-based work; some did not use the skill at all. Some community members and stakeholders contended that skill development of slightly older students (16-25 years) would have more impact.

CRAG, Watchdog, Duty Bearers. CRAG was found to enhance the awareness of students on their rights to education and children's other rights. It has also led to change in their behaviours also – like reduced discrimination and ability to put demands on teachers and school management to improve school management and provide facilities. CRAG is still not able to reach the communities (a tall order for a student group), and real participation of Haliya and Kamaiya children on the committees was lacking. The Watchdog committees were largely successful in raising the issue of the rights of children in general, and those of Kamaiya and Haliya communities in particular, to a larger audience, especially government officials and other duty bearers. It was effective to pursue these concerns at the district level, so that the proper officials and other major players know about the problems and discuss possible solutions. Duty bearers in general were somewhat responsive, but they were bounded by their policies made at higher level, where there is little advocacy for the change in these areas, especially for Haliya.

Programme management and implementation. Some of the problems noticed with the programme arose from not from design (once adjustments were made) but implementation, particularly inadequate tracking of participants, and the lack of flexibility in budget and activities to be implemented at the ground level. The learning cycle worked, but took a long time and in a few cases requests from the ground level were not considered. The delay in releasing funds in NEP and

mismatch of the programme planning cycles with governmental line agencies added complexities. A few promising activities were stopped because of lack of funding.

Should the Empowerment/ Bridge/Vocational Programs Be Continued?

With the tough cases such as with very marginalized groups like the Kamaiya and Haliya, it's crucial to have multiple interventions--through political activism at different levels, awareness raising among elites and the grassroots, formal and nonformal education, employment, and legal approaches among others. ASI's NEP added to the other programs for Kamaiya and Haliya their own multiple interventions – preparation classes and support for at-risk students, teachers' training, CRAG and Watchdog advocacy, and vocational skill development. More intense work and careful tracking in these areas would have surely brought higher performance among the students and more employment and higher income among the vocational trainees. Despite these shortcomings, the programmes are doing good work at a reasonable price. It seems like they are just hitting their stride in administration and implementation as staff, facilitators, and students get more experience (and would improve if the recommendations of this report are implemented), so it would be unfortunate to abandon them now.

In addition, there are many children that the programme has not been able to reach yet. Many children have already gained from the program, but many other children could benefit.

Recommendations

Recommendations Regarding CRAG

1. **Build on CRAG Success.** Although CRAGs have been effective, there is room for improvement. Schedule more regular meetings for topics besides weekly sports/quiz competition. Better record keeping by the committees and facilitators would be useful to show progress, record important events. This could involve a notebook with minutes/decisions or, if that is too cumbersome, a log quickly summarizing topics and activities discussed. Give more training to facilitators, especially about letting students make their own decisions. Increase involvement with parents, such as through parent-teacher-student meetings and activities. Consider having CRAG-led Friday activities in the community, to get more parents and community members involved. Create more opportunities for CRAG to interact with the Watchdog group; they will understand their work better than way (and Watchdog will get more info from the grassroots level). Encourage exposure visits of CRAG to other districts, using individual money or money from school or VDC or DDC. Without some source of funding, these exposure visits are not likely.
2. **Open CRAG groups in more schools.** Because the CRAG groups are doing good work both for the students involved and the school and local community, it would be good to spread the programs. Although funding would help make this happen, it could be done without much funding. In schools with Bal Children's Clubs, there is benefit to combining the club with CRAG, as long as the core purposes of CRAG don't get lost. (Doti District has Bal children's club in every school.) In districts where there are not CRAG/Bal Clubs, lobby the DEO to start them. Take advantage of the fact that CRAGs often makes life much easier for teachers (As one teacher pointed out, ' Now that we have a committee it's easier for us.' He explained the committee made school cleaning and activities much easier.) Separately, parents can push to start CRAG/Bal clubs in schools. To assist with the formation, the partner NGOs can provide the Child Rights Flip Chart.
3. **Expand the base of Expert Teachers.** Where possible, have the CRAG facilitator and the prep class teacher be separate people. That would double the number of supportive teachers at each school.
4. **Organize training and discussion for other teachers in children's rights and children's participation.** The CRAG facilitators can try to organize this (perhaps with partner organization staff, but only if there's budget), especially with a cooperative headmaster.
5. **For BASE: Have CRAG teacher teach a class a month on child rights, as INSEC does.** This is a low-cost and efficient way to spread the message of children's rights to education, the problems of social exclusion, and general importance of children's participation in decision making to many students.

