

## **Project Evaluation Report**

Capacity Building of the Teacher Trainers for One Year Course

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*Submitted to:* HimalPartner and ECEC

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## ACRONYMS

ARNEC	-	Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood
CHC	-	Community Healing Course
CP	-	Cerebral Palsy
DAP	-	Developmentally Appropriate Practice
DEO	-	District Education Office
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
ECE	-	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	-	Early Childhood Education Centre P. Ltd.
EHN	-	Education Horizons Nepal
Exec C	-	Executive Committee
GO	-	Government Organisation
ICDP	-	International Child Development Programme
KU	-	Kathmandu University (private university)
MA	-	Masters
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
MoU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organisation
NLA	-	NLA University College (teacher training college in Norway)
Pvt Ltd	-	Private Limited (business)
RP	-	Resource Person
SEED	-	Early Childhood Education Training Institute in Singapore
SMC	-	School Management Committee
SS	-	School Supervisor
ToR	-	Terms of Reference
TT	-	Teacher Trainer (from ECEC)
TU	-	Tribhuvan University (government university)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the final evaluation of the project: *Capacity Building of the Teacher Trainers for One Year Course*.

The project is five years in duration (2013 – 2017) and at the time of reporting has one year remaining. It has been implemented by Early Childhood Education Centre (ECEC) and funded by HimalPartner, to the amount of NPR 6,478,414 (NOK 518,273) in the four years to date.

The goal of the project is to build up the competence of the ECEC teacher trainers so that the overall goal of teaching quality in the ECEC one year course is met. The target group of the project is ECEC teacher trainers and also ECEC as an organisation, while the beneficiaries were identified as the ECEC one year course students as well as Nepali preschool children.

The main activities planned within the five years of the project include: developing a partnership with an Asian College; running credit courses for TTs; Master in Early Childhood Education for one senior TT and the transfer of his learning to other colleagues; improved networking and relationship building at local, national and international levels; and resources added to the library.

The evaluation uses qualitative research methods to examine the issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of the project. Sustainability and cross-cutting issues are also considered and the report concludes with the lessons learnt which are presented alongside recommendations and finally the added value of HimalPartner is summarised.

The evaluation was led by the external consultant who was recruited by HimalPartner and ECEC, and responsible for the final report. Assisting the evaluation were two staff from ECEC (Reiny de Wit and Bijay Karki) and one member from HimalPartner (Solveig Abelone Midtgarden).

The methods used included a desk review of relevant documents; school visits and observations of class teaching, workshop facilitation, mentoring sessions, and conference presentations; as well as stakeholder interviews and focus group discussion.

Limitations to the study included time restrictions and also methodological complexities. Evaluating the impact of capacity building projects is not straightforward because of issues of attribution and causality. ECEC staff are involved in many other capacity building efforts alongside this project therefore it is accepted that the results and impact of this project alone cannot be delineated. Also, the further impact 'ripples out' the more difficult it is to establish links between the project implementation and the impact on beneficiaries. Therefore this report focuses more

on the impact on ECEC teacher trainers and one year students than on preschool children or their parents.

**Relevance:** This report suggests that despite obvious increases in TTs capacity, the objective of the project continues to be relevant because capacity building is an ongoing iterative process that is never finished.

**Effectiveness:** despite unexpected challenges in Nepal midway through the project period, all project activities were implemented and achieved positive results.

For various reasons outside of ECEC's control, the credit courses were limited and the partnership with the Asian College (SEED) is still in process therefore the results are not as visible in these two cases as for other activities.

The senior TT has not yet completed his postgraduate study however he is already showing increased academic competence and putting his research skills and up to date knowledge of ECD to good use. An unplanned but positive result was the extent to which he made opportunities for exposure visits and networking while in the UK. There are signs that the senior TT is working on building the capacity of the other TTs and that they are willing to learn from him.

The library is set up with improved resources and TTs and students are easily able to access internet as well as quality literature relevant to their teaching and learning.

Perhaps the most significant results overall are the networking and relationships that have been increased at local, national and international level. ECEC staff have prioritised networking and shown that they are capable at it, with this culminating in the very successful organisation of their own conference. The conference gave ECEC staff and students an opportunity to show that they are experts in their field and up to date with ECD trends not just nationally but also internationally.

An unexpected result that does not fall directly under this project, but is linked to it, was the way in which ECEC was able to help teachers and parents support their children in recovering from the 2015 earthquake. This project was directed funded by HimalPartner and resulted in a Community Healing Course package being designed that can be added to ECEC's curriculum and used in the aftermath of any natural disaster or trauma situation.

**Efficiency:** The resourcing allocated has enabled the project to achieve positive results, funds have been appropriately managed by ECEC's finance section (according to the DIGNI financial

checklist), and ECEC have especially appreciated the occasions on which flexibility was shown in order to make best use of the funding. As capacity building of the TTs is crucial to the quality of ECEC's services, and is also a long term investment, the project funding can be considered value for money.

**Impact:** TTs demonstrate a keen learning attitude and a confident, capable approach to their role as teacher trainer. Their seniors have reported an increased ability to plan, prepare and coordinate. They can competently teach, facilitate and mentor in a professional manner. TTs enjoy their role and feel a sense of ownership for the quality of training and reputation of ECEC. They have already experienced success from their networking which has resulted in relationships with ECD experts being forged.

Through the combination of training opportunities and experiences, the TTs capacity has increased enabling them to be competent trainers, teachers, facilitators, mentors, networkers and learners. This has, in turn, led to quality teaching on the one year course.

The vast majority of the current students are satisfied with their experience of the one year course. Many feel that the strength of the course lies in the teaching and especially the guidance and mentoring provided. They also repeatedly refer to the useful content, the good balance of theory and practical and how it has helped them understand children better and discern where they needed to make changes in their own practice.

Change is evident both in the classroom and as reported in students own personal lives, and many students refer to the one year course as a catalyst for change.

The high and increasing demand for the one year course is also testimony of its quality. Despite more students graduating from the one year course, ECD principals and coordinators complain that they cannot find any one year graduates to recruit for their schools, suggesting that graduates are in high demand.

Teachers report that children are positively affected by the changes in their classrooms but the experience for parents is more complex and depends on a combination of factors.

Unintended impact is also discussed; it includes the tension that TTs and one year students face due to time pressures and heavy family responsibilities that compete with their commitment to the course, study or loyalty to their job as a TT.

**Sustainability:** ECEC's sustainability is examined in terms of its ability to be, ability to do, ability to organise, ability to relate and ability to learn.

**Cross-cutting issues:** Specific activities have not been planned within the project to directly address the cross cutting themes, however there are indications that these issues have been taken into account at various levels and stages of the project. It is concluded that there is an environmental awareness perspective, a gender equality perspective, and a conflict sensitivity perspective pervading ECEC.

**Key Recommendations of the project can be summarised into the following points:**

- Capacity building of TTs should continue to be a priority
- opportunities for TTs to attend international conferences and when possible exposure visits to places doing well in their early years practices, should be continued
- The senior TT should finish the thesis section of his postgraduate study as soon as possible and he should be encouraged to continue in the practice of building up the capacity of the other TTs by sharing his learning
- The momentum from the conference should be sustained with further meetings among stakeholders to discuss issues which arose, and where relevant, advocacy plans drawn up
- There is opportunity for learning to be put into writing and more publications to be made which would further ECEC's reputation nationally and internationally
- Progress made in relationship building with both SEED and TU should continue to be pursued.
- The one year course should continue to be increased while maintaining the same level of quality.
- With the help of NLA, plans to expand academically to bachelor level should continue to be pushed and funding applications pursued
- Continue to work with schools and parents and at district level through partners as well as providing longer training courses

**Added Value:** The report concludes by assessing ECEC's relationship with HimalPartner and outlining HimalPartner's considerable contribution to ECEC's work over the years and the added value that they recognise in this relationship.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Over the last two decades awareness of the importance of the early years has increased in the country of Nepal. Private schools have added preschool education to their programs and since 1999 the Government of Nepal has had an ECD section within the Department of Education. However government implementation has not matched the promises of national plans and policies, and the quality of private institutions varies considerably with most using rote learning systems and very traditional teaching methods.

ECEC was established in Kathmandu in 2001 with the vision that 'all children in Nepal get developmentally appropriate education and care'. Initially ECEC offered short courses and as these quickly became popular the demand for longer courses became obvious.

With financial support from HimalPartner and technical support from NLA Norwegian University College and Kathmandu University, ECEC developed and established the one year academic course for preschool teachers in 2008. This was the first all round professional preschool teacher training in Nepal.

This one year course has continued to grow in popularity; demand has increased from 11 students in 2009 to 60 students in 2016.

With the growing recognition of the importance of the one year course and increasing numbers applying for it, came the challenge of ensuring that the one year staff are qualified and capable of training these ECD teachers.

The course is unique in Nepal and must continue to ensure high quality training that is both practical and academic. Therefore it is vital that trainers are up-to-date with the latest early years developments and excellent teachers, facilitators, and coaches as well as being avid learners themselves.

### 1.2 Project Description

The project is a five year program that started in 2013 and ends December 2017. It is entitled ***Capacity Building of One Year Teacher Trainers.***



The overall project objective is that 'the ECEC one year course has quality teaching' and this is indicated by 'lessons in the one year course being academic and research based'.

The goal of the project is to build up the competences of the ECEC Teacher Trainers so that the overall goal of teaching quality in the ECEC one year academic course is met.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of the project. The sustainability of the project is examined and cross-cutting issues of environment, gender sensitivity and conflict sensitivity are considered.

The evaluation also assesses what lessons have been learned throughout the implementation of the project and provides recommendations for its final year. The report concludes with a summary of the added value of HimalPartner as experienced by the target group of this project.

## 2. Methodology of the Evaluation

### 2.1 Overview of the process

This evaluation was conducted between 26<sup>th</sup> October and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016, using a participatory assessment method. The data was collected in the Kathmandu / Lalitpur area (in ECEC's head office and Kathmandu outlet office, the ECEC conference, and various school visits).

The evaluation team consisted of representatives from ECEC (Reiny de Wit and Bijay Karki), as well as HimalPartner (Solveig Abalone Midtgarden), and the evaluation team leader (Carrie Mitchell) who was hired as an external consultant independently responsible for the final report.

Qualitative research methods were used for the evaluation, including a desk review of relevant documents; school visits and observations of class teaching, workshop facilitation, mentoring sessions, and conference presentations; as well as stakeholder interviews and focus group discussion. Further detail on how these methods were implemented is as follows:

#### **Desk Review :**

Relevant project and organisational documents were reviewed and mapped against the areas of evaluation so that key information could be extracted and used as data to inform the analysis.

For a full list of the documents reviewed see Appendix 2

#### **Observations:**

- Eight ECEC Teacher Trainers were observed teaching and facilitating classes for the current one year students
- Five ECEC Teacher trainers were observed in mentoring sessions (one-on-one with the one year students)
- Six ECEC Teacher Trainers were observed presenting workshops in the Early Years Conference. The Head of Teacher Training was observed presenting a plenary session as well as leading a workshop
- Eleven one year students were observed teaching in six different schools as well as leading micro-teaching sessions which took place as part of the one year course

#### **Interviews:**

Two representatives from NLA, all ECEC Executive Committee members, as well as seven Teacher Trainers and six one year students, were interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were used throughout (see interview guides in Appendices 3-5).

