Teacher Training on Early Childhood Education in Nepal
A Capacity-building Project with CITYNET Yokohama Project Office

Harmonising Human Development
Objectives

i. To coordinate teacher training on early childhood education in Nepal and introduce child-friendly education methods.

ii. To share aspects of Japanese culture through educational material.

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Since 2010 the Government of Nepal has prioritised reforms to improve formal education throughout the country, including developing and expanding Early Childhood Education (ECE). Policies for ECE have been drafted, however, much work is needed to achieve the stated objectives. Necessities for pre-primary education have been identified, yet, limited progress can mainly be observed only in urban areas.

While the need for improved ECE has been acknowledged at both government and school levels, strategic plans, including professional teacher training geared towards specific levels, have been difficult to develop. Some private schools in urban areas claim to offer higher quality education, however, regular supervision of standards and monitoring of school fees is rare. Education in Nepal is still framed within a curriculum that seldom reflects child-centered approaches, particularly for pre-primary and primary levels.

Considering these circumstances in Nepal and the need for municipalities to enhance teacher training and skills, this project was developed in partnership with the Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN).

The CITYNET Yokohama Project Office (CYO) proposed the project Teacher Training on Early Childhood Education to Toshiba International Foundation with the goal of improving the teaching abilities of teachers and providing a better learning environment for young students in Nepal. The project also aimed to support educational reforms that the Government of Nepal has introduced since 2010. With the local counterpart role coordinated by MuAN, a CITYNET member, nine (9) schools from four (4) municipalities were selected to be part of a pilot group of teachers and participate in three (3) workshops beginning in June 2014. Toshiba International Foundation sponsored the workshops and the Embassy of Japan in Kathmandu, Nepal courteously provided videos and posters showing examples of Japanese educational systems and culture.
II. TARGET MUNICIPALITIES AND SCHOOLS

MuAN identified target municipalities and both private and public schools from four (4) municipalities. The selected municipalities were all located within Kathmandu valley.

- Madhyapur Municipality
  Adarsha Higher Secondary School, Nawaratna English School
- Bhaktapur Municipality
  Bal Bikash English Secondary School, Bagiswori Higher Secondary School
- Kirtipur Municipality
  Baghbhairab Secondary School, Rarahil Memorial School
- Lalitpur Sub-Metropolitan City
  Mahendra Adarsha Vidhyashram, Namuna Machhindra Secondary School, Mitra Primary School

III. WORKSHOP - I

Teacher training in Nepal was conducted with the support of MuAN from June 16-20, 2014. A total of nine (9) schools and seventeen (17) teachers from four (4) selected municipalities attended the workshop to learn about Japanese elementary educational strategies, teaching techniques and culture. Both public and private schools were represented at the workshop.

The first workshop introduced participants to early childhood and primary education basics and illustrated how Japanese schools plan and conduct lessons. The workshop was designed not only to share knowledge from Japan but also to encourage active participation and engagement in the process of learning.
A. Session Introduction

One of the objectives of the workshops was to introduce the history of Japan’s educational system and culture to the participants. Dr. Shin Hayashibara from Fukuyama Heisei University in Hiroshima also shared several insightful videos and presentations with the group.

The workshops introduced a number of popular Japanese cultural elements that link education and culture. Examples included an interactive session on origami (paper folding), which helps generate creativity in children and can also be used as fun teaching aids for mathematics. Kamishibai (storytelling) can support the development of imagination.

B. Core Sessions

Through the discussions and evaluations, it was clear that this project provided the first opportunity for many participants to take part in a targeted and active training that was practical, enjoyable and applicable to their own schools. The sessions focused on how schools can provide child-centred education and what parents and communities can do to foster the necessary environment for the growth of a child. The sessions also allowed participants to understand how lesson planning and study can be shared among schools in order to collaborate on knowledge, skills and teaching methods, similar to the system currently used in Japanese elementary schools. In groups, participants developed and presented their own kamishibai to their cohort and received feedback on their performance from the audience.

The main components of the lesson shared from Japan were:

i. Writing and using kamishibai
ii. Using origami as an educational tool
iii. Understanding child psychology
iv. Elementary education and teacher training in Japan
v. Teaching practice through mock lessons
vi. Developing creative material for elementary teaching

A participant tries to guess what the picture is about.

Participants learn a card game for teaching vocabulary.
IV. WORKSHOP – II

The main purpose of the second workshop was to follow up on the progress of comprehensive training provided during the first workshop. The training was targeted to the same group of teachers, specifically to the kindergarten and primary level teachers of nine schools in four municipalities, namely Lalitpur, Kirtipur, Bhaktapur and Madhyapur Thimi. MuAN was the main facilitator of the second workshop.