Recommendations Regarding Preparatory Class and Schools

1. **Make sure the Bridge Class is the full period per day, and the proper number of months.**
2. **Create Better Evaluation/Tracking of attendance and achievement.** A separate file should exist for each student with information added every three months on attendance, family problems, strong subjects, weak subjects, etc. This is feasible given the resources of the programme and very desirable. It will allow earlier interventions where there are problems and better understanding of problems such as who is dropping out and why.
3. **Funding permitting, expand the Prep/Bridge classes to other schools.** The programme has generally been effective, but its reach so far has been small. Many other children in other areas could benefit from the program.
4. **Incorporate low cost programs that have shown success in Nepal:** pre-school programs, regular health programs (worm medicine is free and very effective but often not given regularly), tiffin meal programs, vision checks. These programs have been shown to bring very good results at very low cost--and in some cases the partners have implemented them as part of other programs. They could explore the possibility of mixing them into the
5. **Develop more understanding among teachers and other educators about the psychology of marginalized and at risk students.** Teachers should have much greater awareness about the bigotry of low expectations, and the need to create a supportive environment for at risk Kamaiya and Haliya children, especially those facing big obstacles at home. One big problem is unnecessary scolding of students. Students who come to school irregularly or with imperfect uniforms often face scolding (*gali*) from teachers for problems that are usually beyond their control. Sometimes they decide to drop from school rather than face more scolding. One member of a dalit organization explained, 'This is a weakness of teachers. Just scolding the kid doesn't help.'

Recommendations Regarding Vocational Training Program

1. **Create Better Tracking of achievement.** The partners do lots of monitoring and collect information about the participants regularly. The process could be improved with 1) more systematic compiling of the information (in one overview document) and 2) breaking down the category 'employed.' The categories monitored should be more than just 'employed' and 'not employed.'
2. **Look for opportunities to provide trainings in construction fields needed for earthquake reconstruction.** The April 25 earthquake damaged more than 85,000 buildings in the 14 most-affected districts and the government has aimed to train 60,000 construction professionals--carpenters, masons, etc.--in disaster-resilient building skills to address the shortage of trained workers. Many of these skilled

labourers earn excellent wages. In some cases ex Kamaiyas already go to Kathmandu to work in these fields. These connections could be expanded.

3. **Expand programme of career planning and career counseling before trainings.** The better the discussion and preparation before the training, the better the results. Other similar programs (eg World Education, Employment Fund) do these career planning and career counseling and have gained better outcomes in terms of their employment. BASE's workshop in later years to inform applicants about the training, skills and future work relates to this, but this was done on a casual basis. This improved the outcome (employment), but if this is done properly, applicants benefit as they would know what they would be doing and what commitment is required for this.
4. **Diversify the skills training area.** Continual research is needed to determine new skills needed in the market and to avoid market saturation. In training fields, there is some tendency of 'herd behavior.' Need to move away from this. (The GON's training programme for freed Kamaiya gave training in 24 subjects).
5. **Give longer trainings where possible.** In general, longer trainings get better results, unless an apprenticeship can be arranged. At least six months' intensive training is required if the trainees want to establish business or work professionally even in the skills that BASE and INSEC have given now.
6. **Give training in business skills and finances.** Some business/financial skills should be in every training, as this is lacking in the present training course. This will surely increase the length of training. A separate shorter training would also be good shortly after trainees have established their business, gained some experience, and want to more firmly secure or expand their operations. Many trainees and stakeholders expressed the need for more business and finance skills. Partners had recognized the need for this in the 2nd year, but there was no provision of budget.
7. **Provide seed money for trainees, if possible, or organize savings/credit groups among trainees.** Providing seed money with no interest for two years to start a business can help trainees establish businesses. Many interviewees pointed to this problem. More research and exploration is needed on the link between training and the financing needed to establish related business enterprises. One idea is to create savings/credit groups among the trainees. They could save together, make loans for expansion, but also share ideas and new skills. See Case Study #2.
8. **Considering giving bonuses to training instructors if the trainee gets a good paying job.** Other training programs do something like this with very good results.
9. **Provide certificates for all trainings.** A certificate from an accredited institution is especially useful in overseas employment but also within Nepal. The certificate could identify the length of the training and the skills mastered. As INSEC has used in most cases the government's agency for training, trainees have received certificates, but when BASE uses the private workshops for training, it may need a special certificate. A certificate is given in one location in Kanchanpur, but it was not from a training institute as such. There are ways to give certificates based on 'skill-testing'.

