Empowering Older Persons through Basic Literacy Class in Nepal

SDG 4: Lifelong Learning

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FIGHT INEQUALITIES

असामानता किल्ला लडो
Pilot Phase

Piloted in 2016
With Support from NGO Committee on Ageing/NY, Virginia
Hazzard Legacy Fund
in Nepal, Togo, Mali and Mozambique
In Nepal

Area Selection
Budanilkantha Municipality, ward 10, Kathmandu

* High rural migration
* Rapid Urbanization

Local organization
Shree Asthabhuja Samaj
Process

**Learners selection** *(Home Visit and Registration)*

**Teachers Selection** *(Local, Committed & Experienced)*
Basic Information of Neo-learners of Pilot Project

Number of Neo-learners: 32
(28 older women and 4 older men)

Oldest Neo-learner in the Class
78 yrs

Learning hour
• Planned for 4 hours/day, practiced 2.5 hours/day

• Majority had to do household chores and take care of grandchildren
Success Indicators

- Helped to fight loneliness and elder abuse
- Enhanced Self-respect, Self Care and Confidence to raise voice in family and community
- Create Bond of Friendship among Neo-learners
Successes…….

* Access to New Technology like mobiles & TV-remote controller

* Break Misconception that Older Persons Need not/Cannot Learn New Things

* USE New Literates as a Social Resource that can be Mobilized for Societal Development
It helped to:

• Build awareness on issues of their rights, health, financial aspects, etc.
• Mobilize them in advocacy and campaigns
• Organize Health camps
• Engage in games and Entertainments (day-out, singing, dancing etc)
Conducted Survey to Measure the Success

Social Development

Changes in behaviors of family
(Include in family discussions & decision making, grandchildren started to do their homework even in my presence, show more concerns about my needs like medicine, clothes etc.)

Changes in behaviors of Neighbor
(Respect, More welcoming for causal talk, More friends)

Can take Leadership in a group
*Developed a Book in Devnagiri Script (NEPALI) considering cognitive status of older person under guidance of Prof. Helen Abadzi (PhD), University of Texas at Arlington

*Replicated in five communities with local organization and support from local governments
Obstacles

• Deep rooted traditional belief that older people **CANNOT** and **NEED NOT** learn to read and write, (including high offices).

• Funding support
Kanchi Gautam, 69

“Bank refused to provide loan because I was unable to write my name. Now, I can. The class has made my life much easier.”
Dhanamaya Khatiwoda, 71

“I had to wait for a grandchild to come from school and dial the phone for me. I couldn’t go for shopping alone because I neither could read signboards, street names or labels on goods I was so dependent. I am a different person now”. 