A focus group discussion was conducted with a small group of current one year students (see focus group outline in Appendix 6).

Three interviews were followed up as in-depth case narratives; one Teacher Trainer, one graduate from the one year course, and one current student. These are presented in Appendices 8-10.

**Other tools used:**

One year students complete questionnaires at the end of each term and ECEC also arranges a workshop each term in which the students share oral feedback on the course in a reflective manner. Responses from last term's questionnaire were reviewed and this term's oral evaluation workshop was attended.

The ECEC library system was examined and the library committee consulted.

Educational Horizons Nepal (EHN), who purchase ECEC's services, were consulted and their annual report and project report reviewed.

The DIGNI checklist for financial accountability was completed within ECEC's finance department.

Profiles of Nepali preschool children that have been compiled by the one year course student teachers were also reviewed.

**Ethical issues:** as agreed with HimalPartner at the outset, individuals' names and school names have not been included in this report. Respondents have largely been referred to in three main groups. Those who are in management in ECEC are known as the Executive Committee (Exec C) and this includes three expatriates and three Nepali staff. ECEC staff who are teaching on the one year course and other courses are referred to as Teacher Trainers. Those who have enrolled on the one year course are known as one year students (many of whom are also teachers or principals) or one year graduates.

The purpose of the evaluation was explained at the outset of each interview, observation or focus group and permission was agreed.

The policy for photographs in school settings was followed; therefore it was not possible to photograph within some institutions such as the CP Centre.

## 2.2 Limitations

**The timeframe of the evaluation** was somewhat affected by schools being closed during festival holidays and political strikes and ECEC staff being unavailable because of busy weeks connected to conferences, board meetings, visiting consultant, ICDP etc. Despite these restrictions, ECEC staff did everything possible to facilitate the evaluation and it was possible to carry out the planned evaluation activities.

Because of these time constraints, only one focus group discussion was arranged and school observation visits were restricted. However time was maximised by using interviews (which were easier to organise as they did not require so many people's schedule matching simultaneously) and using pre-arranged opportunities to observe students presenting at conference, conducting microteaching and giving oral and written feedback as part of their course. Overall it was felt that there was ample opportunity for collecting rich data.

**The methodological limitations** also need to be discussed, because evaluating the impact of capacity building is not straightforward or without controversy.

As Connolly and York (2012) recognise, evaluating impact can be challenging because of the multi-layered nature of capacity building. Capacity building is an intrinsically intangible, fluid and iterative process. Often it is not possible to demonstrate a causal link between specific interventions and wider processes of change which may include impact on beneficiaries at community level.

ECEC Teacher Trainers are simultaneously participating in many capacity building activities which are provided and funded by different donors and stakeholders. Therefore it is likely that results will overlap and impact cannot be attributed to one project only. It has to be acknowledged that information received from respondents in this evaluation, as well as reported or observed changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes, are bound to be influenced by many factors and not solely this project.

According to the 'Ripple Model' (Hailey, James and Wrigley, 2005; James 2002) capacity building is like a drop that lands in water – the ripples flow outwards to bring change at individual level, followed by organisational change followed by improved quality of services and finally behavioural change amongst beneficiaries.

Therefore, according to this model, the capacity building intervention is merely one intervention among many that brings about change. However, by using the concept of plausible association it is possible to judge whether change at one level does indeed ripple out to bring changes at a wider level.

With all this in mind, it was appropriate to use qualitative research methods rather than quantitative methods and to give weight to semi-structured interviews with open ended questions as well as narrative case-studies to elicit and present information about plausible association.

It was important for this evaluation to focus on changes at individual level (ECEC teacher trainers), and organisational level (ECEC and the one year course), and beneficiary level (one year course students and Nepali preschool children).

However, as the impact 'ripples' out to Nepali preschool children and their parents, the plausible association becomes weaker, and therefore it was considered not possible or worthwhile to make a direct attempt to measure it. So behaviour and attitude change of parents and children, as observed in the classroom and reported by teachers, is included in this report, but it was not considered possible to more specifically delineate the impact of this project on preschool children or their parents.

### 3. Evaluation Results

#### 3.1 Relevance

*- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?*

In the introduction of ECEC's business plan (2014-2018) it is stated that, 'With all the plans and new ventures, ECEC is aware of the fact that it is of utmost importance to keep the quality of ECEC's training and services at the highest possible level.'

Quality was recognised as being of absolute importance at the beginning of this project and this continues to be the case to this point in time. As the quality of ECEC's training largely hinges on the capacity of its teacher trainers, the goal of capacity building the teacher trainers for the one year course remains very pertinent.

The relevance of the project was further confirmed in the responses of three groups of key respondents:

- Each of the six Exec C members discussed the notion that 'capacity building is never finished'. As a reiterative process, no matter how much achievement is made, staff will always need more capacity building. Therefore despite the progress made, the goal continues to remain relevant
- Teacher trainers themselves identified the central importance of developing their own competence. Most expressed concern about 'staying ahead' of the students they teach and claimed a keen passion for learning.
- The majority of one year students, in their evaluations, cited the quality of ECEC's training as a key factor in influencing their decision to do the course; methodology of the TTs as well as the course content were the two factors most frequently linked with notions of quality.

The ever increasing demand for the one year course is proof of the real need for quality training. Since quality is clearly linked with the TTs competence and capacity building is an ongoing process, it can be concluded that the objectives of the project are still valid to the ECD needs in Nepal.

### **3.2 Effectiveness**

*- To what extent has the project achieved the planned results, project goal and overall goal?*

*- Are there any unplanned positive or negative effects?*

There have been some changes to the project activities throughout the four years but it is clear that the revised activities have been implemented and many positive results have been achieved.

In the application for 2013 the main activities planned can be summarised as: a new partnership with an Asian College; credit course from NLA completed by TTs; networking opportunities at international level for TTs; and resources added to the ECEC library.

These activities were implemented between 2013 and 2014. Due to restructuring changes within NLA University, funding for credit courses changed. Therefore the full cost of the one credit course (on mentoring) had to be funded over these two years by the HimalPartner project, and this became the last credit course to date.

In the 2014 application no credit course was proposed but academic capacity building, in the form of the fees for a Master in Early Childhood in the UK, was proposed for one senior TT. This postgraduate study has been pursued 2014-2016, while another related activity was added to the project in the same year; that the senior TT benefiting from the postgraduate study will also focus on transferring his knowledge and increased capacity to the other TTs in ECEC.

The results achieved for each of these activities will now be considered in detail.

#### **Partnership with an Asian College**

A new partnership with an early years training college in Singapore, SEED Institute, has been explored and relationships have been developed. Initially ECEC's director visited the college in Singapore, this was then followed up by Skype calls and interaction at the ARNEC conference by one of ECEC's TTs, and also by an NLA colleague at a later conference in Singapore.

Following this promising start, there was no further development in the relationship for some time and it was not possible to make any agreement or get an MoU signed.

However just recently, there was significant progress. ECEC Exec C reports the follow positive results:

- The SEED experts coming to the early years conference organized by ECEC in Nepal, to share about the development of ECE in Singapore
- A consultation between the SEED experts and TTs regarding the 'curriculum' ECEC is developing. This is a year plan for preschools that TTs are currently working on. (See photo in Appendix 11)

Now that there have been face to face meetings and involvement at this level, ECEC is hopeful that progress will continue.

SEED institute could be a potential exposure opportunity for observing developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) in the early years in an Asian setting. It would also be a valuable partner as well as an inspiration for ECEC as SEED are recognised for their pioneering work in early childhood education training in Singapore.

### **Credit courses**

Ten of ECEC's teacher trainers participated in the mentoring credit course organised by NLA, between February and June 2014. There was a general consensus among the TTs that the course was worthwhile but that the experience was challenging.

The majority of the participants felt that the focus on mentoring was important and relevant as each TT who teaches on the one year course is responsible for mentoring approximately six students.

Several TTs described the content as useful but said that they felt the methodology was difficult. The course was made up of five lectures, independent reading and an internet based exam which required the submission of a written assignment. The TTs found the degree to which they had to independently study and prepare the assignment, challenging.

Some participants also pointed out that while this caused tension it was still a good learning experience as they realised that they needed to continue to develop their independent study skills.

The more senior TTs commented that the credit course was useful and a good theoretical foundation, but they also recognise that in practice TTs need encouragement in specific areas like



asking the right questions when mentoring students. This requires a focus on coaching and practical guidance along with experience and theoretical understanding.

**MA in Early Childhood Education for one senior TT and transfer of skills to his colleagues**

As planned for 2014-2016, one senior TT is participating in an MA in Early Childhood Education at Sheffield University. This is a part-time distance learning course that requires participants to attend five residential weekends in the UK and to complete four 6000 word assignments as well as a final dissertation.

ECEC's senior TT has successfully completed the following modules:

- Early Childhood Education: History and Policy
- Development, Learning and the Curriculum in Early Childhood Education
- Contemporary Issues in early Childhood Education
- Research Methods and Methodology in Early Childhood Education

The TT has been participating in the course since 2014 until present and despite extremely difficult conditions in Nepal throughout the earthquakes and national strikes of 2015, he has fulfilled all the requirements to date. His marks for the four assignments range between 60 and 75. Feedback he has received includes 'a very engaging assignment with a clear structure and flow throughout' and 'your critical voice is developing'. Suggestions for future work include the need to engage with a wider range of literature and further develop understanding of research methodology. Submission of a 15-20,000 word dissertation is the final and remaining part of this course.

An unplanned but very positive outcome of this senior TT's postgraduate study is the extent to which he has been able to create opportunities for exposure visits and networking in the UK. From contacts he made through the course he has been able to spend time with early years experts in UK schools and preschool settings and invite ECD experts to Nepal.

So as well as gaining competence in academic research he has also become up-to-date with the most recent developments in ECD at an international level, and furthermore, he has been able to bring some of this back to Nepal to feed back into ECEC as an organisation. An example of this is that his networking with a Jolly Phonics expert from the UK resulted in her bringing Jolly Phonics

training to Nepal, through ECEC. Another preschool expert from England also came to Nepal to present at the ECEC conference.

The senior TT reports plenty of opportunity for sharing his own learning with his colleagues especially through regular Tuesday guided discussion groups that he facilitates in ECEC. Other less experienced TTs also comment on how they feel comfortable coming to the senior TT, to ask for help when preparing new classes or workshops or presentations. One TT commented 'There is a lot of opportunity to learn from each other - ECEC is structured in such a way that such learning is encouraged.'

The plenary session at ECEC's conference was another example of the senior TT having opportunity to share his knowledge, skills and attitude with a large audience of ECD professionals. This included his ECEC TT colleagues, one of whom made reference to being 'even more inspired about ECD than before' by the session.

#### **Improved networking at local, national, and international levels**

Networking was an area that all the TTs and Exec C members emphasised as being of utmost importance and claimed to be involved in, at varying levels, from local to global. There was an overlap in understanding of the terms 'networking', 'advocacy' and 'marketing or advertising' and sometimes one term was used interchangeably with others.

Individual TTs report to be very active in networking. One TT commented,

'I am always talking about the importance of early years education and ECEC. I never go anywhere without some brochures or ECEC annual report in my bag and whether it's at my children's school or on Facebook or a wedding function or wherever, I am always promoting ECD and our courses!'

Many of the students on the one year course and many participants at the conference first heard about ECEC or came to be involved in ECD through word of mouth.