10. **Study the possibility of making a 'Job Centre.'** A job centre might help connect trainees to jobs. Employers can give information about the jobs they have, and job-seekers could also give information. A counselor could try to match them.
11. **Expand the Age Groups involved in trainings.** Many stakeholders wanted to expand the age group to 16-25 so that many more youths can be engaged in enterprises and get skill-based employment. Younger trainees also have trouble getting resources from their family to start a business. Stakeholders expressed that slightly matured trainees mean that they would take the training seriously as compared to teenagers. Similarly, there is value in training slightly matured members of the community as these individuals feel more responsibility for the families and thus can support other younger children in the family.
12. **Make better relations with Small Business, Animal, and Agricultural government offices.** Help trainees fill out the forms for these offices and explain the process. This will allow them to be invited for programs. Better linkage with these government agencies at the time of planning cycle is important as these agencies would know how many trainees would come from BASE and INSEC and then it would help plan the support required for these trainees.

Recommendations Regarding Duty Bearers

1. **Make Watchdog Committee more organized and systematic.** Push to make the Watchdog group meet more than once every 3 months to create more momentum and make work more systematic and organized. Every other month would be better. They should have a process for making priorities and dividing tasks.
2. **Provide more training for Watchdogs committees on children's rights, children's participation, and effective advocacy.** The Watchdog groups were better informed on general Kamaiya and Haliya concerns--less so on children's participation.
3. **Expand the Watchdog Network to the VDC level.** Create Watchdog Groups in each VDC. Although much of the key advocacy and information-gathering work needs to happen on the VDC level, district level Watchdog Groups have neither the time nor the funding to do this except in maybe one or two VDCs. If existing institutional structures are used (that is, existing committees), expansion can happen with little cost. Another way to keep costs down is to start the expansion in project VDCs and adjacent VDCs. One District Education Officer responded very positively to the idea of VDC level Watchdog Groups: 'It would be great to have [a VDC-level Watchdog group]. To bring about change--this is needed.'
4. **Create formal sharing opportunities between the Watchdog group and the political parties.** Both Kamaiya and Haliya/Dalits are substantial voting blocs yet that power is not represented in the political process.
5. **Create Semi-Annual Watchdog meetings with government officials and political parties.** The parties need to know that there are organized, active groups

- that they will hear from. The following should be involved: CDO, DEO, LDO, Land Reform, and some VDC representatives and political parties.
6. **Provide funds for Watchdog district committees to make visits to programme schools and trainings.** The Watchdog groups often had little contact with the grassroots parts of the programme (CRAG, Prep, and Vocational). On visits, they could be advocates for the programs, provide assistance and advice to the participants, and learn more about what is happening on the local level. Such travel is particularly difficult in the hills.
 7. **Make effort to get exceptions for school fees for Kamaiya and Haliya children.** It may be impossible to end the system of fees (school is supposed to be free), but it might be possible to create exceptions for the poorest of the poor.

