

## **Educate the Children**

Operation Day's Work Project – NEPAL  
Programmatic Report

### Major activities and results

The two main areas of activity were the scholarship and school support programs.

#### Scholarship program:

Girls in grades 8-10: scholarships were provided to these girls and young women in an effort to balance gender participation in the higher grades.

This has been successful.

Higher studies scholarships: funds provide successful high school graduates with an opportunity to continue their studies. These students also participated in regular meetings to discuss issues of concern to them.

Results are mixed; some students will retake exams in order to progress.

Students with exceptional need: all students in this program successfully completed their studies this year and progressed to the next grade.

#### Successful result.

Students with potential: all students who received educational support in this category progressed to the next grade. Successful result.

Other scholarships: students in elementary through secondary grades receive educational assistance. Many scholarships support girls from the Dalit ("untouchable") Hindu castes, who receive educational support to reverse traditional discrimination. Good attendance and educational achievement; a successful result.

#### School support:

Building renovation: support permitted the upgrading of permanent school facilities and addition of needed furnishings.

Educational materials: distribution of a package of equipment, including posters, charts, and globes.

Teacher training: teachers participate in in-service training in their subject area and receive teaching tools.

### Outputs

Scholarships were awarded as follows:

1. 225 girls in grades 8-10. Our field staff reports that there is now at least a 50-50 gender balance in the high schools in ETC's project area, in some places girls exceed boys.
2. 56 students for post-high school scholarships in college and technical schools. All students have completed grade 11 or the first year of an intermediate degree. Most passed the annual examination successfully. Students who failed will re-do final exams and papers. Given the rural background and associated education challenges of the students, this

- result is highly encouraging. ETC has been convening meetings regularly to provide moral and counseling support to these students.
3. 40 students with exceptional need. As noted above, all passed their year-end exams.
  4. 50 students with potential. All of these students successfully passed to the next grade,
  5. 260 other scholarships. These include 83 Dalit girls in Rasuwa and Nuwakot, 100 Dalit boys and girls in ETC's new project area (Godavari), as well as 77 other students who received support throughout ETC's program areas.

#### School support outputs included:

1. Renovations in 28 schools. We were able to reach many more schools than originally planned, but with smaller inputs. During this time of uncertainty in the rural areas, ETC field staff decided to keep a low profile, relying on local partners to set the agenda and pace of change. This has worked well; unlike many other foreign-supported NGOs in Nepal, ETC has experienced very little harassment or work stoppage due to Maoist influences. Meanwhile, community members have continued to lend their support, with local labor and materials.
2. Education materials supplied to 11 schools. This included a set of posters, charts, globes, tools for experiential (hands-on) learning, as well as recreational/physical education equipment.
3. 56 Mathematics and English teachers from 38 different schools participated in skills-building and pedagogical training.

#### Outcomes

Internal monitoring and external evaluations of ETC's programs reveal the following outcomes:

Increased academic attendance due primarily to scholarship/educational support and improved school environment.

More girls attending schools.

Better examination scores and grade-level advancement due to improved teaching materials, teacher training and clean, healthy environment.

More favorable attitudes toward girls' education, as girls continue to succeed in education. According to the field staff, the girls' improved potential as income earners has a lot to do with this attitudinal change.

Increased self-esteem of students can be seen in improved appearance and cleanliness, as well as care for the children's textbooks.

Increased commitment of the communities is evident. One example is that communities in Rasuwa district have established 4 kindergarten classes on their own initiation after being motivated and inspired by ETC's example.

Improved teaching is evident through declining failure rates in all grades.

## Anecdotal information

Some voices from the field:

### **Small help makes a big difference in poor lives**

Shree Maya Tamang, an 18-year old girl from Nuwakot, lost her father when she was very young. It was virtually impossible for her to go school as she was from poor family. But, with the help of ETC's scholarship program, she went to school and passed SLC (high school) exam. It was a great success for a girl from a "backward" ethnic community to pass SLC, but that was not enough for her to make her dream materialized. ETC decided to continue the support for her, so in turn, she joined technical college for agriculture development education. Now she is continuing her education and aims to be a JT (junior technician/extension agent). It is relatively easy to get the job of JT and help the community people in their problems. Now Shree Maya says, ETC has pour water on her drought-stricken life. She can be self-reliant and help her family, community and the country in future.

*Note: It is extremely rare for Tamang girls anywhere in Nepal to achieve this level of education and to articulate such well-defined career goals.*

### **The effect of a good environment**

"When I reached in Sidheswori Primary School on my regular school visit and supervision program, I saw more children in the kindergarten class than ever," said Bhim Mahat, ETC's Rural Education Coordinator. "Then I asked the principal, Mr. Rabindra Silwal, how did it happen so? He replied me that he was also amazed that the teachers make the children interested to come to the school regularly. He immediately expressed his view that ETC's teachers training program and support for the school's building and teaching materials has changed the whole environment of the school." Bhim noted that Mr. Silwal recorded more new children enrolling and said parents are excited to send their children to the school because of the good, healthy environment there.

*With the importance their work recognized by the community and ETC, teachers also seem happier and more enthusiastic, which cannot help but positively effect classroom dynamics.*