Well established relationships with schools have been nurtured and new ones made. Through working with EHN in the field, TTs report good relationships with District Education Offices (DEO) and district level government officials, as well as the schools themselves. ECEC has been working with EHN in Dhading district since 2013. ECEC provides the technical support in ECD while a local NGO provides training in health, sanitation and nutrition. Results from partnering in this way include a total of 22 Resource Persons (RP) and School Supervisors (SS) from Dhading DEO trained

as Master Trainers in ECD; 150 ECD facilitators trained in child-friendly teaching methods; School Management Committees made aware of key ECD issues and more than 3000 parents empowered through the Parent's Education Programme.

The Head of Kathmandu Outlet Office describes how schools within the valley often phone them and ask why it is so long since ECEC have visited. Despite pressures of administration and a busy training schedule she gives priority to visiting and continuing to strengthen these relationships.

At national level, ECEC continues to strengthen links with KU, and more recently relationship building with TU has been progressing on the grounds of discussing a future vision for bachelor level education. As a (Pvt Ltd) business there are challenges for ECEC in making close links with either NGOs or Nepal Government, but ECEC Exec C members recognise the importance of bridging the gap between the private and public sector and despite the difficulties involved, are investing effort in this area.

As already mentioned in the separate section above, networking with SEED has produced results and is to be continued. Relationships with NLA already have deep roots and continue to develop as the vision for a bachelor level course is worked through and together ECEC and NLA make proposals and funding applications. Similarly, KU and ECEC have a well established relationship.

Other international level networking has resulted in six members of ECEC staff attending the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) annual conference – two each year. One senior TT feels that this conference is more geared towards NGOs and has suggested another Asian conference that is more research related and which he considers would be even more worthwhile attending – the Pacific Early Childhood Education Research Association (PECERA).

However, networking at past ARNEC conferences has already yielded positive results. The contacts one TT made resulted in four ministry level early years experts from Bhutan coming to Nepal and participating in ECEC's recent conference (see photo in Appendix 11).

The senior TT who is currently completing his MA has also attended the 'Early Childhood Leadership Summit' in Singapore, presented a paper in the 'European Christian Education Conference' in the Netherlands, and in the 'European Early Childhood Research Association' in Barcelona he presented a shared paper on 'Mentoring and Early Childhood Professional Development in Nepal'.

Through all these forums, conferences and networking opportunities relationships at local, national and international level have been forged, information shared, new trends learnt about and developmentally appropriate education has been advocated for. However the climax in terms of networking and advocacy opportunities for ECEC was their own recent conference which has been referred to multiple times already in this report.

ECEC organised their first two day conference in November 2016, with the financial support of HimalPartner and technical input from NLA. It generated much interest and resulted in more than 500 people, connected to ECD in various ways, participating with enthusiasm. The private sector was well represented as was the government from schools and Department of Education. However ministry level representation was missing and ECEC director has said that this reinforces her conviction that, despite the challenges, they need to persevere with efforts to advocate with the Government of Nepal about the importance of ECD within education.

All the ECEC TT's were observed presenting in workshops and making use of the opportunity to interact with other national and international ECD experts.

One of the Executive Committee members commented,

'the conference was a wonderful opportunity on so many levels. It was a great forum for sharing and learning because it brought together such a wide spectrum of ECD professionals. I was also encouraged to see our own teacher trainers taking part so confidently. At the planning stage when many requests from Rato Bangala School and others, came in about wanting to lead workshops, suddenly all our TTs became competitive – they were adamant that they would not be done out of the opportunity to present! And that's the type of experience they need in order to further develop as well as make more contacts. A few of our one year graduates also presented and got very positive feedback. So, between our senior teacher trainer challenging an audience of several hundred about the importance of ECD and our TTs and student graduates confidently facilitating workshop presentations - I would conclude that the conference was a highlight in ECEC's 15 years of history!'

**Library resources:**

Resources have been added to both the ECEC head office library (main library) and the smaller Kathmandu outlet office library. Books and two desktop computers are now installed in the main ECEC library, and since the start of the one year course on the other side of the city a small selection of books and photocopied articles have also been collected in the Kathmandu branch library.

All of the TTs and the majority of the one year students report having used the library at some stage in the last six months. Library card check-outs and self-reported borrowing suggests that the TTs make use of both academic texts and also children's books. One year students tend to predominately use children's resource books.

The computers are set up with internet access and are easily available to any staff or student. They tend to be used more at certain times of the year and students report that they are especially useful when assignments require them to search online and during the e-learning part of the one year course.

**Further unplanned results**

The earthquakes in April and May 2015, affected all life and work in Kathmandu, including ECEC's trainings. As well as having to cancel all the short courses, the one year course was negatively affected. It was delayed by several months and seven out of the 36 students enrolled in the course were unable to continue.

However during the gap while it was not possible to continue with regular training, ECEC were still busy. Because of their skills and knowledge of working in appropriate ways with young children they were able to immediately volunteer in the so-called 'safe spaces' which World Vision set up throughout the Kathmandu Valley.

As well as this ECEC was supported by HimalPartner to work with other stakeholders on responding to the new needs everywhere around. Because of their well developed skills in organising training; their relationships with teachers, parents and children; and their ability to put together child appropriate resources, ECEC were the right people to develop a Community Healing Course (CHC). This course was specially designed to help teachers and parents support their children in being able to process the trauma that they were going through. The same course was also used by EHN and TEACH to further reach affected people.

## Final evaluation report of project: 'Capacity Building of the TTs for One Year Course'

Initially the trainings were only given within the Kathmandu valley but soon demands came in from surrounding areas and the next step was to travel to badly affected district areas. Because of contributions from partners including HimalPartner, the courses were provided at a reduced price.

Within the Kathmandu Valley 1745 parents were trained in 109 sessions, and 1005 teachers were trained. Outside the Valley 1845 parents were trained in 94 sessions, and 255 teachers were trained.

Parents reported that after the training they better understood their own sense of frustration, anger or irritation and could help the children deal with their emotions and fright in a more sensitive way. One mother said that because of what she had learnt in the training she decided not to lie to her son anymore but preferred to answer his questions and explain the situation to him properly.

In their annual report ECEC concludes 'it was good to be able to help in the relief efforts by training teachers and parents, working in our own area of expertise'.

### **In summary**

From the details outlined above, it can be concluded that despite unexpected challenges in Nepal, all project activities were implemented and achieved positive results. Due to a combination of reasons the credit courses were limited and the partnership with the Asian College is still in process therefore the results are not so visible in these two cases.

The senior TT has not yet completed his postgraduate study however he is already showing increased academic competence and putting his research skills and up to date knowledge of ECD to good use. An unplanned but positive result was the extent to which the senior TT made opportunities for exposure visits and networking while in the UK. These were a sideline to the postgraduate study but have yielded fruitful results and connections already.

There are signs that the senior TT is working on building the capacity of the other TTs and that they are willing to learn from him. The library is set up with improved resources and TTs and students are easily able to access internet as well as quality literature relevant to their teaching and learning.

Perhaps the most significant results overall are the improved networking and relationships that have been worked on at local, national and international level. ECEC staff have prioritised

networking and shown that they are capable at it, with this culminating in the very successful organisation of their own conference. The conference gave ECEC staff and students an opportunity to show that they are experts in their field and up to date with ECD trends not just nationally but also internationally.

Added to this, due to funding directly from HimalPartner ECEC was able to help teachers and parents support their children in recovering from the earthquake. This resulted in a CHC package being designed that can be added to ECEC's curriculum and used in the aftermath of any natural disaster or trauma situation.

### **3.3 Efficiency**

*- Assess the reasonability of the relationship between project costs and results achieved*

The resourcing allocated has enabled the project to achieve positive results and contribute to the impact. ECEC have especially appreciated the occasions on which flexibility was shown in order to make best use of the funding. In this way, funding contributed to, rather than hindering, the achievement of results in the capacity building of the teacher trainers.

A concrete example of this flexibility was the change to include postgraduate study fees of the senior teacher trainer as well as an increase in support for the ECEC conference. Both these changes can be considered efficient use of funding as they are producing successful outcomes which would not have been possible without the necessary level of funding.

As capacity building of the TTs is crucial to the quality of ECEC's services, and is also a long term investment, the project funding can be considered value for money.

The DIGNI checklist (Appendix 7) shows effective financial management within ECEC, including cost effectiveness in the procurement of resources as well as careful financial implementation, monitoring and reporting.

### 3.4 Impact

- *Has the project contributed to the planned impact as described in the overall objective?*

- *Has the project contributed to any unplanned impact?*

Prioritising with investing in the teacher trainers' capacity has had positive consequences in ECEC as an organisation and in the one year course in particular. Three detailed case narratives, presented in Appendices 8-10, implicitly capture many of these consequences and the following discussion will outline more explicitly how the target group has benefitted from capacity building followed by a discussion on the consequences for the beneficiaries.

#### **Impact at teacher trainer level:**

Despite differences in experience and the level at which they are functioning, all of ECEC's TTs demonstrate a keen learning attitude and a confident, capable approach in their role as teacher trainer. The expatriate Exec C members who have been coaching them from the outset report TTs increased ability to plan, prepare and coordinate. The more senior TTs also have management and administrative responsibilities to juggle along with their teaching and mentoring.

One TT from the Kathmandu city office has commented,

'the main challenge is managing time. Sometimes trainings are back to back and then there is preparation as well as school visits and taking time to mentor our students, never mind spending time together as a team to motivate each other and share our learning... it means long days to fit it all in. But it is never monotonous because we enjoy and are energised by the work!'

TTs are expected to use their own initiative in revising lessons, inputting into activities such as curriculum development and contributing to shared learning sessions with colleagues. One TT reflects, 'At the start I just copied what the other trainers did, but now I can search and modify things for myself'

From consultations with TTs it is easy to detect a sense of energy and ambition amongst them with regard to improving ECEC as an organisation and increasing their own skills and upgrading their qualifications. This ranges from wanting to do further postgraduate study focusing specifically on ECD, to the desire to do more academic research based study, to a keenness to be



involved in more change and advocacy at policy level and the ambition to write books that will be published in the ECD sector.

All the TTs speak with passion about how they perceive ECEC's potential to grow and expand in the services it provides and they clearly see themselves playing an important role in making that happen. There is a sense of commitment to, as well as ownership of, the organisation.

From observing the TTs in action it is clear that they can competently teach, facilitate and mentor in a professional manner. The one year classes are stimulating and practical (see photos in Appendix 11), filled with fun and useful activities. But they also include appropriate content and the depth necessary for theoretical understanding. This is also why many TTs report the need for self-study and online searches to keep them 'ahead of the students' and 'abreast of national policy and international trends which are always changing'.

Self-study alongside exposure visits, international conference attendance and academic trainings combine to make TTs confident that they are the experts in their field and also convinces clients too. As one TT reports,

'Initially we were more hesitant especially about doing principal seminars. But now we are confident that we are the experts and even if someone challenges us we can convince them. Even those with a lot of teaching experience respect us now and I noticed that they no longer ask for 'the foreigners' – they are satisfied with us as Nepali experts in ECD!'

The TTs have also been encouraged by the visible impact of their own networking. As already mentioned, the introduction of a UK Jolly Phonics expert to Nepal was directly because of the senior TT's networking in Sheffield. This visiting expert was able to train all the TTs to do Jolly Phonics training, as well as teaching the one year students in this area.

