

NCEFGYAN

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NEPALESE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND

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gyan: *n.* knowledge acquired
by direct perception

The new area identification program

On July 21, 2006, NCEF approved the new area identification program. For the first time, we have articulated the mechanics of identifying and expanding to a new area. We hope this will result in more effective sites in the future. The plan is to have up to five new areas under evaluation in 2006. The approved proposed areas are designated as "areas under evaluation." The areas under evaluation will perform and be treated just like older areas that NCEF has been running for a number of years. The only difference will be that the areas under evaluation will have a much smaller number of students. At the end of the year, the areas under evaluation will be evaluated using metrics outlined in this document. Only the areas under evaluation that have performed well will be approved for expansion with a larger number of students in the coming academic year.

Under this new program, invitations to be a new NCEF area have been sent to Chittapole, Gamauli, and Sindhupalchowk regions. This leaves us with two more available spots for this year.

If you would like to learn more about the program or are interested in starting a new area, please visit the following website:

<http://www.nepalchildren.org/documents/newarea.html>

A team formed to evaluate new areas

A team has been formed to manage and evaluate the new areas. The team currently consists of Gyami Shrestha and Rameshwor Kafle. They will be in charge of all aspects of new area administration. This ensures that there is very little, if any, additional work created for the rest of the organization as a result of this program.

Increased help in Palpa

Initially, we had hoped to start Palpa with five students, but we had then decided to only have three students because we were concerned about its preparedness. Recently, a decision was made to increase the number of students in Palpa back to five because we have seen excellent performance by the Palpa area coordinator in the last few months.

MEET PREM



Age: 7 years

Grade: Nursery

School: Pashupati High School,
Chahabil, Kathmandu
Nepal

Prem's mother earns less than \$13 a month as a hired farm worker - less than a subsistence wage. Prem always loved books and hoped to study, but his father had abandoned the family, and his mother could barely afford to feed her children, let alone give them an education. Tragically, Prem's thirteen-year-old sister was abducted and sold into the sex trade in India. Prem always loved books, but when his mother could not afford them, he resorted to stealing them from others. Prem's mother hopes for a better future for Prem, who now attends school thanks to an NCEF scholarship.

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NCEF PAMPHLET

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Interview with Mr. Pukar Malla,

a member of the 2005 Selection Committee and one of the translators of 2006 applications.

Mr. Pukar Malla served as one of the members of the selection committee last year. This year he was involved with translation of applications from Nepali to English. Mr. Malla is a PhD candidate in electrical engineering and is minoring in Business Management. He has wide-ranging interests including in arts, theatre, philosophy, nature and gym. He has been greatly involved in Nepali community events in the U.S. and shows deep interest in helping the community back in Nepal, especially in education development sector. Originally from Kathmandu, he currently resides in Beaverton, Oregon. In this interview, he gives insight of NCEF's work and his experience.

Q. You served as one of the members of the selection committee last year. What was your motivation for contributing your time and energy for this committee's work?

I have always been delighted in participating in community service activities. I also enjoy engaging in Nepali community events. My interest in Nepal has helped me understand the need for education in the country's development – and what better thing is there to do than help kids, and especially kids who might be left without education if we did not contribute to the cause.

Q. What prior experiences (education/ profession/desire) helped you make the decisions in the selection process?

I have organized many activities for children through Social Service Clubs at St. Xavier's School and at Budhanilkantha School. Furthermore, during my undergraduate years in the US, I was part of a team tutoring needy Philadelphia kids. Eventually, I am keen on contributing to Nepal in the Education sector and thus any project in this sphere interests me.

Q. Did this experience meet your expectations? If so, what aspects were most meaningful?

Reading through the applications made the issues back home more glaring and stark. I felt good about being part of the global effort in working towards a prospering Nepali community. I felt especially good about being

connected with Nepal despite being far away from it in a meaningful way. The selection process was professional. It helped me learn the traits of conducting such a large project efficiently.

Q. What will help in making the work of the selection committee more efficient and effective?

I found the entire process very efficient to begin with.

In the future, if the committee becomes largely interested in increasing the number of children it supports, the selection process might become more daunting and might warrant different planning. For example, instead of all the members of the committee responsible for looking at all applications, we might want to involve more people in the selection committee and divide the application pool amongst the committee members.



Q. Having seen applications from past two years, what similarities and differences did you observe about the applications.

The applications were similar.

Q. What kind of changes, if any, did you think made this year’s selection process more efficient? What changes, if any, did not quite meet your expectations?

Timely distribution of the Nepali-to-English translation was a suitable effort. The addition of Part 2 (Information from the Volunteer or the Coordinator) to the application was a good addition to last year’s process. Also, the addition of the new guidelines to evaluate the need level of the applications (e.g. income level requirements based on rural or urban residence and on the number of children in the family) were desirable. Besides that, I do not know more about this year’s selection process. I am certain it was only better than last year’s.

Q. NCEF has worked to improve the selection criteria each year, so the most needy are assisted. What improvements in the selection criteria for next year will be needed to fulfill such a goal?

I find the selection criteria adequate. If we can amass the resources, I would suggest that NCEF reach out to more places in Nepal.

Q. General comments

The efforts of NCEF are commendable and much needed. We should attempt to use the example of NCEF in inspiring the different Nepali communities living in North America to contribute to Nepal in different ways.

2006 FUNDRAISING METER



MAKING DONATIONS

□ **Online:**

www.nepalchildren.org/donation.html

□ **Checks:**

Make checks payable to:

Nepalese Children Education Fund or NCEF

Mailing address:

Nepalese Children’s Education Fund

P.O. Box 380061

Cambridge, MA 02238-0061

Questions?

Website: www.nepalchildren.org

Email: contact@nepalchildren.org

THANK YOU!

WHAT ARE CHILDREN DOING?

Jyoti in Kathmandu is learning A, B, C, D and ka, kha, ga, gha (Nepali alphabets). She exclaims, “We have swings and we have slides too, and I have my friends. I am happy playing with them.”

Trishna in Kathmandu was excited and said “Wow! I passed LKG [lower kindergarten] and now I can sit in another room for UKG [upper kindergarten]!”

Surakshya in Kathmandu found an informational session at school on HIV/AIDS and drugs to be interesting.

ABOUT NCEF

NCEF is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to develop the potential of disadvantaged Nepalese children through education. Need-based scholarships are provided to deserving students who would otherwise be unable to attend school. Our social workers in Nepal meet regularly with the selected children and their parents to assist in each child’s development. We dedicate our resources to each NCEF child until they complete high school (twelfth grade).