



# Concern Nepal



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## EDITORIAL

Former Chair of Physics at McGill University of Canada, Ernest Rutherford, devoted his life to understanding atoms and the atomic model of elements. He was awarded the 1908 Nobel Prize in Chemistry and, in 1911, postulated a planetary model of the atom, where positive charges concentrated in a very small nucleus surrounded by huge empty space where nearly weightless electrons dwelt sparsely. Soon, he became known as the father of nuclear physics. Even for a great scientist like Rutherford, these little things called atoms proved to be so complex that neither he nor all the scientists combined have been able to fully understand them. The most primitive of building blocks of matter in the universe proved to be infinitely complicated.

When CFFN launched a series of small educational projects in rural Nepal, we had hoped to understand the problems in Nepal's education exceptionally well. However, today we realize that problems of education may never be understood fully, even generations from now. We had hoped that we will solve educational problems at the individual child and individual school levels, and then replicate the solution throughout the country. However, today we understand that the problem of educating an individual child may not ever be fully understood.

Well before the conception of a scientific model of atom, Rutherford had concluded that it should be possible for atoms to disintegrate. Well before the knowledge of atom was mature, nucleus of atoms were split and atom bomb was made in a short span of time. In the same fashion, although it may take much time to understand the true nature of knowledge and learning, we saw unprecedented opportunities in breaking barriers to education. This has culminated into CFFN taking ambitious initiatives in breaking barriers to education in Nepal and in spreading the light of knowledge. Today, we say that the problems of education may never be understood fully but it should be possible to build institutions that take world class education to every seeker of knowledge in the world.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2010

## CFFN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

For Canada Foundation for Nepal (CFFN), 2009/2010 was the year when its activities were not as noticeable from the surface as the ones in the past years. However, the organization was not without motion. We were taking significant steps to take endeavors that have substantially higher level of complexities compared to its past activities. In order to focus on critical tasks, we had to give up on our past approaches that were spreading our resources thin among many endeavors. In the past year, CFFN persisted solely in its goal to spread the light of education to the neediest and made some significant inroads.

CFFN believes that education is the most enduring foundation for every individual to develop their full potential. When the majority of a population is educated, the society and economy of a country flourishes. CFFN's vision continues to be to touch the people at the margins of society through the light of education.

**OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NEPAL (OUN):** 2009 was the year when the concept of distance education surfaced and flourished into a full-formed proposal and an initiative for establishing an enduring and ambitious institution, OUN. It was identified as the most desirable institute to spread the light of quality higher education to the masses with the shortest amount of time and with the least amount of money. Since this identification, a number of achievements have been made. Its basic promise has been explained through a separate article in this newsletter and also through another article published in NRNA Souvenir.

1. The Open University of Nepal initiative evolved out of CFFN quest to mobilize Diaspora Nepalese in developing educational content and in distribution them using information and communication technologies. This led to CFFN presentation in NRN-Canada program in Toronto and its AGM in Calgary and the idea slowly caught on and reached up to 4<sup>th</sup> Global Conference of NRNA in Kathmandu held in October 2009. Along the way, series of studies and interactions led this idea drifted towards distance learning tools, technologies, and procedures utilized by many successful institutions in the world. This resulted in a fact-finding mission in December 2009 by a team of representatives of NRNA Regional Coordinator for North-Americas, NRN Canada, NECASE and CFFN to Athabasca University, the best known Canadian university in distance education. This mission not only concluded that Open University is a institution necessary in Nepal, but also established a strong working relationship with Athabasca University. The finding of the mission was presented to NRNA ICC to make a case that NRNA and CFFN could partner to make the dream of Open University of Nepal a reality.
2. In December 22, 2010, NRNA formed a NRN Skills, Knowledge and Innovation Task Force (NRN SKI), which formed an Access to Education sub-task force to deal with all NRNA matters pertaining to education in January 2010.
3. A team of three people led by Dr. Pramod Dhakal, and comprising of Dr. Ambika Adhikari and Dr. Drona Rasali was formed to advance the Open University initiative. Swiftly, the CFFN flyer prepared in June 2007 was re-developed to present Open University of Nepal initiative as CFFN and NRNA joint initiative.
4. Building-up of strong working relationship with Athabasca University and ICDE are key highlights of our achievement. Through these efforts we have made great strides in building networks.
5. Subsequently, a workshop on Open and Distance Education in Nepal to be held during NRN 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference was proposed to NRNA ICC and the proposal was approved. Therefore, a workshop is organized

on May 28, 2010, which is bringing together institutional thinkers and academic experts of international stature to deliberate on academic, business, and governance of Open University of Nepal.