The head of the Kathmandu city outlet office was happy to share about the impact of her networking,

'I was the first Nepali to represent ECEC at the ARNEC conference and it is because of networking there that the Bhutanese early years experts, from the ministry, came to our conference. I am in the closed Facebook group with them and am kept up to date with their education program. I also have good

connections with some Indian experts and I'm also in communication with UK Early Years professionals.'

Mentoring is a relatively new teaching skill in Nepal and is often ignored in businesses and institutions in favour of more traditional lecturing. However, in ECEC there are signs that mentoring is being well utilised with positive consequences. From the outset there has been a mentoring system within ECEC as an organisation and now the TTs are also using mentoring with their one year students.

Many TTs find time to be a challenging factor in mentoring, but they also see the huge benefits of prioritising it. One TT reflects,

'Mentoring requires a lot of listening and cannot be rushed. But now I feel like I know my mentees very well. I can guide them through issues because we can get to the core of any problems that arise and I can also motivate and encourage my students in a way that would never be as effective in a group. It is easy to give specific feedback that is useful and then it is encouraging to see a student grow and develop in exactly the area that they got suggestions about.'

The above discussion clearly shows that through a combination of training opportunities and experiences, the TTs capacity has increased enabling them to be competent trainers, teachers, facilitators, mentors, networkers and learners. This has, in turn, led to quality teaching on the one year course which is very visible in a number of ways that will be examined below.

### **Impact at one year course level**

The vast majority of one year students are satisfied with their experience of the course. In ECECs anonymous evaluation questionnaires, more than 95% of one year students ticked the highest three ratings (out of five ratings) indicating their satisfaction about last term.

Focus group and interview responses found the same positivity. Many students mention that in their opinion the strength of the one year course lies in the teaching and especially the guidance and mentoring provided. They also repeatedly refer to the useful content, the good balance of theory and practical and how it helped them understand children better and discern where they needed to make changes in their own practice.

One student summarises the impact the course has had on her attitude as well as practice,

'My thinking has changed and I have so much more idea about fun ways. I also plan much better so things that I did before I still do but more purposefully. I have the objectives in mind – why I do what I do. So for example circle time I always did, but now it goes better because I have fresh ideas and know why I am doing something and not just doing it routinely.

And I think we all put more effort into our teaching now, those of us who are here doing the course together. We talk and share ideas and search on the net. And we are all friends now, in this group, so that's a great resource that will continue even after the course has finished.'

Change is evident both in the classroom and as reported in students' own personal lives. Students are aware of positive development in their lives as teachers, as parents and as individuals. One student recognises that, 'the course has helped me not just deal with kids better but deal with myself better. I look at other people differently; I'm much more positive and less judgemental.'

Another points out that, 'I find that my relationship with my own daughter has improved. I would say I am a great Mum now. I read her a story every night and can see better from a child's shoes now.'

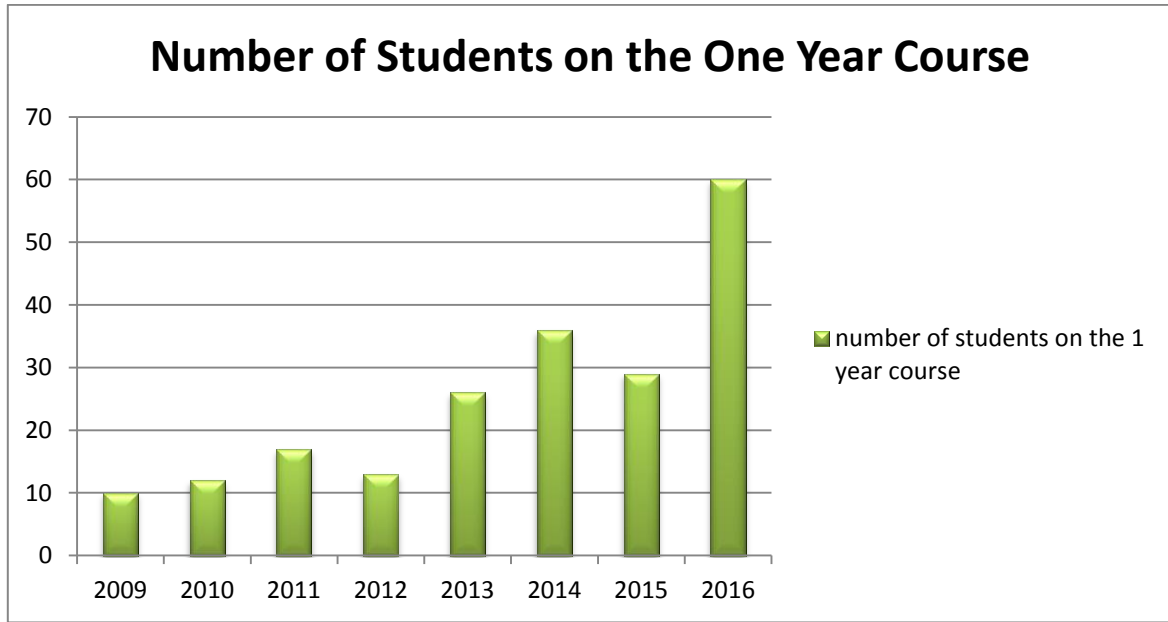
Many students refer to the one year course as a catalyst for change. They speak of 'new ideas' and 'getting recharged' as well as sharing details of the specific changes that have taken place. One current student says 'I set up the classroom differently – it's better use of the space and more accessible to all the children now.'

Another student adds, 'we do ongoing assessment now... and it is encouraging to see how the children grow every day and every week. This is more appropriate than term exams for the young children.'

These changes have also been observed in the classroom on school visits (see case study in Appendix 8 and also photos in Appendix 11)

An increase in confidence and change in attitude are also commonly discussed, 'I would say that over this year my relationships with my colleagues have improved. Giving positive feedback works.'

The high and increasing demand for the one year course is also testimony of its quality. Apart from 2015 which was badly affected by the earthquake, in recent years there has been a dramatic increase in numbers taking the one year course, as revealed in the bar chart below.



There are no formal records, but one year graduates who are in contact with each other through Alumni meetings and social media, claim that there are no 'unemployed' graduates. By this they mean that all those who have graduated from the one year course and want to work are employed either as teachers or principals in schools or other ECD settings or have set up their own school.

This is corroborated by several ECD principals and coordinators complaining that they could not find any one year graduates to recruit for their schools. They describe how they resorted to hiring 'non-qualified teachers' and sending them to ECEC to be trained.

It is clear that the ECEC one year course is increasingly in demand and also that graduates who have taken the course are in high demand; both of these are a reflection of the quality of the course.

### **Impact that ripples further out**

One year student teachers also report that this impact does ripple further out to affect children in their classrooms and even teachers. For one analysis of the challenges as well as benefits of this impact, see the case narrative (in Appendix 8) which focuses on the experiences of one student graduate who has successfully transformed her early years department using the playway method.

Many one year students report that the children in their classroom are positively affected by changes they implement (and also at home with their own children). Better understanding of child psychology, fresh new ideas and more child friendly environment are quoted as bringing enjoyment into children's lives. Using appropriate ongoing assessment to measure learning (such as profiling, observations and photos etc) shows the teachers how the children are developing and helps them structure plans and scaffold children's learning.

One teacher has commented,

'The children are more excited. They love all the new things and so they are more motivated and have less challenging behaviour. And if the children are happy and going home all the time with new things (new words and new work and stories) then the parents are also very pleased and satisfied'.

However, while many one year students who are teachers agree that the children react positively, their experience with parents vary. Some report positive reactions, while others report initial opposition because of preference for more traditional ways of teaching. Many report that parent seminars are vital and once the parents 'understand' the approach they become more sympathetic and supportive. Others felt that they have had to compromise their teaching because of parental expectations especially when there is pressure for entrance exams to admit children into primary level education.

From classroom observations as well as interview discussion it is clear that the most impact happens where several factors combine. The one year course is a vital component, but not the only one. Along with the one year course, the strength of the convictions of the student as well as the support they receive from their school management, colleagues, parents and ECEC makes a big difference. ECEC's input in parent seminars and also working alongside other teaching colleagues who are one year course trained are factors mentioned as increasing impact.

Overall it is possible to conclude that ECEC has built up a reputation for quality in the early years and this is continuing to spread. As one student succinctly commented, when asked why she decided to take the one year course, 'The brand! It was the brand that attracted me.' ECEC is now a recognised brand name that says quality in ECD.

### **Other unplanned impact**

As well as much growth and development there has also been frequent mention of the unintended side effects of sacrifice and compromise. Both TTs and one year students have reflected on the cost of their commitment to the one year course or ECEC.

Many respondents felt that they were better trainers or teachers or parents or individuals after completing the one year course, but at the same they reflected on how their commitment involved time, resources, pressure and at times compromising their family responsibilities. One TT who has been with ECEC a long time described her committed, 'at times I have had to put ECEC before my own children.'

Many one year students are also full time teachers and busy mothers, daughter-in-laws or have heavy family responsibilities. At the oral evaluation workshop, one student was choked up with emotion as she described the pressure she faced to continue attending the course and complete her assignments as well as fulfil her home and school responsibilities. She described how she had to keep reminding herself that other students faced the same pressure in previous years and still completed.

On another occasion, one student shared that the mentoring approach on the course along with how 'approachable and supportive' the trainers were, was what got her through the term. 'I still had to do the assignments and meet the high standards, but because I had the understanding and words of motivation from my mentor and other trainers at ECEC I was able to keep going' she shared, with tears in her eyes.

This is another indication of quality; course standards remain uncompromised but support and guidance from TTs are available to address the needs of students who are struggling with these standards. The fact that students persevere beyond what they feel they can cope with is an indication that they wholeheartedly believe in the worth of the course.

There is another area of unplanned impact, which does not relate to the TTs or students, but is linked to the process of implementing the project itself. The project coordinator reflected on how

much she has learnt through implementing the project cycle and with the support and training from both ECEC and HimalPartner's side she now feels much more confident than she did at the outset.

'I took the job over from someone else. Because I didn't have any experience it felt like a sharp learning curve. Thanks to the patient help from those in ECEC who guided me and the flexibility from HimalPartner when I missed deadlines or needed training, I now have much more of an understanding of how a project cycle works.'

### 3.5 Sustainability

- *What is ECECs general ability to take on such projects?*

- *Will ECEC be able to sustain the services after the project period?*

**Ability to be:** ECEC has 15 years of positive teacher training experience; seven years as an acknowledged one year training course provider and current plans to become the first Bachelor level college in Nepal to provide primary and pre-primary teacher training. As already discussed in the previous section, it is now a quality brand name in ECD that is becoming well known throughout the country. The demand for its services is increasing, and while it still needs outside funding for new ventures, it is able to support its ongoing activities and training from its own income.

**Ability to do:** ECEC has remarkable potential for doing what is its main area of expertise; pioneering ECD training in Nepal. This has been demonstrated in the success of its one year course which is now running in three batches with six times the number of participants as when it started in 2009. The teacher trainers, on which the ability 'to do' hinges, have an open attitude to learning; are continually developing their skills; and are proactively involved in advocating for ECEC and increasing its sustainability. ECEC's staff retention rate is good and their ability to design and implement a trauma related curriculum (CHC) proves their ability to be flexible and function even in a crisis.