Teachers were given two months after the first workshop to develop and test their own teaching material in their classrooms and they were asked to share the outcomes in the second workshop. All teachers produced a high level of teaching material, which indicated their strong motivation and enthusiasm to provide a better learning environment for children.

A. Core Sessions

Participants created a wide range of teaching material such as storytelling with pictures, rhymes, games, mathematical cubes, and shapes etc., which they developed over two months and presented during mock lessons. The participants’ enthusiasm and commitment reflected the success of the initial workshop.

The material they developed was exceptionally creative and innovative as it also included items, which hadn’t been taught during the first workshop. Through discussions and observing the participants’ inspired usage of colour, self-crafted material, methods of teaching and communication, it was clear that the impact of the first workshop was indeed very positive and encouraging. The participants indicated that this was their first exposure to this type of workshop.

One of the major outputs of the workshop was the development of an exchange programme between an elementary school in Nepal and in Japan, facilitated by Dr. Shin Hayashibara. Bal Bikash Secondary School from Bhaktapur municipality in Nepal expressed interest in the programme after students from Ekiya Nishi Elementary School in Hiroshima presented them with drawings. In reciprocation, Bal Bikash students also drew and sent drawings to Ekiya Nishi elementary school.
V. WORKSHOP – III

The third and final workshop focused on assessing the drawings made by the students. Drawings were divided into three categories: 1) ‘family’ for kindergarten students, 2) ‘school environment’ for classes one to three, and 3) ‘community/village’ for classes four to five. Artwork such as paintings or drawings are often difficult to assess especially those by student artists since their work reflects their imaginations, perspectives, the environments that he/she is brought up in, and the influence that fellow classmates might have. The teacher participants were given guidance on how a child’s artistic abilities can be strengthened and hidden talents supported through various assessment techniques. Participants chose the best three entries in each category according to their selection criteria. Prizes were awarded to the teachers of the winning schools.

VI. EXCHANGE VISIT TO HIROSHIMA

Bal Bikash English Secondary School in Bhaktapur (Nepal) and Ekiya Nishi Elementary School in Hiroshima (Japan) exchanged drawings, which were delivered by Ms. Neupane of MuAN during her visit to Hiroshima. Ms. Neupane made a presentation on Nepal and exchanged cultural information with students at Ekiya Nishi over lunch. The principal and teachers at the school welcomed the initiative and expressed interest in continuing the exchange. Ekiya Nishi Elementary School is a UNESCO designated school.
VII. EVALUATION

Educational workshops conducted in Nepal generally consist of a series of lectures and sessions with minimal participation. The workshops conducted by CYO and MuAN were highly interactive and allowed exchanges amongst facilitators and participants. Evaluations conducted after each workshop indicated that participants greatly enjoyed the learning process and were eager to use the new techniques in their classrooms.

The majority of participants indicated that the training met their expectations and they suggested that this type of training be provided frequently. However, 13 participants indicated that although the training was relevant for them, they would not be able to apply everything they learnt because of contextual differences.

Sixty-five per cent of the participants said that the time allocated for the opening/closing sessions, presentations and discussion was good. Twelve per cent indicated that the overall training time was quite short. Twenty-three per cent of participants were highly satisfied with the allocation of time.

The majority of participants stated that logistics, adaptations of lessons learnt and follow-up were good. Despite an excellent training experience, language was a barrier for most participants. Similarly, not all material could be adapted locally due to a lack of materials, technology and support from school administrations.
VII. CONCLUSION

This teacher training on ECE in Nepal was the first educational training offered by CITYNET Yokohama Project Office to include both public and private schools. School and teacher profiles reveal the diversity of participants attending the three workshops. The training offered insights into Japanese elementary education, culture and teacher training in Japan. For most teachers, it was the first time to attend a practical and participatory training that also introduced teaching techniques used in Japan. The training highlighted ways in which teachers can reach out to children in order to foster their talents and skills.

This project introduced strategic development of teaching materials and techniques for better creativity, flexibility and inclusiveness for a more child-friendly learning environment. Lesson plan development is a gradually-increasing practice in some schools in Nepal, however, lesson studies are quite rare. The latter allows teachers to observe other classes, evaluate lessons and learn new teaching techniques.

In most cases, education in Nepal still follows a one-way teaching process where the teachers play the main role and education is closely linked to achieving higher scores on examinations. Early childhood education gives more emphasis to child-centered education and learning environments. This allows children to increase their ability to think and act based on their surroundings. It also enhances their creativity, imagination, and logical thinking while strengthening social and communication skills.

