

PSD Connect

A Quarterly Newsletter

The PSD Connect is a quarterly e-newsletter published by the Partnership for Sustainable Development (PSD) Nepal to inform all their partners, ex-volunteers and supporters, about our activities and news. PSD Nepal is a non-profit social development organization dedicated to the alleviation of poverty of Children and youth of rural Nepal. For more information please visit www.psdnepal.org.

MESSAGE FROM the EDITOR

Namaste Friends!

Here is our latest quarterly newsletter keeping you up to date with some of our work and accomplishments over the last year and give you an outlook what you can expect from PSD. Please feel free to contact us if you have any announcements, articles, or messages that you want to promote through our newsletter. We heartily welcome your views, comments, and queries regarding the work of PSD-Nepal and/or regarding the improvement of the newsletter! You can send us an email to psdnepal@mail.com.np or call us at (9771)-4780369, fax 4780631.

Bishnu H. Bhatta

Early Childhood Summit

January 3, 2015

On 3rd January 2015, The Early Childhood Summit was held at Radisson Hotel, Kathmandu, Nepal. The Summit goal was to bring individuals together to share, examine and reflect upon possible future collaboration, future research that examines evidence based practice, and to share cross-cultural lens of quality early childhood education.

Many of the Summit participants were established colleagues, or were visited during the week prior to the Summit at their respective programs. The eight areas that summit encompasses in discussion were: Education Diplomacy, Children's Rights, Girl Education, Homeless, Abandoned & Orphaned Children, Teacher Education, Training and Monitoring, ECE Curriculum, Cultural & Linguistic Diversity and Parent & Family Involvement.

The participants of the summit included over 100 educators, department of education, researcher, child advocates, facilitators, teachers, Unicef, NGOS, INGOs representatives, University professors from across Nepal. And, the ACEI members included nine individuals from International Outreach Committee. ACEI members included three directors of Project: Dr. Georgianna Duarte, Dr. Ekaterina Strekalova-Hughes, and Mr. BishnuBhatta. The ACEI IOC members included: 1)TapashBhattarai, 2)



Loren Weybright (Board Member) 3) Tata Mbugua (Board Member), 4) Nicholas Schmidt, 5) Debbie Young, and 6) Kathy Price. The ACEI members represented three countries, 9 states, and a total of 11 languages, and a culmination of experience in over 30 plus countries.



The discussion among these national and international intellectuals on ECD in Nepal comes up with diversity of outcomes which are expressed interests of the participants of what was the most critical need or needs in regions. Recommended outcomes included: Authentic child centered research that is implemented across Nepal, Cross-Cultural and collaborative Research in all areas, A focus on practices that are evidenced based practices of Nepali Culture/ Language, Publications in Nepal and US, Support UNICEF Initiatives in Nepal, in particular “Child Friendly” concepts, and programs,

Global sharing of information/ resources and materials, Global communication, Enforcement of existing country policies/ posters/ contacts, Posters of information, Radio and television programs focusing on the 8 selected areas, Educate, train, share, research in the area of quality indoor environments and outdoor environments that support development, growth, culture and language in meaningful ways, Examine/ educate on comprehensive models such as the rural libraries that integrate various family needs, education, training, early childhood education, health, and literacy needs, Research various constructive models on family engagement (father engagement)/education, Collaborative writing in publications, policy, position, and important papers Support, and sharing across programs.

In a nut shell, the summit has turned out to be a positive steps towards the improvement of ECD in Nepal. To add, concerned people from the Government of Nepal, ACEI and PSD Nepal has shown their commitment to work in this sector with the collaboration of all schools i.e. public, private and community including the local people as well.

Photography for Change medica project with International collaborative Education, New York, USA

Along with two teachers and 14 students of New York City International collaborative education school were in Nepal to illustrate the examples of practical and active learning. The relevance of this project was to allow students to open up to the teachers more easily and to provide them practical knowledge of journal writing, field work, creating photo stories and editing photos.



The program was first started with **the ice breaker session**. Then **magazine lesson** was introduced. This lesson accustom students with photography, helped them to identify the different ways a pictures can be used to tell a story, send a message, and show emotions.

Then students were taught to **use camera** so that they can be comfortable with all the basic functions of the camera such as shutter, flash, zoom, applying different abgles and to be more creative with their

camera. Not only this, they were given a chance to experiment with taking photos around their school and of their friends. Next important task was **story telling** through photos and drawings. As it is said, "Nothing is better than a good story", the students were given a piece of paper and were asked to create four separate drawings that tell a story. These activities help them to identify the key elements of a story, formulate their own stories, think creatively and understand the importance of visuals in telling an effective story.