6. Immediately after formation of the Task Force, in 20<sup>th</sup> February 2010, presentation on OUN was made in NRN-USA Annual General Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, USA. There has been significant amount of interest in Open University of Nepal initiative since then. NRN-Canada and NRN-USA have also taken up the cause.
7. Meanwhile several rounds of interactions have undergone with the Ministry of Education in Nepal and a letter of request and a draft Memorandum of Understanding to be agreed among Government of Nepal, NRNA and CFF has been submitted to the Prime Minister of Nepal. All activities are progressing at the moment.

**COMMUNITY CHILD CARE CENTRE (4C) PROJECT:** Another major project launched by CFFN in 2009 was 4C project “Community-based Early Child Care Centre”, under the initiation and leadership of by Michael and Tineke Casey. 4C project is significant because it addresses one of the previously ignored but high impact initiative. The aim here is to bring cooperation within the villages such that siblings, especially girls, would not have to assume the role of a mother and care for younger siblings while their parents work on the field. The aim is to help communities develop capacity to let children experience fun and be engaged in learning at the same time. More on the motivation and progress of the project is found in an article below. There have been some notable works in this project.

1. Site survey, grassroots people mobilization, and formation of a committee to manage the affairs of 4C at a local level.
2. Teacher selection through open competition, and teacher training.
3. Supply of educational material and training on the usages.
4. Successful operation of the first 4C centre.
5. Design and construction of physical building, which is near completion.
6. Recognition from Ministry of Education and payment of 25% salary of the teachers by the ministry.
7. Collaborations flourishing between CFFN and EDWON to advance 4C project expansion.
8. Coffee and tourism identified as backbone of sustainability of the centres. Collaboration with other interested organizations is under way.

**YUBA SANCHAR RADIO:** CFFN Radio and Yuba Shanchar program have been other successful ventures in 2009/2010. Yuba Sanchar Radio was able to enjoy the contribution of two very respectful and experienced members, Saligram Aryal and Govinda Dahal. Under Saligram Aryal’s coordination, Yuba Shanchar was able to make huge improvements in News and Interview sections. Additionally, Govinda Dahal brought invaluable knowledge and information on health related issues to Yuba Shanchar through educational and highly entertaining dramas. Yuba Shanchar has evolved from a small group of inexperienced youth’s endeavor to highly professional and educational radio program run by the same youth group with some helpful guidance.

## FEATURED ARTICLES

### **Inclusive Education: A Hope Offered by Distance Education**

***Dr. Pramod Dhakal***

**CFFN, NRNA, NRN-Canada**

#### **Background**

Nepal has made some notable gains in promoting basic literacy considering that some fifty years ago the country was near total illiteracy. Today, the awareness about the value of education is at all time high, exemplified by the fact that education has become the most prolific private-sector growth industry. Nevertheless, this growth remains in and around urban centers where most of the universities and colleges are concentrated. Consequently, the educational bonanza has been largely enjoyed by the urban and relatively well-to-do families. That should partially explain why in South Asia, Nepal has the highest Gini Index (47.3), a measure of economic inequality, as per a World Bank report released in 2009.

Access to education among women, rural, poor and marginalized groups in Nepal remains significantly limited. UNESCO data indicate that 38 percent students in Nepal drop-out before completing Grade 5. Among those who do not drop out, the repeat rate is as high as 20 percent. Only nine percent youth enter into tertiary level education. Further, the attendance of women in tertiary education is reported at dismal three percent. The educational figures for the rural and the traditionally marginalized population are notably worse. According to Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2006, some 14.1% Brahmins attain higher education, while only 0.7% Dalits do the same (about 14% of Nepal's population is Brahmin and 13% is Dalit). These data are indicative of the enormity of demographic divide and the work required be done to educate the population in Nepal.