**Ability to organise:** ECEC have demonstrated their ability to organise big events including the children's fair and the conference. These have been events which have attracted large numbers of participants from various countries and professional backgrounds, generating interest and

interaction which has continued after the event itself has finished. ECEC have also proved their ability to organise longer and more academic training courses, of which the one year course is a unique and successful example in Nepal.

**Ability to relate:** ECEC have worked hard at networking, advocating and relationship building. They relate well to donors, national and international partners, and local ECD stakeholders which include NGOs, GOs, schools and other actors. Their relationship with NLA is well established over many years and likewise with KU. The relationship with TU is still at the exploratory stage and needs to be further strengthened, as does the new connection with SEED. A relational gap that ECEC recognise as being necessary to bridge is that between the private and public sector, and in particular opportunities for ECEC to strengthen their relationship with the Education Ministry of Nepal.

**Ability to learn:** learning is at the core of ECEC; it is the ethos, the methodology as well as the product they sell. Therefore it is not surprising that ability to learn is emphasised at every level of the organisation. ECEC have shown their ability to learn in the past as they have increased from being a small organisation with few staff to being a larger organisation with many staff. NLA recognise ECEC's ability to learn as they report how much both parties have learnt over the years. TTs and management report a willingness to learn and a keenness to engage in continued formal learning for qualifications as well as more informal learning at organisational level and amongst colleagues. Prioritising capacity building activities in projects such as this and with other donors shows that priority is given to individuals' learning (at all levels and departments in ECEC, not just TTs). The Executive committee have spent much time reflecting on the organisational learning and how management can use that learning to ensure sustainable future leadership. In relation to this, ECEC recognise the need for supported learning and preparing staff properly for taking on new responsibilities. This has proven an effective model and is one of the reasons why they now have several senior positions of management filled with Nepali staff, and is also why there are still expatriates in the leadership structure.



### 3.6 Cross-cutting issues

*- How has the project addressed the cross-cutting issues of environment, gender sensitivity and conflict sensitivity?*

While no specific activities have been planned or budget allocated to directly address the issues of environment, gender sensitivity and conflict sensitivity, there are indications that these issues have been taken into account at various levels and stages of the project.

There is an environmental awareness perspective in the ECEC office in general, and this is also reflected in individual staff habits. Examples of this include recycling, reusing paper and relying on soft copies where possible, being economic with water and power as well as other resources, and making use of public transport.

TTs also pass on to students the importance of environmental awareness by including lessons on the one year course on physical environment, outdoor play and using nature in schools. This is not common in Nepal and the focus on promoting the use of nature in preschools is unique to this course. Added to this, scrap material is used in class, and activities that use locally available materials are encouraged.

ECEC also demonstrates a gender equality perspective at all levels, from recruitment to teaching on the courses. As the only male member in the Exec C, the Head of Training Department comments

‘The whole area of gender is important to us here in ECEC. At one level we need to be encouraging males into the profession and developing their interest in ECD. But at a national level there is still such a shortage of confident professional females that we have a massive role in redressing this! So just seeing our female teachers at the end of the one year course able to take the initiative, advocate for young children’s wellbeing in their schools, convince parents, present workshops and deal professionally with principals is very encouraging.’

Similarly, a conflict sensitivity perspective pervades the work of ECEC. The organisation’s core values (Love, Creativity, Integrity and Cooperation), as well as the methodology of using mentoring, and caring for the wellbeing of the whole person, promote mental wellness which fits with the preventative side of conflict sensitivity. ECEC’s commitment to the ICDP facilitator

training as well as other trauma and counselling related training also shows the organisations concern about conflict sensitivity.

One TT explains,

'I believe we play an important role in conflict related issues because often conflict arises from ignorance and not caring enough about wellbeing - of the child, or the teacher or family. Therefore our way of working and emphasis throughout the one year course is crucial. Caring for the whole child and the whole teacher is foundational. And then of course, the style of how we do this is also important, including the use of mentoring.'

## 4. Conclusion

The evaluation report will conclude by outlining the key lessons learnt through the implementation of the project and recommendations for the changes to be done in the final year of the project as well as in the future without project support.

This will then be followed by a final section summarising the added value of HimalPartner as experienced through the implementation of this project.

### 4.1 Lessons learnt and recommendations

Many valuable lessons have been learnt through this project which can be summarised into the following main points. Corresponding recommendations will be interspersed in bold print.

- Capacity building is an ongoing and reiterative activity. It cannot be 'achieved' or ticked off a list, so while significant progress has been made, the overall goal of the project is still relevant.

**Capacity building of TTs should continue to be a priority, including providing a breadth of training (as has already been happening) on an ongoing basis. Those who recognise a gap in their education or capacity should be encouraged to research ways of addressing this need that advantage both the learner and the organisation.**

- The combined results of much training, coaching, access to resources and participation in conferences keeps ECEC teacher trainers up to date in ECD trends. It helps to improve their teaching and mentoring skills and increases their confidence as academic experts in the ECD field. Exposure visits to observe DAP are especially valued as a source of inspiration and international networking opportunities have proved productive.

**Continue to provide opportunities for TTs to attend international conferences and when possible exposure visits to places doing well in their early years practices.**

- The senior teacher trainer's experience of doing a part-time distance MA in Early Childhood Education has been positive, particularly because of the practical exposure visits and the networking opportunities that fitted with this study. Along with the

academic value of the degree and the opportunities for knowledge transfer to colleagues, this postgraduate study has proved a worthwhile investment.

**The senior TT should finish the thesis section of his postgraduate study as soon as possible.**

**He should be encouraged to continue in the practice of building up the capacity of the other TTs by sharing his learning**

- Networking with national and international stakeholders has been successful, positive relationships with many ECD stakeholders have been built and ECEC is now a well known player in the national ECD field and beginning to be more recognised at international level also. The ECEC conference in November 2016 was especially successful with people showing their interest by 'paying and staying' as well as engaging in workshops and general interaction.

**The momentum from the conference must be sustained with further meetings among stakeholders. Issues which were raised at conference (such as the difficulty of bridging the private / government gap and concerns about the preschool to primary school transfer) should be further discussed and advocacy plans drawn up.**

**There is also opportunity for learning to be put into writing and more publications to be made which would further ECEC's reputation nationally and internationally.**

**Progress made in relationship building with both SEED and TU should continue to be pursued.**

- ECEC has become known as a brand of quality in early childhood education. There is increasing demand for longer academic courses. Demands are also coming from employers who are looking for more graduates who have completed the ECEC one year course.

**The number of students accessing the one year course needs to continue to increase while maintaining the same level of quality. Working closely with NLA, plans to expand**

**academically to bachelor level should continue to be pushed and funding applications pursued.**

- Impact at beneficiary level is most visible when several enabling factors combine. Factors that encourage graduates to make meaningful change in early years settings include:
  - more than one person in the setting has taken the one year course
  - school management understand the playway method and are supportive
  - parents are convinced
  - ECEC is involved in more than just the training (eg involvement in parent seminars and advising)

**Continue to work with schools and parents, and at district level through partners, as well as providing longer training courses. Continue investing in marketing strategies and relationship building as well as advocating for DAP in every available forum.**

- In Nepal there is a lack of 'readymade' ECD experts so teacher trainers (as well as preschool teachers) have to be 'home-grown'. Therefore capacity building is of the utmost importance as it is the only way to ensure quality in trainings and in turn, in early years settings. This brings the discussion in a full circle back to the first point, emphasising the need for still more long term investment in capacity building and training.

**Continue to prioritise with capacity building of TTs and providing long training courses.**

## **4.2 Added value**

In this section the relationship between HimalPartner will be assessed and the considerable added value of HimalPartner will be summarised, as a conclusion to the report:

ECEC's relationship with HimalPartner has grown and developed over many years and is therefore very close and trusting; trust on both sides is reported.

ECEC do not just see HimalPartner as a donor; they are considered much more than that as HimalPartner knows ECEC's strengths and weaknesses and understands them very well.

However, or perhaps *because of* this close relationship, members of the ECEC Executive Committee have pointed out that it is still important that HimalPartner listen to ECEC and heed their technical opinion. ECEC do not want to feel donor driven or pushed around by any agenda (other than their own which is to provide quality service). Some members of the ECEC executive committee feel that this is particularly important to remember when there are Nepali staff in management positions who may not feel as free to speak openly or raise a challenge as expatriate members.

Other areas mentioned by ECEC included the improved communication. Difficulties previously experienced with short deadlines followed by long gaps in communication when HimalPartner were out of the office, have largely been resolved. Now that ECEC are in the habit of using Skype for more urgent contact, alongside email for general communication, processes are reported as more smooth.

ECEC appreciate the level at which HimalPartner are involved with them and the passion with which they input into the work. ECEC recognises that HimalPartner played a major role in supporting them in the establishment of the one year course as well as being instrumental in linking them with NLA who have made a huge contribution to ECEC's academic development.

ECEC also report how HimalPartner recommended them as a vehicle to bring ICDP to Nepal. Through HimalPartner's support, some of ECEC staff have been trained by NLA experts and are certified trainers now involved in training other trainers. Because of HimalPartner's role, this effective international parenting programme for guardians has reached Nepal.

Three examples that were shared by ECEC which they felt showed the nature of HimalPartner's added value particularly clearly were the adjusted contribution provided for the conference; support for the Bachelor feasibility study; and HimalPartner's immediate reaction after the earthquake.

Due to the difficulties of steep inflation and wanting to keep the charge for conference participants at a level affordable for teachers on low salaries, ECEC needed extra help with conference funding. HimalPartner understood the situation and was able to meet the needs.

The initial prompting, as well as the support, for NLA and ECEC to get together and prepare a pre-project study for a Bachelors course, came from HimalPartner. Through this support NLA and

ECEC were enabled to do a preparation and feasibility study regarding the vision of expanding to Bachelor Level.

ECEC executive committee members also share how, after the earthquake when many organisations and relief work was in total chaos, HimalPartner got relevant stakeholders together and mobilised them according to their expertise. Funding was quickly approved and CHC work started a very short time after the disaster. There was trust on both sides of the process and the results of the CHC were considered successful.

None of these three examples would have happened if HimalPartner had not known ECEC and its strengths and weaknesses so well.

Over the years there has been learning on both sides. ECEC executive members including the project coordinator have mentioned how grateful they are to HimalPartner for their patience, flexibility and understanding on many occasions and request that this continues and the relationship is further strengthened as they continue to work together. As one member commented, 'we are enmeshed, HimalPartner and ECEC. Together we have seen many achievements.'

## Appendices

### Appendix 1:

#### Terms of Reference

### Final Evaluation

2016

Digni number:10631

**Projectname:** Capacity building of the teacher trainers for One year course

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Agreed by HimalPartner and ECEC:

Approved by Digni:

**Project time frame:** 2013 - 2017  
**Partner:** Early Childhood Education Center P.Ltd (ECEC)  
**Document version:** 00

#### Introduction

##### - **Abbreviations**

Early Childhood Education Center P.Ltd	ECEC
ECEC Teacher Trainers	TT
Kathmandu University	KU
NLA University College	NLA
Early Childhood Development	ECD
Non-Governmental Organization	NGO



***Background information***

**Early Childhood Education Centre Pvt. Ltd. (ECEC)** is an organization located in Kathmandu, Nepal. The organization was established in July 2001 with the desire and vision to improve the quality of Pre- and Primary School teaching in Nepal.

