Mother Tongue Based Equivalency

Innovative Solutions for School Dropouts in Nepal

Tap Raj Pant
UNESCO Office In Kathmandu, Nepal
9 November 2012
Why in Mother Tongue?

The Interim Constitution of Nepal:

• each community shall have right to receive basic education in mother tongue

• each community residing in Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script, culture and heritage
## Languages in Nepal

**Total Languages identified – 92**  
**Unidentified languages - 1 (93rd category)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepali</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maithili</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpuri</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tharu</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamang</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awadhi</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bantawa</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurung</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limbu</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bajika</td>
<td>1.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>0.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajbanshi</td>
<td>0.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherpa</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>About 4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education context

- 1.3 million children (6-15) are still out-of-school
- 15% drop out from primary grades (1-3)
- Language is one of the reasons for drop out
Mother Tongue Based EP for school dropout of Mushar Community in Dhanusha and Siraha 2010-2011
Objectives

- Implement an equivalency program (EP) for school drop outs in Mushar communities with a view to providing support towards accomplishing universal primary education (UPE) and recommendation for further action.
- Develop reading materials as supplementing bridge course in mother tongue for the targeted children.
- Raise awareness about multilingual education by providing insights into the value of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education which respects the rights of children.
Characteristics

- Piloted by NFEC in partnership with local NGO supported by UNESCO
- Age group: 8-14 year
- Target groups: School drop out from mushar community in Dhanusha and Siraha district
- Duration of course: 10 months
- Bridge course equivalent to primary grade 3
Implementation procedure

- **Steering committee**: Comprising of experts from the Ministry of education (MOE), Non Formal Education center (NFEC), UNESCO and representative from NGO to provide overall guidance and technical support.

- Steering committee identified Mushar as one of the most disadvantaged group having high drop out from school.

- Selected an NGO in consultation with Local District Education Offices for the implementation of the EP.
Contd....

- NGO surveyed school dropouts in mushar community and identified the needs of the learners with the support of local school teachers

- **District coordination committee** selected the mother schools and facilitators to conduct the equivalency course

One teacher from each mother school was selected to support the facilitators work
Cont....

- Training provided to local experts, facilitators and teachers on how to develop and use locally relevant materials for school dropouts

- Mother School Management Committee and NGO partner raised awareness among Mushar community through home visits and parents counseling

- Competency level of school dropouts assessed jointly by local experts, school teachers and facilitators
• 10 months locally relevant condensed course in Maithili language developed for the school dropouts within the FSP curriculum framework by group of local experts including facilitators and school teacher

• Training manuals for the facilitators was developed locally

• 10 + 3 days training provided to the facilitators and mother school teachers

• Facilitators conducted 10 months courses for school dropouts in 6 selected locations identified by survey with the support of mother schools
Contents covered

- Core subjects for condensed course: Social study, Math, Nepali, English and Science (Non core contents such as PE, creative arts, music etc. are included into core subjects as appropriate)

Learners assessment:

- Competency level assessed at the time of the enrollment
- Monthly test conducted by facilitators
- An examination conducted by mother school at the end of the course and enrolled learners in an appropriate grade in the schools (3 and 4)
Monitoring and Supervision

- NFEC, UNESCO, School supervisor
- Closely monitored by mother school teachers and resource person
- Monitoring by Steering committee and District coordination committee

Total costs: 20,000 USD
Training for Facilitators, teachers and local experts

6 facilitator received 10 days basic and 3 days refresher training

Group work
Classes for school dropouts at Dhanusha and Siraha districts

Children study at open ground

Children study at class
Course book in local language
Maithili

Children's activities during the class
Achievement

• 10 months class successfully conducted and 122 children (80 girls and 42 boys) enrolled in regular classes (grade 3 and 4) in the mother schools and only 4 dropped out.

• Musahar community children got an alternative learning opportunity in mother tongue and enrolled in an regular schools

• Local teachers and facilitators engaged in the process and build capacity to develop and use of locally relevant materials within the framework of national NFE curriculum.
• Raised awareness among local community people towards the education of their children and committed to send their children in school near to their home.

• NFEC has plan to further test this methodology in another language context in 2012/2013

• Mushar uthhan committee (an association for mushar) has introduced this course in other districts with the support from other donors.
Case -1: Nisha became a good example in her tole

• 12 years old Nisha has been a regular and good students in her class from the very beginning. She always come in class after finishing all the works at home. Nisha dropped out from the school when she was in grade 2 in 2008. She got an opportunity to join this bridge course. She has changed in her personnel hygiene as well as sanitation in her tole. She also bring her brother into the class who dropped out from the school in 2010 when he was in grade 3. She is very poor although regular and punctual and very talent in her class. Her father works in hospital as a sweeper. Now, Nisha can write about family, village, friends, letters and short application. People appreciated in her effort and laborious. She wants to enroll in grade 4 after bridge course in government school. Thus she became model in her Dom tole.
Lesson learned

• The methodology adopted for material development needs to be replicated in other community.

• Involvement of local experts, teachers and facilitators in the process of materials development helped in localizing the contents.

• There is strong needs of adapting local context and culture in the content of OSC programme.
• More supplementary materials to teachers/facilitators and learners would contribute for better teaching and learning.

• Frequent supervision & interaction with Facilitator and community members contributed to almost no drop out from the classes.

• Use of mother tongue as medium of instruction at primary grade contribute reducing drop out rates and repetition rates.
Thank You