#### **Closing the Gap**

“Education is the largest single contributor to break poverty, income gap, gender inequality and ethnic inequality, and also to improve nutrition, health and longevity of people”, declared 2005 OECD Report on Education. While the research unequivocally singles out education as the greatest good that could be delivered to people, there is not enough money in state treasury to build and operate traditional style institutions in sufficient number in every part of the country and make them affordable to meet the educational need of the population. Some unconventional and effective method in taking the light of education to the entire population of Nepal is, therefore, urgently required.

The advancements in instructional technology, telecommunication, and computing technology made in recent decades have so clearly demonstrated their potentials that taking higher education to rural, remote, and marginalized population, who are confined to the villages due to family obligations and social-financial challenges, has become economically and pedagogically viable for all nations, not just the rich. And for a country like Nepal that are facing a huge challenge in providing opportunity for primary and secondary teachers and rural workers to upgrade their education, skills, and careers, distance education is the most economical and viable option available. At a time foreign employment has become the most sought after option for young people, finding avenues for them to continue their education even in these circumstances has become a necessity. And for those who have remained in the villages, improving their knowledge and skills in health, productivity, management, entrepreneurship and sustainability have become urgent for the economic improvement of the country.

## **Unique Opportunity for an Open University in Nepal**

A fact finding mission involving Canada Foundation for Nepal (CFN) and Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) came to identify in late 2009 that open and distance education is the most effective means in taking tertiary education to every part of the country and everyone in Nepal. These organizations subsequently brought forward an initiative to help Nepal build its Open University of Nepal (OUN) in view of a number of compelling reasons.

While the need is acute in the villages, those with the most knowledge and skills move to cities and increasingly to foreign countries. Consequently, Nepal faces critical shortage of qualified human resources within the country in building world-class universities. A distance university in such situation offers a great hope because it not only can reach the students in villages and towns, but also the Diaspora academics and professionals living in the cities and countries around the world. Having had partaken in the early feast of education and had experienced the hopelessness caused by poverty and remoteness, Diaspora Nepalese also long for an honour to their native land. Their own struggles for education have made them discover that success is still possible even for the neediest of groups, if opportunity were to be presented. The strong desire they show for giving the gift of teaching to seekers of knowledge in Nepal is a testament to that. Therefore, the liability and hopelessness caused by mass migration of the educated may after all be an asset in the form of international expertise, experiences, and knowledge. This is a tangible asset for incubating and lifting up the state of higher education in Nepal. Only missing link in making this happen is the presence of a distance university that links the learners and teachers living at distances. Therefore, OUN has become a necessity of time for Nepal to translate this hope into fruitful endeavour.

## **Promises of Distance Education**

Distance education is not about computers and computer programs – supposedly replacing real teachers. It is about harnessing the knowledge and real teaching of real teachers who, unlike in traditional schooling, may be found anywhere in the world. In today's context, it is about exploiting the power of computing and communication technologies in reorganizing of the relationships among students, teachers, space, and time such that the role of geography, wealth, personal constraints, and family constraints could be minimized in knowledge acquisition. It is about maximizing the benefit of international cooperation for the benefit of those who are not reached by the light of education due to circumstances beyond their control. It is about breaking the barriers that exist in front of economically struggling countries in taking high quality education to the masses of people.

No other mode of education bears the potential for causing viral effect in knowledge acquisition and in explosive growth of education in a country as does properly developed and delivered distance education. Although it has shown respectable maturity today, its promises are felt only in a handful of resourceful countries through a handful of reputed institutions. However, the trend is such that distance education is going to be the mainstream education system of the future society and the future world. And that is poised to happen in a near future – not a distant one. Therefore, the most opportune time for Nepal to pour warlike efforts in developing open and distance education is now.

## **Making it Happen**

At a glance, it may appear that distance education is just a distant dream for a resource-strapped country like Nepal, where even the prerequisite technologies like electricity, Internet, telephones, computers, computer literacy, and even general literacy, have not properly reached to the urban and semi-urban population, let alone the rural and remote population. In fact, in a country which has not caught up with the fever of knowledge and innovation, making

a technology reliant university of this scale is more difficult for Nepal to achieve than the difficulty there was for the then already technologically aspiring USA and USSR to conquer the space in the 1960s. However, Nepal's need fall pale in front of the scale of educational endeavours that exist around the world.