Fieldwork was the next imperative activity in which teachers take the students out into the field. Here, students learned the basics of photography and how photos are used to portray a story. Further, it provides interactive and open environment to learn in. The students were able to explore not only in the village, but the outskirts from what they are used to, visiting sights such as the tree Buddha sat under for 40 days, mountain temples, other assorted temples, shops, fields, and rivers.



Teaching photo terms was presentation given to students showing different photo terms, including composition, lighting, mood, setting, subject, foreground, background, focus, point of view, and direction. This helped students to identify and understand these terms when looking at a photo and make s them to understand why they like certain photos more than others. Likewise, it also make them capable to apply these terms when taking photos.

Following it, they were taught to use **Picassa**. The teachers split the students into small groups. Using the program Picasa the teachers teach the student the basics of the program. They edit the photos the students took whilst they were out in the field. Students became able to crop, use filters, upload pictures, change contrasr and fix red eye in Picassa.

How to **Write Journal Entries** about their experience with the class and with photography was another important activities. They were given different assignments daily, including writing about different ideas for photo stories, what they want to learn about, and what they have already learned. After this task, they became able to realize the importance of journal as well as figure out why people take photos.



This way, Nepalese students were bestowed with different learning process to which they were not familiar till the date. Students were also happy to update themselves with new technologies of photography and to get practical senario of learning. Some students were even determine to be a good photogrpaher in future. Thus, the project has given optimism and a dream to children of being a professional photographer.

Volunteer Story: My time as a volunteer in Nepal

Having read several books about Nepal but still not knowing what expects me there I arrived in Chitwan. Soon I became a part of the so different Nepali way of life having no other choice living in a rural area and with a Nepali host family and I enjoyed it. My lovely host family welcomed me and the people in the village and the students in the school showed me their warmth and cordiality.

It was not always easy to teach the children, having just graduated high school and being without any teaching experience yet and also because I didn't speak much Nepali in the beginning and their English was pretty poor as well. I also had some problems with the typical Nepali way of teaching to which they were used to and which shocked me in some way, having experienced such a different kind of education when I was a student myself. It was difficult for me as a volunteer to gain enough authority to keep them calm and silent, but soon they trusted me what gave them the courage to ask me questions or to tell me if they didn't understand something. I felt like this is not evident in the schools of Nepal.

I wanted to give my students something, an experience they would never forget. So I asked German friends and companies for support. They sent us many valuable drawing materials and financial donations as well. I chose the way of drawing because I think it is very important and supportive for a child's development and can interact in a very helpful way by learning any subject. That means that art should be included in education as with drawing pictures children can strengthen their self-confidence. Like wise, they can convert bad experiences, gain a different and more attentive view on the world's beauties, improve their dexterity, train their brain in a very effective way and they can practice creativity, which can be helpful in every situation in their future lifes'.

I saw the shining in the eyes of the children when I gave them my few coloured pencils and soon I recognized that these children need colours in their life, they need to draw their own pictures, pictures that come from their own mind, heart and creativity and that they need someone who encourages them in doing so. I took it as my aim. And with the materials from Germany, I started to grab my aim. Carefully Students dipped the brush into the water colours, became braver and braver and wanted to use every of these strange things at once. They were obviously not used to fill a whole page with a picture, with colour. Maybe some of them used a coloured pencil for the first time in their life. That was the experience I provided them and I gave them the possibility to practice as often as I could. Soon they brought me drawings they had made at home. I think it was very important for them that there was someone who saw it as something valuable and who paid attention to every student and not only to the best ones.

But during my four months as a volunteer teacher I also had to realise that I cannot change everything I would like to and I also adapted a little to the Nepali teaching methods I actually didn't appreciate much. Apart from that I have to mention the lovely and helpful friends I met and my host family that really became my Nepali family. They took me to several places in this beautiful country and showed me the local traditions as often as they could. They introduced me to the rural lifestyle and things like washing my laundry or took a bath at the well in the backside of the house and sitting next to the warming fire that was inflamed to boil the buffalo milk, became a common part of my life. As a conclusion, I can really say that I had four great months in Chitwan, surrounded by open minded and hearty Nepalese people, gaining a lot of life experience, many wonderful and some shocking impressions and finding a second home.

I always felt secure and PSD helped me whenever I needed them. Thank you.

By Janne