

## Study Visit Nepal

### 1. General Info

**Dates:** 22 February - 14 March 2017

**Participants:**

Nikolaos Pasamitros - Inter Alia

Fausto Amico – PRISM

Jean Marie Abdoulaye Diouf – Federation Dimbaya Kagnalen

Yagya Aryal – Campaign for Change Nepal (CCN)

Prakash Bhattarai – Campaign for Change (CCN)

The study visit to Nepal took place in several cities and villages of Nepal, as Kathmandu, Pokhara, Waling, Hungi and Butwol.

### 2. Field Research (Interviews)

The team conducted interviews with **10** youth workers, **6** small-medium entrepreneurs and **3** policy-makers. The interviewees were not only Nepalis but also non-Nepalis that act, work and live there for a long-term period. Part of the interviews was conducted in English and part of them in English-Nepali with interpretation facilitation by Yagya Aryal or Prakash Bhattarai. There are various findings from the field research on different levels.

Like it used to be in the Western countries in the past, Youth work in Nepal is connected to social work. The basic needs to be served in many occasions in the Nepali society render social work and youth work interweaving actions.

Youth work is connected to the job market. Youth Work and Youth Workers try and manage to offer entrepreneurial skills to youngsters. This is because there is a need for economic independence of individuals that could let them better their income and life conditions. There are also interesting methods that connect Youth Work with the job market. One is the existent structure that allows public universities to announce calls for innovative business projects, receive applications, evaluate proposals and allocate funding according to their internal committee judgements. The other, is the existence of organisations that combine Youth Work and Youth agricultural training with cooperative, entrepreneurial activity.

Youth work is connected to activism for both youth workers and young people. Youth Workers urge youngsters to claim rights already established in other places of the world. For Youth Workers and young people, political activism and political party activism do not always have a clear dividing line between them. This blurring of actions and status sometimes happens as a conscious and others as an unconscious phenomenon or decision.

In villages, youth work is also related to agricultural skills. Youth Work is an important force in the laborious effort of Nepal to upturn the constant flow of internal and external migration. Internal is directed to big urban centres in search of better life conditions and jobs. External migration is directed towards different places around the globe. More skilled Nepalis move to the USA, Australia and Europe. Construction and other muscle workers migrate to the Persian Gulf states. Finally, completely

unskilled workers seek heavy, unhealthy and low-paid job positions in India. This flow is reinforced by geographical proximity and the free-visa regime between Nepal and India.

On the official and state level, there is, at least on paper, a distinct youth policy. There is a Ministry of Youth and Sports, the National Youth Policy 2010 and there are also official, state accreditations for individual Youth Workers on the local, district and national level.

International connections of organisations and associations are quite common in Nepal. Many international funds are active there (USAID, UNDP, Norwegian national programme etc.). There is also a significant number of INGOs and foreign NGOs active. Especially after the 2015 earthquake, their number has increased rapidly. Their work there is sometimes important while some other times there are concerns that they arrive for opportunist or for religious conversions reasons. In most of the cases, domestic organisations, associations and community centres are the gatekeepers for the access of foreign organisations and youth organisations in Nepal.

Youth Work and the related terms of social work, community development and youth training surely contribute to the social, economic and political development of young people. It is also a platform for Youth Workers to exercise organised pressure towards the decision-makers. So, Youth Work activism develops in different ways, depending on the occasion. There are cases where work is bottom-up and includes exercising pressure for claims and increased accountability from the decision-makers. Serving basic human needs, empowerment of youth, inclusion of marginalised groups, offering of skills and claiming human rights are only some examples. In other instances, procedures are top-down: official Youth policies, Youth Councils, ministry directives, INGOs and foreign funding, political party involvement or support. In both cases, grassroots work is highly accepted to be crucial for the future of Nepal and its people and is highly supported.

### **3. Local Event**

During the study visit, the local organisation (Campaign for Change Nepal) along with the participants and the community centre of the village of Hungi, organised and realised the second local event of the project. The event included exchange of experiences in the field of youth by youth workers, the participants of the study visit and local stakeholders. A local level policy-maker and the teacher of the village school offered also their insights. The event closed with Nepalese traditional dance, local black tea and traditional cookies.

### **4. Job Shadowing**

The participants shadowed the work of CCN and other organisations. In particular, the study visit team had the opportunity to observe and learn from the work of CCN at the rural areas of Palpa and the way it empowers youth.

#### **CCN**

CCN conducts sharing workshops, activities that involve marginalised groups and hosts EVS<sup>1</sup> volunteers that teach English language and culture to primary school students. It also supports in kind local community centres that offer vocational skills to youngsters.

#### **Butwol Community Centre**

The Butwol community centre is a self-owned and self-run centre in one of the poorest neighbourhoods (in fact a shantytown) of Butwol. It was created by CCN and the Valladolid, Spain city

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<sup>1</sup> European Voluntary Service

organisation. It used to offer cutting and sewing skills to the young people of the neighbourhood. Now, due to the current needs of the community it works as a primary school and also as a pole of attraction for children against incivility.

### **Hungi Women's Association**

Hungi Women's Association is a very important institution for the empowerment of marginalised women. Given that women fight for bettering their societal position in the country and the fact that unmarried females and widows stay on the margin of society, the work of the association is groundbreaking for the standards of the village. Women work together in cooperative farms and feed and profit from the crop. They also organise their activities and socialise among each other. Age and caste does not seem to be an issue in the association.

### **Youth Agricultural Farm, Hungi**

Youth Agricultural Farm is an innovative learning and working centre. In Hungi there is a big flow of active youth to the Middle East countries and the big cities of Nepal. The purpose of the centre is to keep young people in the village and offer them solid work and life opportunities. The educational benefit is twofold. Youth get agricultural skills so that they can remain in the area and work the land. At the same time, they get entrepreneurial skills by selling the surplus of their crop. In practice, young people learn, consume what they cultivate in the form of a cooperative and sell extra goods and share the profit. There is also a goat farm that offers stockbreeding skills.

### **Kanchanjungha Polytechnic Institute Nepal (KPIN), Vocational Learning Centre, Butwol**

This Butwol vocational learning centre is an institution that offers vocational learning. It attracts youth from the greater Butwol region and is mostly known for offering entrepreneurial and business skills. The premises of the centre are eco-friendly and include a biological garden.

## **5. Cultural Learning**

The study visit team had also the opportunity to visit the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Pashupati, Kathmandu and the Gardens of Lumbini, the birth place of Buddha.

For more information about the Study Visit in Nepal, ask Nikos Pasamitros: [pasamitros@interaliaproject.com](mailto:pasamitros@interaliaproject.com)