To estimate the size of the problem, compare Nepal's \$0.6 billion government expenditure in education and sports with the education expenditure of \$1.047 trillion made by the US Government for the Year 2010. The US budget will be incremented by \$53 billion in 2011 and \$63 billion in 2012. These yearly increments alone are near 100 times larger than Nepal's budget in education. The yearly budget of educational institutions located in City of Ottawa, Canada, with less than one million people is three times the Nepal's national budget in education. Therefore, this problem of developing even the largest of university in Nepal amounts to an unaccountably negligible amount of the educational expenditure in the world scale.

Mobilizing both financial resources and human capital towards making the Open University of Nepal is after all not an infinitely large problem but a very doable sized problem. And the real problem is not that of money but that of courage to take up a mission of such scale, ability to develop plans for such complex endeavour, and skills to assemble human and technical solution to successfully execute it. When those conditions are fulfilled, the world will not remain as a mere spectator of Nepal. Coincidentally and fortunately, there exists sufficient dose of skills, knowledge and experience pool among Nepalese Diaspora for galvanizing institutional collaborations and international partnerships to make such mission possible.

Having had experienced too many revolutions of other kinds from the 1950s, Nepalese people desperately deserve an intellectual revival, which could be made possible through the utilization of Diaspora talent base. It is about time that NRNs translate their affinity to help Nepal establish Open University of Nepal as an institution of international reputation for quality and an instrument for spreading the reach of higher education all knowledge seekers of Nepal!



Please visit an informational website <http://openu.cffn.ca> that is currently evolving and learn more about our mission. The proponents look forward to having cooperation and participation from many generous individuals and institutions for educating rural and marginalized people of Nepal.

## Helping Establish an Early Child Care Centre in Rural Nepal

**Michael and Tineke Casey**

**CFFN**

One of the facts of life in rural Nepal is that young children - some as young as 4 or 5 - are often called upon to care for their younger siblings. With mother and father toiling in the fields from dawn to dusk it often falls on the very young to be the primary caregiver to children often only 1 or 2 years their junior. To those blessed with being born into wealthier environments this situation appears wrong on so many levels from child safety to the basic loss of a childhood experience for the child caregiver. This older child (or, as often, the oldest female child) also loses out on schooling either late in first enrolling at school to being the first to abandon their studies. In some well documented cases the elder child brings the siblings along to school enlarging the class size and disrupting the class discipline with toddlers



who are all too young to sit quietly through hours of class work. For an education system already under stress such disruptions are felt by all students and the entire community suffers as the cycle of poverty begins anew.

Now early childcare is an issue everywhere. Here in Canada where we are blessed with so much - even here, early child care is a day-to-day issue with parents - who will look after the young children while mother and father are off at work? So if it is an issue in Canada imagine what it is like in rural Nepal where mother and father work at back breaking work from dawn til dusk at a farm, tending goats or whatever their fate has cast them to. But what to do? What options do these people have? To survive one must work.

## **So, what to do? Or more specifically - what could we at CFFN do?**

Last year Tineke retired from her job working for one of the best known early child care facilities in Ottawa - The Andrew Fleck Child Care Agency. Andrew Fleck was a wealthy merchant in Ottawa in the early 1900's who took an interest in the care of the young children of servants who worked in the mansions of the Ottawa elite. Something must be done for them he thought and put his money into supporting an institution that would house the children and some child care workers during the day while their parents worked in the high homes of Ottawa. The agency continues to this day looking after young children, some from the margins of society. Well if Andrew Fleck can start a child care centre in Ottawa then we should be able to do the same in Nepal. After all, by rural Nepal standards, we are wealthy indeed.

It is here that we thought we could make a meaningful contribution by establishing a model for sustainable village-oriented community daycare. This would provide supervised care from the time that siblings drop off their young charges in the morning on the way to school until they can pick them up after school closes. This would be one way that children could attend school at will and on schedule.