Recommendations--Other Subjects

1. **Create more Haliya leaders.** Haliya themselves should be leading the charge for their rights. Yet this is not the case. Strategic scholarships at the high school and college level could make a big difference.
2. **Improve project management by:** 1) providing timely delivery of funds to the district offices from ASI/head office/regional office, 2) providing some flexible funds at district level so that district programme assistant can fund creative ideas that could come during the course of implementation of the program, 3) harmonizing the yearly programme cycle (eg mid-July to mid-July) according to the government so that co-ordination or joint activity (eg training for skill development) can be undertaken effectively.
3. **Provide more advocacy at the central (Kathmandu) level:** Some issues (eg scholarships for ex-Kamaiya boys) and livelihood support for the parents (so that they can support their children) related to the government require advocacy at the central level as they are decided at this level.
4. Programme directors/M&E evaluators' **regular field visits** (covering all districts, especially remote ones) is important. This is required for both understanding the ground reality and to liaise with line agencies.

Appendix A: Original Outcomes

The original 2010 key outcomes were:

1. The Nepal Government at all levels (national and local) fulfills its commitment on equal access to education for children of former bonded labourers (Kamaiya and Haliya) in the project target areas
2. Out of school children (8-15 years old) of former bonded labourers in the project areas are able to access and continue education with progression to higher classes starting with bridging and preparatory courses (provided outside of formal education setting)
3. Out of school children between the ages of 16 – 18 in the project areas gain enhanced employment opportunities as a result of vocational training
4. Daughters of bonded labourers (aged 8-18 years) gain increased access to education and training in the project areas.

The New Outcomes (adopted 2013):

1. Children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and their parents are empowered to understand, assert and claim their right to education.
2. Out of school male and female children of former bonded labourers (8-15 years old) in the project areas are able to access and continue school education with progression to higher classes starting with bridging and preparatory courses (provided outside of formal education setting).
3. Children outside of school aged 16 – 18 in the project areas gain enhanced employment opportunities as a result of vocational and skills development training.
4. Duty bearers in the project areas are responsive to the needs and rights of the children of ex Kamaiya and ex Haliya and take measures to increase their access to education.

Outcomes 1 and 4 were added at the start of year 4 because of a need to increase awareness of the importance of education among the Haliya and Kamaiya communities and among key stakeholders including local government and schools.

Appendix B: The Study Team

The study team is composed of two co-researchers both based outside of Nepal but with extensive Nepal research and evaluation experience, including research on bonded labour in West Nepal. One of them, Dr. Jagannath Adhikari, is a native of Nepal with 20 years of experience conducting project evaluations in Nepal. The other, Prof. Thomas Robertson, speaks Nepali fluently and has been going to Nepal since 1988. He has experience with education in Nepal (and elsewhere) as well as with evaluation of development projects, including in the project area. Their CVs are attached.

In addition, local assistants--a male Tharu from another region and a female Dalit from West Nepal--were hired. Under the guidance of the co-researchers, these research assistants collected reports and other secondary information and helped with interviews with children and parents of the Kamaiyas and Haliyas. They were trained for this purpose.

Appendix C Field Work Schedule

Meeting Date	Person	Position/Office
July 20 Nepalgunj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churna B. Chaudhary 	CEO BASE
July 21 Nepalgunj/ Dang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhola Mahat 	INSEC regional co-ordinator, Nepalgunj
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birbal Chaudhary and 3 other BASE Staff 	Project Co-ordinator, NEP, BASE
July 22 Dang- Ghorahi/Deukhuri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with District Educational Officer 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with District Women and Child Welfare Office 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Land Reform Office 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with Watchdog Committee in Deukhuri 	
July 23 Deukhuri (Dang)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with vocational skill trainee (carpenter) 	Dang, Deukhuri
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with vocational trainee (sewing/Tailoring) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with trainees (sewing/tailoring) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with CRAG, FGD with teachers, FGD with SMC, FGD with prep school children • Interview with boy trainees for motorcycle repair 	Nava Prativa Lower Secondary School, Pakhapani, Lalmatiya, Dang
July 25 Bardiya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with CRAG, FGD with teachers, FGD with SMC, FGD with prep school children 	Durgabhawani Primary School, Rajapur, Bardia
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with trainees on sewing and tailoring 	Rajapur market

