

Child Development Centers (CDCs)

Annual Report

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Compassion 575

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Introduction

The massive earthquake of 7.8 magnitudes which hit Nepal on 25th April 2015 has affected millions of children in Nepal. According to UNICEF, at least 950,000 children in Nepal will not be able to return to school unless urgent action is taken. Almost 24,000 classrooms were damaged with many suffering further damage in subsequent aftershocks. Almost one million children who were enrolled in school before the earthquake could now find they have no school building to return to. More than 90% of schools have been destroyed in Gorkha, Sindhupalchok and Nuwakot district. 80% of schools have collapsed in Dhading district. In some areas of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, approximately nine in ten surviving buildings have been used as emergency shelters. Schools were closed for almost a month. Hundreds of thousands of children still need shelter, food, access to water and sanitation, medical care, education and protection. Many earthquake affected children continue to live in areas at high risk of landslides and floods. As the rainy season takes hold, access to these areas is becoming increasingly challenging, threatening these children's access to water, sanitation, education and health services and putting them at a higher risk of exploitation and abuse including trafficking.

CDCs in the eastern and western Nepal were affected by the earthquake. The walls of CDC buildings have been cracked but not collapsed and it is safe to run the classes. CDC is helping poor children to continue their education and graduate. CDCs have been serving the children with compassion. Many children's life has been transformed through the CDCs.

Working areas of CDCs

Name of the area	Number of CDCs	Name of centers	Children enrolled
Eastern Nepal	4	Baragothe	75
		Damak	75
		Bayarban	75
		Itahari	75
Western Nepal	2	Bardaghat	75
		Sunawal	75
Total	6		450



Story reading day in Itahari CDC



Children receive school materials

Educational/Intellectual Aspects

Even after the massive earthquake, CDC classes are still running even though the number of children has been decreased in some centers. Many children lost their houses and moved back to their villages. CDC teachers guide the children to do their assignments everyday whether they have done their school assignments or not. Child friendly environment is provided in the centers. Education materials like notebook, pencils, color pencils, instrument box, eraser, pen and ink etc are provided to the children. 450 children received school materials this year. It was distributed four times a year. They are also awarded with gifts like handkerchief, sanitary pack, socks, geometry box etc when they get good grades. Various skill development programs like speeches, debates and quiz competitions, drawing competition, general knowledge test were arranged in the CDC. Earthquake safety measure class was also provided to the children by the teachers.

Physical Aspects/Health and Nutrition

Many indoor and outdoor activities were organized in different centers. Indoor games like Chinese checker, ludo, chess, carom board were organized and outdoor games like football and volleyball match. Winner of the games were awarded with presents like notebook, bouquet, geometry box, chocolate etc at the various centers. De-worming tablets were fed to the children twice a year and physical check up was done such as measuring height and weight at all centers. In the context of Nepal, poor families do not give a lot of importance to their health due to lack of education and knowledge. So health teaching was also provided to the children by health workers. Topics included importance of health, personal hygiene, nutrition, worms etc. Mothers learned to cook nutritious food/snacks at various centers and this is being followed up by the CDC teachers whether they are feeding nutritious food to their children or not.

Social and Cultural Aspects

Children in the centers were taught about earthquake safety measures. Other awareness programs like child rights, child abuse and child labor were conducted. CDCs also organized cleaning program near the center on environment day. Children's birthdays were celebrated at the center. Lots of games and fun activities were conducted at the center to develop friendly environment among children. On 29th September 2015 Children's Day was celebrated in all centers. At Damak CDC, Children's Day was celebrated with dances and songs performed by the children. Lots of games were also played like musical chair, balloon blasting competition etc. The winners were awarded with chocolates. After the program they had a feast together.

Spiritual Aspects

Activities like Bible storytelling, Bible studies and quiz were conducted in various CDCs. The winners for quiz contest were awarded with notebook and pen. Children were involved in Sunday school activity, youth ministry and taught action songs and hymns. Number of children who were involved in Sunday school activity was 325 and the number of children who were involved in youth ministry was 130. They were also involved in Good Friday, Easter and Christmas programs in the local Churches.



Impact of the program

The program has impacted children in many aspects. Regular health check up of children has improved their health and they have adopted the mentality to stay clean and tidy. Children are getting nutritious food and they are worm-free. They have formed a habit of washing hands before and after eating and using the restroom. It has benefited children's health a lot and prevented them from getting diseases.

Self-Sustainability

Local churches have been taking initiation in designing necessary programs for the children. Local churches have given space to CDCs as a part of the church ministry like NYI, NMI and Sunday school. Local churches are planning to have in their yearly budget a separate column for CDC.

Challenges

- Due to lack of church buildings some CDCs like in Itahari and Bayarban are facing problems to run the centers.
- Beside CDC children other children's parents persistently request CDC teachers to admit their children in the centers.
- Parents stop sending their children (particularly boys) to CDC when they reach higher grades because they do not want their boys to go to the church.
- Senior kids hesitate to listen to the Bible stories.

Conclusion

CDCs are a program that aims to create family environment among children. Thanks to brother David Argabright for giving this privilege to influence children through our love works that helps them change their behavior!

Success Stories

Puja Lawati is from Suryadai tole, Damak-1 which is in Eastern part of Nepal. She is 10 years old and she studies in grade 5 at Shree Chulachuli English School and attends the Baragothe CDC. There are 5 members in her family. Her father is in abroad country for work and her mother makes Dhaka clothes (handmade traditional cloth) and her mother is teaching her sister-in-law how to make Dhaka clothes as well.

Puja is a very brilliant student. She has never failed her grades. She became first in her class till grade 3 and in grade 4 she became school topper. Her mother gives all the credit to the CDC. She thanks the CDC teacher and says "since Puja has joined the CDC I have never got any complaints from her school teachers about her homework and grades". She is a very hard-working child but she was very shy to talk in front of other people. Even in CDC center it took her a long time to be frank and talk with other children. These days she gets involved in CDC activities without any hesitation. She sings, acts and speaks on any topic without feeling shy. She also got a certificate in best acting in her school which proves that she no longer feels shy and awkward to perform in front of others.

Puja is very good at acting and sketching. She likes to play in her leisure time. She feels very happy to go to Sunday school. She memorizes the Bible verses without any mistake and recites them in the Sunday class. Going to Sunday class has inspired her to read the Bible and know more about Christianity. She has started to read the Bible at home when she gets time. There is no objection from her parents but they are happy to see their child's progress and express gratitude towards the CDC teachers.

Her mother says "I am very happy that NCM Nepal is working among our community. Giving opportunity to our children and helping to raise our income through SHG and not only this much, I am also thankful for forming Self Help Group which has helped us to improve our economic status. I am the treasurer of the SHG."