The concept of early child care education is not new to Nepal. The government for many years has had a plan to have a series of child care centres rolled out in all 28,000 villages in Nepal. But the plan remains years behind schedule due to the lack of funding available and to the many legitimate but competing needs. So the program is largely underfunded and early child care facilities in rural districts are rare. Nevertheless the Government of Nepal has established training programs for communities that can provide their own centre and some funding to offset some of the salary costs. Still, despite this support, few communities have the means to build and maintain a structure, hire teachers and keep the enterprise running in good times and bad.

Our first thoughts were to form a standardized and managed home-based child care program at various homes in the villages, similar to what operates in licensed home-care in Canada. This way there would be no need for an expensive, purpose-built child care centre. However we soon learned that there are several cultural roadblocks to making this happen, roadblocks that will take some time to overcome and not really part of the problem we were trying to address. So we went back to the simplest of conceptual models; a freestanding purpose-built building centrally located and close to the existing schools. The model we would follow would be similar in concept to that developed by John Wood of Room to Read - offer the community a challenge grant.

The challenge grant is straightforward. The start up funding for construction materials and land purchase would be provided by CFFN in addition to ongoing operational funding for the first three years of operation including the salaries for two full-time teachers. The community for their part would provide the land, provide the labour for the building construction and ongoing maintenance, provide volunteer teachers to supplement the two fulltime teachers to maintain a 7-to-1 child-to-adult ratio and provide the food so the children could have morning and afternoon snacks and a full meal at noon. The grant would run for three years and after that the community would sustain the operation by themselves. We would work with the community to determine how this sustainability could occur.

Photos from 2009-2010





Includes trips to Nepal, NRNA Conference, and Radio sessions!



But where could we start? We decided that at least for our first centre, we should pick someplace where we were almost guaranteed of success. Somewhere where we knew some of the people, where the village had previously demonstrated their commitment to the rights of all villagers to a good education. Through our friends Tom and Donna Lea of Chicago, Illinois we knew of such a village; Sarkuwa in the Baglung district of Western Nepal. Sarkuwa had previously demonstrated its ability to carefully manage a grant they had received some years earlier from Tom and Donna's High School they had been "twinned" with. The US students had raised \$8000 in an effort to help their Nepalese twin. The funds remain in place to this day as the citizens of Sarkuwa manage a series of local grants to needy parents funded by the interest returned on the original capital.

Our first meeting with the villagers was memorable. The Headmaster of the local High School chaired the meeting which was attended by many of the families who would directly benefit from the child care centre. Through our translator, Gyanendra, we explained what we had in mind, how the project would be a co-development between the CFFN and themselves and what we expected of them. The meeting ran long as it is not so simple to just set aside some arable land, nor is it easy for each family to donate volunteer time on a regular basis. As we discussed this more in detail though it became apparent that each family would be committed to 15 to 18 days per year of volunteer time. This they could manage. The villagers accepted the idea in principle and details were to be worked out with the local Mother Unit (women's co-op).



**Tineke and Michael meet with the Madhi village elders to discuss the possibility of an early child care center**

The meeting with the Mother Unit was equally successful and subsequently an agreement was struck with the entire village to begin a pilot child care centre as soon as possible. A Board of Directors was elected and we provided suggestions for teacher selection, a draft programme and ideas for the building design. We also provided the first funding instalment.



**Learning through play with Lego DUPLO blocks**

centre would temporarily close while the teachers attended child care training in the city of Baglung.

Six months later we returned to Sarakuwa to find the pilot child care centre up and running. Two teachers had been chosen from the community, a temporary location found and the two teachers had been sent off to another community to learn the fundamentals of early child care. We visited the centre daily and provided a substantial amount of teaching and play materials. Tineke worked with the teachers after hours on how the equipment could be used in a "learn through play" environment. We also prepared a daily programme for them for the next 3 or 4 months, after



**CFFN's Tineke and Gyanendra work with the two full-time teachers Indhu and Jhalaki**

which the formal early

It is important to point out that Sarakuwa is not a poverty-stricken village. In fact compared to many rural villages it is reasonably prosperous and its village elders are enlightened and forward thinking. So many respects picked the "low hanging fruit" in choosing to start there. But the need for child care exists and it is important to start any endeavour with a quick success. It is important in

stricken prosperous we have in



**Some of the children with the two village teachers**

the pilot project to learn the true costs of establishing and maintaining such a facility as it is our wish to build more in other locations.