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with parents • Interaction with trainees on sewing and tailoring • Interaction with trainees in masonry 	Baniyabhar, Bardia Bhurigaon, Bardia Bhurigaon
July 26 Kanchanpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with District Edu Office with DEO and others • FGD with Watchdog committee members • Interaction with vocational skill training (sewing/tailoring) 	Mahendranagar, Kanchanpur Mahendranagar, Kanchanpur Daiji, Mahendranagar
July 27 Kanchanpur/Dhanagadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs CRAG, Prep students, teachers, SMC, parents • FGD with trainees of sewing and training • FGD with trainees in masonry 	Jana Chetana Primary School, Jaijala, Kanchanpur Jaijala, Kanchanpur Bani, Kanchanpur pur
July 28 Kailali/Dhanagadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churna B. Chaudhary • Birbal Chaudhary • Yangya Raj Chaudhary • Other officials of BASE 	BASE officials.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khadak Raj Joshi and • Bhim Rashailee 	INSEC Regional Co-ordinator and Project Monitoring Officer, Dhangadi
July 29	(Travel) Kailash Paneru	District Programme Asst, Dadeldhura
July 30 Baitadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dev Chand • Interview with CDO, Land Reform Officer • Interview with vocational skill trainee (mobile repair) 	District INSEC office, District Programme Asst, Gothalapani, Baitadi Baitadi Baitadi

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGD with Watchdog committee 	Gothalapani, Baitadi (INSEC office)
July 31 Baitadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs with CRAG, preparatory class students, teachers, Interview with Patron of CRAG, FGDs parents, SMC • Interview with vocational skill trainees (two girls who took training on hand knitting) 	Manilek Higher Secondary School, Gurukhola, Baitadi Gurukhola, Baitadi
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs with CRAG, preparatory class students, teachers, Interview with CRAG facilitator 	Nepal Rastriya High School,, Siude, Baitadi
Aug 2 Dadeldhura	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction at district office (Mr Kailash Paneru) • Interview with vocational skill trainees (house wiring) • FGD with Haliya Mahashang • FGD with Watchdog Committee • Interview with Land Reform Officer • Interview with Educational Officer 	Dadeldhura
Aug 3 Dadeldhura	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs with CRAG, prep class students, teachers; • Interview with CRAG facilitator 	Ghatal Higher Secondary School, Dadeldhura
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs CRAG, Preparatory Class students, Teachers, 	Balkalyan Higher School, Samaiji, Dadeldhura

	Interview with Patron of CRAG, FGD parents	
Aug 4 Doti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction at INSEC district office • FGD with Watchdog committee members • FGD with vocational skill trainees (working sewing tailoring) • Interview with Voc trained person working and not working (house wiring) • Interview with CDO, • Land Reform Office, and • District Education Office 	Programme Assistant (Mr Nawaraj Joshi), Silgadi, Doti
Aug 5 Doti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGDs CRAG, Preparatory Class students, Teachers, Interview with Patron of CRAG • Meeting with parents 	Mastheswori Lower Secondary School Rana Gaon, Doti Rana Gaon, Doti
Aug 6 Travel to Dhanagadi		
Aug 7 Dhangadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing at INSEC regional office 	Khadak R Joshi and Bhim Rashailee
Aug 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing at INSEC central office, Kathmandu • National Level Education NGO 	Subekshya Karki, Programme Coordinator; Former Programme Co-ordinator

People and Organizations visited/consulted in Kathmandu:

1. INSEC head office (Subodh Pyakuryal – Chair of INSEC, Bijay Raj Gautam Executive Director, Subekshya Karki, Programme Co-ordinator).
2. CSRC (Community Self-Reliance Center) – consulted through emails and phone as it had done work on Haliyas and on Land Rights Movement in Nepal.
3. Department of Education and Ministry of Education.
4. Friends for Needy Children (talked to Anjita Kattel) as it has a programme for Kamlari’s education and rehabilitation.

5. World Education (talked to Helen Sherpa).
6. Ministry of Land Reform and Management, Kamaiya and Haliya Rehabilitation Program.
7. ILO
8. FSKILL