**HimalPartner** is a Norwegian mission and development organization with long ties to Nepal. The organizations vision is to be a tool for God in the Himalayan region so that His love can be visible in practice.

**The project** named "Capacity Building of One year Teacher Trainers", is a 5 year project that started in 2013 and ends in December 2017. The goal of the project is to build up the competences of the ECEC Teacher Trainers (TT) so that the overall goal of teaching quality in the ECEC 1 year course is met.

The one year course is a joint effort of three educational institutions: Early Childhood Education Centre Pvt. Ltd. (ECEC), Kathmandu University (KU) and the NLA University College in Norway.

The one year course develops preschool teachers who have a thorough understanding of child development, philosophies and theories of early childhood education and who are to use this knowledge in teaching young children.

The strength of this project lies in the integration of theory and practice: lessons learnt in the classroom are practiced in the field and the experience leads to exploring new areas of knowledge.

The final evaluation will be done in 2016 so that the recommendations can be implemented before the project ends in December 2017.

- **Overall Project Objective**

"Teaching quality in the ECEC 1 year course is quality assured"

**Indicators of overall objective**

"Lessons in the 1st year course are academic and research based."

- **Project goal (2013-2017):**

"To build up the competences of the ECEC Teacher Trainers (TT) who are teaching in the 1 year academic course."

- **Indicators of project goal:**

"Demonstration of the right knowledge, skills and attitude by ECECTT while teaching."

- **Expected results**

See the expected results as written in the following documents:

1. Project Document 2013 - 2017
2. Annual Project Applications for 2014, 2015 and 2016
3. Annual Project Reports for 2013, 2014 and 2015

- **Target group**

Target Group

ECEC Teacher Trainers

ECEC as an organization

Beneficiaries

The ECEC 1 year course students

Nepali preschool children

## **The purpose and scope of the evaluation**

- **Important issues to examine**

### **Relevance**

*The extent to which the project meet the needs of the target group and country priorities.*

1. To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?

### **Effectiveness**

*The extent to which the project has achieved its objectives.*

2. To what extent has the project achieved the planned results, project goal and overall goal?
3. Are there any unplanned positive / negative effects?

### **Efficiency**

*The relation between input and results.*

4. Assess the reasonability of the relationship between project costs and results achieved.

### **Impact**

*The real difference the project has achieved.*

5. Has the project contributed to the planned impact as described in the overall objective?
6. Has the project contributed to any unplanned impact?

### **Sustainability**

*Whether the benefits of a project are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.*

7. What is ECEC's general ability to take on such projects?
8. Will ECEC be able to sustain the services after the project period?  
(Reference should be made to the Five Abilities model.)

### **Crosscutting issues**

9. How has the project addressed the crosscutting issues of environment, gender sensitivity and conflict sensitivity?

## Lessons learned

10. Assess lessons learned and give recommendations for the changes to be done in the last year of the project and for a future without project support.

## Added value

11. What is the added value of HimalPartner - if any?

### List of stakeholders

The main stakeholder groups are as follows:

- Digni
- HimalPartner
- Early Childhood Education Center P.Ltd
- NLA University College
- Kathmandu University
- Ministry of Education
- Teachers
- Target group & beneficiaries

See the detailed stakeholders list in Appendix A

## Methods

A participatory assessment method will be used where all parties will approve the terms of reference (ToR). The chosen external evaluator will answer to this ToR with an "Assessment approach" and will lead an evaluation team consisting of 1-2 representatives of ECEC and HimalPartner.

The team will participate in most of the interviews and workshops together with the external evaluator. After consultation with ECEC and HimalPartner the external evaluator is independently responsible for the objectivity in the final report.

The methodology to be used will include the following:

- **Reading of documents:** The assessment team will read the project documents and the following other relevant project related, organizational related and technically related documents
- **Interviews:** The assessment team will interview relevant stakeholders (see above) through individual interviews, focus group discussions and workshops.
- **Field visits:** Relevant field visits may be conducted in the target area.

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- **Follow up:** The recommendations and discussions in the evaluation will be presented at a workshop at ECEC prior to the final report, and will serve to inform future projects of ECEC and HimalPartner

### The evaluator and the evaluation team

The evaluator should possess more than five years relevant experience of project implementation/evaluations in various fields relating to community development. The evaluator as well as the other team members should be able to understand the context and have a realistic view on time for making changes in institutions and communities in the country. Before the evaluation starts the evaluator will have an introduction conversation with HimalPartner.

Role	Name	Appointed by
External Evaluator and team leader		ECEC and HimalPartner
Team member	Reiny de Wit	ECEC
Team member	Bijaya Karki	ECEC
Team member	Solveig Abelone Midt garden	HimalPartner

### Report

The assessment report should be well-researched and include recommendations for future direction of the work. The following parties, ECEC and HimalPartner, will comment on the report before the external evaluator finalizes the report. However, we emphasize that the external evaluator has the full responsibility of the report and its content.

The reports shall be in English, and be forwarded in digital form (pdf-format) as well as two sets of hardcopies. The final report should contain:

- Executive summary
- Background and Purpose
- Findings and Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Lessons Learned
- A list of abbreviations
- Relevant appendices

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### Delivery dates

SN	Activity	Deadline	Responsibility
1	Documents submitted to the evaluator	10 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016	Project advisor
2	The respond from the evaluator on the ToR	17 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016	Evaluator
3	Kick-off meeting for evaluation team	26 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016	Evaluator
4	Workshop or dissemination seminar	28 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016	Evaluator
5	Submission of Draft Report	29 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016	Evaluator
6	Submission of Final Report	6 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2016	Evaluator

### Suggested program in Nepal

ECEC suggests the **following** program for the field visit in China/Nepal. This is still to be confirmed and will be included as a part of the response on the assignment from the evaluator and in communication with the three parties; ECEC, HimalPartner and the evaluator.

Date, 2016	Time	Location	Stay	Activity Details
26 <sup>th</sup> Oct-		ECEC		Reading of documents/preparation
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2 days	Kathmandu		Observation of ECD conference
13 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup> Nov	1 week	ECEC		Interview of ECEC trainers
9 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2 weeks	ECEC		Class observation of the trainers
12 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> Nov	10-12 visits	Kathmandu		1 year students 'School observation/interviews
	2 weeks	Kathmandu		Reporting

#### Note:

The activity plan has a tentative estimate of time. The location will be altered if any severe condition.

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### Budget

<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>NOK</b>	<b>NPR</b>
Income		
Digni/HimalPartner		
Expenditure		
Evaluator honorary	22,805	291,900
Evaluator food and accommodation	1,953	25,000
Evaluator travel expenses	3,515	45,000
HimalPartner representative		
Evaluation expenses Nepal	156	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,430</b>	<b>363,900</b>

### Appendices

- A. Detailed stakeholder list
- B. Project document (2013-2017)
- C. Annual applications 2014,2015,2016
- D. Annual reports 2014,2015
- E. The 5 Abilities Model
- F. Other document can be provided

## Appendix 2:

### Documents reviewed in the evaluation include:

- Annual Project Applications (2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016)
- Annual Project Reports (2013, 2014 and 2015)
- ECEC Annual Report (2015)
- ECEC Business Plan (2014 – 2018)
- ECEC financial records and auditor's report (project report and ECEC general report)
- NLA Summary Report
- EHN Reports (2015 annual report and 2015 project report)
- CHC Report
- ECEC evaluation forms completed by one year students
- Senior Teacher Trainer's masters assignments and University of Sheffield's feedback
- Records of attendance for TTs taking credit course, other training, attending conferences etc
- Library records (books checklist and sign-out system)



### **Appendix 3:**

#### **Interview Guide for Executive Committee Members**

##### **The project in general:**

- In what way have you been involved in the implementation of this project?
- Where would you say the real impact of the project lies? In what ways has the project been of value?
- Have you been able to see any visible signs of growth in the TTs you are responsible for /work closest with? (Share some examples please)

##### **For EC members who are also TTs:**

- What opportunities have you had for your own capacity building over the last four years?
- And have these been sufficient? How well equipped do you feel you are (to do your job well)?
- How have you been able to transfer your knowledge to other TTs in your team?

##### **ECEC as an organisation:**

- What opportunities do you have for advocacy? How could these be increased?
- How are you working towards sustainability?
- Can you share about any networking opportunities you have experienced?
- In what ways does ECEC address the cross-cutting issues of environment, gender sensitivity and conflict sensitivity?

##### **The project more specifically:**

- What have you learnt from the implementation of this project?
- How was the process? And the relationship with HimalPartner? (Probe: Could you ask difficult questions? Meet their criteria and expectations? What were the challenges?)
- What is the added value of HimalPartner?
  
- Anything else you would like to share that is important to you/ relevant to the project?

## Appendix 4:

### Interview Guide for One year Teacher Trainers

- Tell me how you became a teacher trainer and how long you have been in the role?
- How have you had opportunity to develop your capacity as a trainer over the last years?  
(Probes: How useful were the credit courses? How have you used the library? Have you been involved in any networking activities? Are there opportunities to learn from each other, within ECEC?)
- Do you do anything differently now than you did when you just started working as a TT?
- What opportunities and challenges do you face as a TT? (Probes: what gives you satisfaction / frustration in your job?)
- In your role as a TT would you say you have any opportunity for advocacy? What scope for advocacy does ECEC have as an organisation?
- As a TT do concerns about environment / gender sensitivity / conflict sensitivity mean anything? Or impact on your classes?
- What aspirations / vision for the future do you have? What way would you like to see yourself developing professionally?
- What about ECEC as an organisation – what direction do you hope it goes?

## Appendix 5:

### Interview Guide for One Year Students:

- What made you decide to do the one year course?
- Is the course proving to be what you expected or hoped for?
- What would you say is the highlight or most positive thing about it, so far?
- How do you find the classes and teaching?
- How has the course impacted on you as a professional?
- Has it made any impact on you personally?
- Have you changed anything because of the course? (in school / in your teaching / in your home etc?)
- (If there have been changes in your teaching or you have implemented anything how do the students and parents feel about that? What feedback do you get from them? What about school administration or colleagues?)
- Would you recommend the course to others? Why?
- What vision / hopes / aspiration do you have for your future?

## Appendix 6:

### Outline for Focus Group Discussion:

Round robin:

- Let's begin by each person saying their name and where they are working / for how long

Brainstorm:

- I want you to call out words that describe your experience of the one year course and we will jot them down on the newsprint. (Nepali or English but just single words).

Question:

- Can you share why you decided to take the one year course?
- I want you to think back on the course so far and describe what you like best (choose the highlight)
- And is there anything that you've been disappointed about?

(Further probes: How do you find the content? How do you find the methodology? What could the TTs do better?)

- Have you ever used the ECEC library? For what purpose? How useful was it?

Question:

- What do you think about issues like the environment / gender / conflict sensitivity? Are they relevant to early years' teachers?
- Has the one year course considered these issues at all?

Question:

- Reflecting back on this last year, can you think of anything that you've started to do differently in your class or work – because of participating in the one year course?
- And any way that you are different on a personal level?
- How have these changes affected others (especially children and parents)
- Anything else you'd like to share about your experience of the one year course that is important to you?