The three workshops offered participants opportunities to learn, apply and modify their teaching methods for further improvement of their classroom environments. For many, this training was the first time they fully understood how crucial their roles as teachers are.

These outcomes show that the training was both highly effective and practical for the teachers; they were able to put their learning into practice, share outputs with other teachers and further develop better teaching skills. If sustained, this type of training programme can bring more positive changes to a wider group of teachers in Nepal. This would subsequently influence better child development and education methods. As the progress of a country greatly depends on the development of citizen skills and positive mindsets, even a small project such as this is critical to ECE development.
1. Four girls on the playground pose for the camera.
2. Children practice English nursery rhymes with their teacher.
3. A representative from MuAN explains the usage of Japanese teaching materials to trainees.
4. Children pray before a meal.
5. Participants present mock lessons during the training.
6. A teacher proudly shows a kamishibai that he developed after undergoing the training.
7. Children in a school classroom give their undivided attention to the teacher.
8. Many historical buildings in Nepal are used as classrooms by local public schools.
## Participant List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Muni.</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Training related to childhood education</th>
<th>Yrs. Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anjana Madhikarmi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Madhyapur Thimi</td>
<td>Adarsha Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 9-month teacher distance learning (Radio Programme) Completed 15 days Teachers Performance Development (TPD) training</td>
<td>24 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amitra Chitrakar</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Madhyapur Thimi</td>
<td>Adarsha Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed ECEC Training- World Vision, Education Department Nepal, District Education Office</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nita Nayaju</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Madhyapur Thimi</td>
<td>Nawaratna English School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 15 days TPD training</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajan Rai</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Madhyapur Thimi</td>
<td>Nawaratna English School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surendra Raj Gosain</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bhaktapur</td>
<td>Bal Bikash English Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 15 days ECEC training</td>
<td>12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sita Prajapati</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bhaktapur</td>
<td>Bal Bikash English Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 15 days ECEC training</td>
<td>12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krishna Man Malepati</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bhaktapur</td>
<td>Bagishwori Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 5 days primary level general training</td>
<td>16 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soni Rajchal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bhaktapur</td>
<td>Bagishwori Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed teaching material/method, 1 month and 15 days ECD training</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashish Sharma</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Lalitpur Sub</td>
<td>Mahendra Adrsha Vidyashram Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed E-class training</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambika Bhattraik</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Lalitpur Sub</td>
<td>Mahendra Adrsha Vidyashram Higher Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunita Dawadi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Lalitpur Sub</td>
<td>Namuna Machhindra Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed ECC Montessori / first step / second training</td>
<td>6 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kapil Simkheda</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Lalitpur Sub</td>
<td>Namuna Machhindra Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 9-month teacher distance learning (Radio Programme)</td>
<td>18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanti Sthapit</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Lalitpur Sub</td>
<td>Mitra Primary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Montessori</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laxmi Rijal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kirtipur Sub</td>
<td>Baghbhairab Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 9-month teacher distance learning (Radio Programme) Completed TPD training</td>
<td>17 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambika Bista</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kirtipur Sub</td>
<td>Baghbhairab Secondary School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>Completed 15 days childhood psychology training Completed 7 days TPD training</td>
<td>19 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aruna Maharjan</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kirtipur Sub</td>
<td>Rarahil Memorial School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suroj Thing</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kirtipur Sub</td>
<td>Rarahil Memorial School</td>
<td></td>
<td>🗩️ 🁳 🁳</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Female | Male | Government | 🗩️ Private | 🏋️ English | 🎮 Games | 🖋️ Handwriting | 🧪 Science | 📚 Social Studies | 🕐 Mathematics | 🇨🇳 Nepali
### School Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Year Est.</th>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>Avg. number of students per class</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Avg. age of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarahil Memorial School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Nursery to Grade 10</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghbhairab Secondary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Grades 1-10</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahendra Adarsha Vidhyashram</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Nursery to Grade 10</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namuna Machindra Secondary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Grades 1-10</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adarsha Higher Secondary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Play group to Grade 12</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawa Ratna English Secondary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Nursery to Grade 10</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagishwori Higher Secondary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Pre-nursery to Grade 12</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bal Vikash English Secondary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Play group to Grade 10</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitra Primary School</td>
<td>📚</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Nursery to Grade 10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These outcomes show that the training was both highly effective and practical for the teachers; they were able to put their learning into practice, share outputs with other teachers and further develop better teaching skills. If sustained, this type of training programme can bring more positive changes to a wider group of teachers in Nepal.