**THANKS so much for your time.....**

**Appendix 7:**

**DIGNI financial accountability checklist**

**REVIEW OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES DURING PROJECT VISITS**

	<b>CHECK LIST REGARDING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
	<b>ROUTINES</b>	
<b>1</b>	Request a meeting with the person responsible for the project's accounting. This should not be the person responsible for running the project. Does the accountant have sufficient qualifications for this position? ( <i>skal sikre arbeidsdeling – bukken og havresekken og faglig kvalifikasjon!</i> )	Accountant has a Bachelor of Business Studies and six years experience as ECEC's accountant and three years previous experience working in finance
<b>2</b>	Is there a segregation of duty between accounting and handling of cash? ( <i>regnskapsfører og kasserer bør ikke være samme person, men i små prosjekter kan dette forekomme</i> )	Accountant is responsible for managing accounts and handing out cash. There are systems for both that are followed
<b>3</b>	Ask about cash handling in the project. How is cash requests authorized, process of returning vouchers. Ask if there are any delays or problems obtaining sufficient and timely vouchers from project staff. Long delays may be a sign of lack of control of use of cash. Does the project have a maximum rule for cash balance in safe?	Approval procedures followed and then advance vouchers used or bills presented / double signed and cash reimbursed (examples copied). No delays or problems. Max 30,000Nrs
<b>4</b>	Which routines are in place to ensure that vouchers are certified by someone other than the accountant?	Double signature system - Project coordinator as well as accountant
<b>5</b>	Do you find the general ledger accounts well suited and reasonable, considering the size and the extent of the project? Are transactions classified correctly? ( <i>skal sikre kapasitet og oversikt</i> ). Who is responsible for classifying cost? If it is the accountant, how does he/she ensure correct classification to project or budgetline?	Yes. Simple and clear Initially classification set up with Kunti. Now Doji gives clarification where necessary, but accountant finds it easy to follow independently
<b>6</b>	Is the accounting done by computer? If yes, which programme is being used? ( <i>skal sikre automatisering – reduserer risiko for manuelle feil og overstyring</i> )	Yes. Using TALLY
<b>7</b>	Does the project has its own bank account? Ask for an overview of the signatories for the bank accounts. What is the approval proceed? Are there any limits?	Yes. Singatures and approval from any two of Reiny, Josien and Reann. Limits are as per the budget which are fixed
	<b>REPORTS AND RECONCILIATIONS</b>	

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8	How up to date is the accounting? Is it more than a month behind? <i>(skal sikre at bokføringen er oppdatert, slik at prosjektet vet hvor mye \$ man har til enhver tid)</i>	Accounting is up to date (this week) and done on an ongoing basis
9	When was the last reconciliation of the bank statement(s) and the general ledger? <i>(skal sikre at det kun er autoriserte som har bank tilgang, og at det er to stk, (bukken og havresekken). Hvis bankutskrift stemmer med hovedbok gir dette en indikasjon på at regnskapet er riktig)</i>	Within the last month
10	When was Petty Cash last checked? Did anyone witness that the amount in the petty cash agreed with the cash book? Was there any deviation between the petty cash and the cash book at that time? <i>(skal sikre gode rutiner for kasse – ofte er det betydelige beløp i våre prosjekter)</i>	Five days previous (which includes 2 days weekend and 2 days Tihar holiday) Admin assistant witnessed it. No deviation between petty cash and book
11	Is each accounting period (monthly, quarterly?) concluded by preparing a financial report? <i>(skal sikre at bokføring er oppdatert og kan leses i en rapport)</i>	Report prepared monthly
	<b>THE BOARD</b>	
12	Request the last financial report. Does the board of the project regularly receive financial reports comparing the budget with the accounts? Ask for the Board's most recent financial report. Are resources used in accordance with the approved budget? <i>(skal sikre at rapport blir etterspurt, (man sikrer oppdatert bokføring) og at styret er opptatt av prosjektets økonomi)</i>	Reports given to project coordinator when needed and more often than once in the year. Resources used as proposed (or changes approved)
	<b>ACCOUNTS</b>	
13	Does the report include all income from donors and from sale?	yes
14	Ask to see a folder with vouchers from this year. Are the vouchers numbered and organised in an orderly way? Are the vouchers certified by someone other than the accountant (and according to the routines)? Are the vouchers original third party documents? <i>(skal sikre at bilagene er gyldige, NB! i noen tilfeller er third party document ikke mulig, spør da hva alternative prosedyrer er).</i>	Vouchers are logical and orderly. Yes, they are certified by project coordinator as well as accountant. Yes, they are originals
15	Are expenses paid in Norway charged to the local project account? Do the local accounts include salaries and social expenses for missionaries? <i>(skal sikre god kommunikasjon mellom prosjekt og org)</i>	Yes, HimalPartner's relevant contribution. There are no salaries for expatriate (only this evaluation cost)
16	Does the project have problems related to financial management and accounting? Are there problems related to budgets and reports to the organisation in Norway?	When problems have arisen, accountant has queried it with project coordinator & discussed with HimalPartner and

		solved any issues. No current problems.
	<b>ASSETS AND DEBT</b>	
17	Ask to see a fixed asset register (e.g. stock of goods) When was this list last reconciled to the general ledger? Has there been much waste? How was this reported? <i>(skal sikre gode rutiner for varelager, slik at man til enhver tid vet hvor mye man har)</i>	Kept in excel and part of ECEC core account. Small part of project, no waste, only updating of technology.
18	Choose an article from the fixed asset register and check that the quantity on the list agrees with the actual stock. <i>(stikkprøve skal gi oss indikasjon på kontrollen)</i>	Yes
19	An inventory register is established and kept up to date. <i>(skal sikre oversikt over prosjektets eiendeler)</i>	Yes (in excel)
20	Ask for a specification of debt and accounts receivables. Have any doubtful receivables been written off? <i>(skal sikre at de har oversikt over balanseposter, hvem de har gjeld til og hvem som har gjeld til prosjektet. Er det store poster, er det gamle poster?)</i>	N/R
21	Does the organisation utilize logbook for vehicle use?	Yes but N/R to this project
22	Project funds have not been lent out throughout the year? <i>(Norad-krav)</i>	No
23	Has the project given an advance on salaries? How many months?	No
	<b>AGREEMENTS</b>	
24	Agreement made between local and Norwegian organisation? <i>(sikrer at forutsetningene og vilkårene er klargjorte på forhånd)</i>	Yes, at outset
25	Agreement made with ex-pats in the project? <i>(sikrer at forutsetningene og vilkårene er klargjorte på forhånd)</i>	(contracts made with expat teachers who teach p/t on the 1 year course)
	<b>CORRUPTION/AUDITING</b>	
26	Auditing: Does a certified person do the local auditing? How long has the current auditor verified the accounts? Who decided on the local auditor? Is there direct communication between local auditor and Norwegian auditor? Have the local and Norwegian auditor signed a contract? <i>(skal sikre god revisjon, er de selv fornøyde med revisjon og tilbakemelding fra revisor?)</i>	Yes, ECEC's auditor has audited this project from the beginning. Auditor selected by ECEC board members/ approved by Exec Committee. HimalPartner has asked & received auditor's contact details so it's assumed that they have direct contact

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27	Is there any irregularities in the financial management that the accountant wants to bring to our attention? Was there any significant matters / weaknesses brought up in the last project audit? (spør om en kopi av siste revisjonsrapport og management letter utarbeidet av lokal revisor).	No, nothing outstanding that has not already been discussed with ECEC and HimalPartner
28	Is there an annual audit of the organisation as an entity? If so, ask for a copy of the last audit report for organisation (om svarer er nei her, bør dette bli tatt opp med tilskuddsmottaker pga risiko forbundet med manglende gjennomsiktighet).	Yes. Received
29	Are they familiar with Dignis Policy Document for Combating Corruption?	Yes. Workshop attended
30	Are they familiar with Dignis Guidelines for the Handling of Corruption, Suspicions of Corruption or Bad Financial Management? What are their guidelines concerning corruption?	Yes. Aware of DIGNI and ECEC's own guidelines
	<b>OTHER</b> (these are questions for the <b>project manager</b> )	
31	Does the project manager receive project financial report on regular basis? How often, and are the report useful? (sikrer at prosjektleder er informert og oppdatert på prosjektets økonomi).	Yes, when necessary. Yes
32	Are there any unnecessary delays when cash is requested? ( <i>store forsinkelser i utbetaling kan indikere at noen holder igjen penger/låner av kassen</i> ).	No.
33	What are the routines concerning recruitment of personell? (stikkord: bruk av annonser, uavhengige ansettelser, ansettelseskontrakter).	Managed by Executive Committee and Managing Director
34	What routines are used in procurement of goods and services? ( <i>stikkord: beløpsgrenser, bruk av anbud ("tender"), hvem godkjenner internt i org.?</i> )	Approved by relevant committee/ quotation system / bill & receipt/ cash paid / transfer made
35	How often does the Norwegian organisation visit the local partner and to what extent do they look at the project financial management? Do they do similiar tests/questions that we have just performed? ( <i>i følge avtalen skal tilskuddsmottaker påse at deres partnerer har gode rutiner</i> ).	They visit regularly usually once or twice in the year. They do not specifically ask these checklist questions but discussion takes place alongside their other more general purposes



## Appendix 8:

### One Year Student Graduate – Case Narrative (i)

*I visit a one year course graduate in her school setting. The children are in various groups of three or four around the room, engaged in all different activities. A classroom assistant is working with four children to thread marigolds on to a Tihar string; other groups are independently colouring pictures, building with construction toys, reading story books and other activities.*

*The children move between activities by choice, packing away one game before taking out something new. They put down a small floor mat on which to spread out their new play. As well as the classroom assistant there are a few young volunteers who move around the room engaging with the children, answering questions and giving advice or help when necessary.*

*The teacher and I sit in the library corner and while there is a buzz of noise in the room it is restrained enough for us to talk easily. I ask her to share about her experience of being an early years teacher, and she explains:*

'I wanted to change things in the school that I worked in but I couldn't. I had some ideas but for ten years I taught and wasn't able to make any changes from the very traditional style.

The children (very young children) sat at desks with their copies and text books or chanting the rote learning numbers or letters, hour after hour and I was part of that.

Then came a turning point in my life – several things combined to make change possible. I took the one year course at the ECEC Kathmandu outlet and I changed schools to start here. Now what you see here is what I would call a transformation...

Our preschool department is one section of the bigger school system (primary and secondary). From the beginning, the school administration has given me complete freedom to change whatever I wanted, and for that I am always grateful. They have supported me when I have implemented the ECEC playway method, when I have asked for resources, and when I have made changes.

As well as providing the technical support to make it possible, ECEC were the catalyst for the change. In that way it has been so much more than just 'taking a training'. The one year course was the strong course with theory linked to practical. It all made sense and was a wonderful training and I was determined to implement it in my school.

As a team we agreed to implement the playway and make the changes from desks and books and rote learning. But the first challenge was finding teachers. There were no trained teachers available. I mean trained in the playway method. All the ECEC one year graduates are already employed or opening their own schools and there are none available to recruit.

The teachers we had were traditional teachers and just couldn't cope with this new way of teaching. They felt so much pressure about all the changes. Five out seven of our staff left within the first five or six months. At that stage I felt like giving up. But I still had the support of my administration and the confidence from ECEC that what I was doing was the right thing.

So then we had to train our own teachers. We employed new teachers and sent them to do the one year course at ECEC.

We had to make our own curriculum and start planning from scratch. With ECEC's help we developed our curriculum and themes and daily planning. In nursery we have no academic content (no pencils or copies). All the staff have had to put in long hours – everyone has to stay after the children leave because 4-5pm is compulsory planning.

The next major challenge was the parents. They really had to be convinced and this meant that we had to be confident in ourselves about our approach and why we are doing it and what the outcome would be. But once we had several teachers trained, and they were really onboard, then together as a team we were able to change the parents' minds! By next year all our teachers will be one year trained.

We do two parents seminars a year and these are compulsory for both parents of every preschool student. ECEC help us so we can run sessions about child psychology and development etc. The parents soon became convinced and we find that now they are very satisfied. They even willingly send in the resources we ask for and meet any demands we have!

They see their children learning and bringing home new ideas and I believe they see that it is working. We show them the child's development from their individual profile so they no longer ask for marks and results on a report card. Here also the children transfer automatically from preschool to class one without any pressure so the parents don't have that tension.

Three years later I look around my classroom and see contented children who are learning and growing and enjoy coming to school, I have parents who are satisfied, conscientious teachers who have a sense of pride in what they are doing and a supportive administration to whom I am answerable. But that has not always been the story... it has taken hard work and tears at times. It required complete commitment to the change, a team effort and no looking back.

But it works and we are proof of that. We often say 'playway is magic'! And we are an example of a Nepali school doing it. Sometimes local teachers see the foreigners' examples of preschool education and like it but they say 'that isn't possible in my setting'. But now we are a Nepali example. 'It works but you have to be realistic about the effort and challenges involved,' I often tell people.'

*The following weekend I watch as the same graduate presents a workshop in the ECEC conference. She has a large audience of early years experts and educational professionals. Confidently she uses powerpoint to share her own experience and advocate for developmentally appropriate education*

*for young children. It is a powerful example of 'theory to practice' in early years education in Nepal.*

*At the end of her presentation there are many questions and comments, revealing the audience's interest but also remaining scepticism. 'Come and visit my school to see the playway method in real life' she offers, 'our doors are open and we have many visitors wanting to see it for themselves'. She finishes by saying how thankful she is for her team of teachers who have worked so hard with her to make it happen, for the support from her school administration and for ECEC who have been there at each part of the process 'shaping teachers and changing future.'*

## Appendix 9:

### Teacher Trainer – Case Narrative (ii)

'I have been a teacher trainer in ECEC for four years and since this last year I have been teaching on the one year course.

One of the things I appreciate most about ECEC is the learning atmosphere. There is really a lifelong learning attitude. We are all continually coached and given opportunity to develop.

Before joining ECEC I was teaching in a secondary school and didn't experience anything like that and while I have always had ambition to develop there wasn't the inspiring atmosphere to push me on. So now I am very aware of how different ECEC environment is - how the talent of staff is nurtured.

I myself took the one year course and then completed the KU diploma part. That made a big impression on me. The one year course was foundational and then the KU experience was also very different for me. It was much more positive than TU, with its interactive methodology and action research approach. So these were some of the things that really increased my thirst for learning.

As a teacher trainer I feel the need to keep ahead of the students I am teaching, so continuing to learn and keeping up to date in education and the latest ECD is very important to me. As well as all the training opportunities I get in ECEC, I also research and read a lot myself. I search online and make files of documents that I've downloaded and saved, also the YouTube and TED talks that our senior teacher trainer recommends.

I have a lot of parenting books from the ECEC library at the minute. They interest me – both personally and professionally – and maybe someday I will write a book! Too often we [students] just use the handouts we receive in training and nothing more. That isn't enough. We need to further research and find more... our own reading as well.

I think I have developed as a trainer as well over these last few years. At the start I just copied what the other trainers did, but now I can search and modify things for myself and only chose to use what I think is good.

And we need to keep updating and improving things. Recently a government trainer of trainers said to me 'isn't training just like being a class nine teacher?! One batch comes and we give the training and when they pass, the next batch comes and we repeat the cycle!'

And that is what I am afraid of; that I also become like that. We cannot just make curriculums and resources and then implement them routinely like the machine. We need to be up to date with the latest developments and revise things constantly... improve things. So I hope to continue studying – I recognise the need for an MPhil or PhD. I want to be respected because I am the quality teacher trainer.

I also expect ECEC to continue to grow. I expect that in years to come there will be other branches in major cities across the country and also a Bachelor level campus in Kathmandu. And alongside these big visions I still have a vision for my own village and people group from such a remote part of Nepal. I hope they also will prioritise with education and quality early years education in particular; I advocate for that, whatever way it is possible.

I am optimistic that these things can happen. They may seem like big visions or impossible dreams but then I think about how I was a village boy up in the mountains and when I was in school one day I decided 'I want to be become a teacher! One day I will be a great man like my class teacher!' And at the time I felt like that was an unrealistic dream... but I became a class nine teacher and now a trainer of teachers. So I know I can expect visions even bigger for myself and ECEC.

I believe ECD work is the most important and newest educational thing for Nepal and I am proud to feel that we (ECEC) are leading in this and I am part of that!

## **Appendix 10:**

### **Current one year course student – Case Narrative (iii)**

'I have worked for more than nine years with children with cerebral palsy. I wouldn't call myself a teacher... I have more of a therapist background.

So first I did a three month course, organised by an INGO, on orthopaedics. From that training I was selected to work at the CP centre in Dhapakhel.

We have all ages and levels of children with CP in the centre. Some children are long term students and others get short term training so they and their parents can have a better quality of life. Most are day students but some are residential. The centre gets a lot of international funding.

Throughout the last nine years I have received plenty of training – from different organisations and visiting medical experts – on general special needs as well as specific disabilities. I am qualified as a play therapist and in other related areas of therapy, psychology and counselling.

Recently I moved from working with older children to younger. Most of the children I am now with have a mental age of between two and four years of age. Suddenly the way in which I worked with the older children was not relevant with the younger ones and therefore I needed to learn new skills and understand younger children better. That's why I joined this course!

In my own area of special needs I have the training and experience but ECEC are the experts in early years education so if I put these two together then I have something really valuable.

I am learning so much about child psychology and how young children develop and this will be really useful for me. I have to adapt many of the activities so they apply to my differently-abled students – but I can do that no problem. Applying it to my setting is my goal. If I understand the theory and how it applies to the practical in general, then I can apply it to my setting specifically. So that's why this course is very relevant and useful for me.

One other teacher from our centre has already graduated from the one year course and there is a second student on this year's course. So the ECEC trainers know our setting in detail as they have visited many times for practicals. They are willing to make the course fit our circumstances as well. Where relevant they make reference to my setting and also ask me to share my experience. That is a strong model for learning... where everyone learns from each other.

Making things connect is what knowledge and learning is all about, so I am satisfied with how this one year course meets my learning needs and how I can apply it to my job and how the teacher trainers understand that and I'm very thankful how ECEC makes that all happen.'

### **Observing the same student in the CP Centre:**

*The sun streams in through the window of a room decorated with art and craft; brightly coloured kites of all shapes and sizes hang from strings and Tihar festival pictures cover the walls.*

*Five children and two adults are clustered around a low table in the centre of the room. Two children are sitting on the floor and three are on low wooden chairs with supported backs.*

*The one year student and the classroom assistant take time to make sure the children are physically comfortable, that they can all easily see each other and are ready to start the activity with painting-aprons covering their clothes.*

*The one year student starts the lesson by asking whether anyone has a pet and encouraging the children to share about what pet animals they like the best. Some children reply verbally while others communicate their choices by hand gestures or knocking on the table when it is their turn; all participate.*

*After this brief discussion each child chooses an A4 photocopied picture of an animal and different coloured paper. Their task is to rip up the coloured paper into small pieces and stick it on the animal to 'colour' the picture.*

*Two of the children work together cooperatively. One holds the picture in place with his elbow while the other rips the coloured paper using his foot. The student teacher works with one girl, opening her hand to guide the paintbrush into it, and then encouraging her to apply the glue independently. The assistant moves between the children, picking up anything that drops, reminding them not to leave 'lazy-gaps' on the picture and continuously providing resources and encouragement.*

*The student teacher keeps up a quiet but steady flow of conversation, sharing about her own pets, asking the children questions about colours, counting and how they feel their work is turning out and encouraging them to do things for themselves.*

*The children's faces reflect intense concentration on the task and there is a peaceful atmosphere in the room. When asked how they feel about their pictures or each other's, they give positive comments showing a sense of satisfaction in their work.*

*Occasional physical cues are given quietly to individual children to remind them about comfortable posture or not letting water escape from their mouth and the children are quick to follow the suggestions.*

*The student teacher jokes by putting a strip of the black paper as a moustache on her own face rather than as cat's whiskers on the picture. Several of the children roar with laughter, clearly appreciating the joke.*

*The activity takes about 45 minutes but all the children are fully engaged until the end. One child who finishes quickly is encouraged to help someone else who has made less progress. The student teacher writes each child's name at the top of their picture asking them to spell out the letters for her as she writes.*

*When all the children are finished the student teacher asks them to hold up their work and show each other. Those who can speak verbally congratulate each other and there is a lot of smiling and head nodding in appreciation. Then the work is hung on a line to dry and the children's wheelchairs are brought back into the centre of the room and the children go off to wash the glue off their hands and use the toilet before physio class.*

*Outside the classroom, on a bench under a vine, the ECEC teacher trainer sits with the student teacher and asks how she feels about the lesson. The student teacher shows her file and explains what she had to change and why and reflects on the session. The ECEC trainer gives feedback and encouragement and a few points to consider for the next lesson.*

*After several rounds of thank yous and namastes, we leave the shady courtyard and go out to the dusty road to wait for a local bus that will take us back to the ECEC office. The noisy bus allows time for reflecting on all that we just observed.*



**Appendix 11: Photographs**



Consultation between the SEED experts and TTs regarding curriculum design



Senior Teacher Trainer presenting his plenary session at the ECEC Conference





Networking contacts made by one TT at ARNEC resulted in four ministry level early years experts from Bhutan coming to Nepal and participating in ECEC's recent conference



The one year classes are stimulating and practical, filled with fun and useful activities but also contain an appropriate depth of content and relevant theory

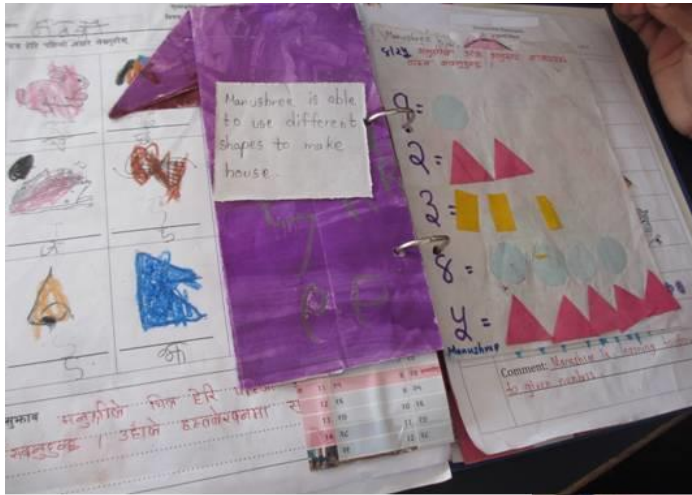


In ECEC mentoring is being well utilised with positive consequences



Teaching and learning in classrooms that have been transformed by the 'playway' method

Final evaluation report of project: 'Capacity Building of the TTs for One Year Course'



Examples of children's profiles  
(used as an alternative to formal  
examinations in some preschools)



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