Breaking the cycle of poverty in Nepal will be a long and complex journey covering difficult terrain. But like all journeys, it goes step-by-step, village-by-village. Helping fix a systemic problem at the Primary School level is one of those steps and we believe community-based early child care is part of that fix. The solution we propose is within the reach of most villages in Nepal but does require some modest initial financial support from outside the village plus some guidance on future sustainability. Having a personal connection to the village is an important (though not vital) component in establishing and

maintaining trust. The Nepalese Diaspora and the many Friends of Nepal living abroad could provide much of this support.



**She is the future of Nepal - and our world**



Please visit an informational website <http://4c.cffn.ca> and learn more about the initiative. The proponents look forward to having cooperation and participation from many generous individuals and institutions for educating rural and marginalized people of Nepal.

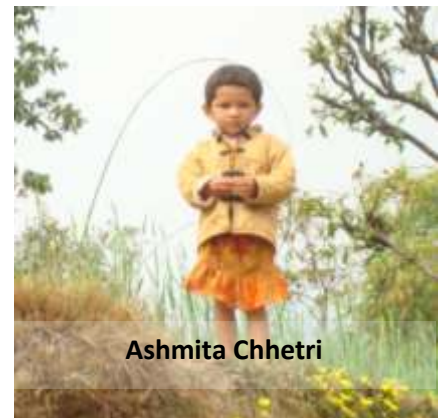
## **The Power of Exposure**

**Geeta Thapa**

**CFFN**

In the Year 2008, I took one semester off from my regular Bachelor's Degree program to re-visit Nepal and I utilized part of this time as a volunteer at Janata Higher Secondary School. As it happens by pure coincidence, there I meet a five year old girl, Ashmita Chhetri. To have grown up in Kathmandu, I had many apprehensions and unknowns in my mind and I had no expectation that I would have a lasting impression from a five year old child. However, a brief conversation with this little girl left a new impression and outlook about people in me. There was something about Ashmita; we developed an instant bond and time after that became different.

Ashmita would hold my hands and take me to the school from my temporary residence at Madi, every morning, at 9am. During the one hour walk uphill in



**Ashmita Chhetri**

the mornings, I learned that, despite her young age, she has taken on many responsibilities of her household. She woke up before 5am and swept her house while her parents left for field work. Her mother would bring morning meal to start and Ashmita would look after it, controlling the fire in wood burning kitchen, until the food is cooked. The meal would be ready when her parents came back. Such sincerity and the burden of so complex responsibilities at such young age!

Story of Ashmita made me experience awe in appreciation of human potential and the sorrow of not having choices and options even for a five years old child. I wondered if there could be options to harness the amazing creative potential of children without taking away the fun, excitement, and freedom of playing with friends. Older siblings taking care of younger siblings, sisters sacrificing their education so that their brothers can go to school, and very young children looking after cattle is seen so easily in these villages. Things that would be taken for granted by young children of developed societies are mythical luxuries to children like Ashmita.

Conditions of poor families in Nepal's villages plead for change and improvement in lifestyles where children could be raised in desirable learning environments. If not the change in the whole society, if a project can change the life of even a single child like Ashmita, I would consider it well-worth it. However, looking into the 4C project, which came to fruition from years of experience and long contemplations of Michael and Tineka Casey, I see potential for change at a larger scale. Therefore, I proudly salute Michael and Tineka for their dedication to build a better life for children - one village at a time, starting from Ashmita's village.

As I reflect, I realize that the power of an exposure can be great in sensitizing our mind about many important issues of society and in changing course of our thoughts. After this encounter with Asmita it makes me think why many well to do people in the cities keep young children as their servants, and why much richer people in the west do not keep servants. Perhaps absence of exposure may be a reason why we remain indifferent about plight of others. And even in volunteering there are earnings of thoughts and reconstruction of our self!



Please visit an informational website <http://4c.cffn.ca> and learn more about the initiative. The proponents look forward to having cooperation and participation from many generous individuals and institutions for educating rural and marginalized people of Nepal.

**प्रवास, रेडियो नाटक र स्वास्थ्य**  
**गोविन्द दाहाल**  
**सि.एफ.एफ.एन.**

आदीमकालदेखि आजसम्मको मानव सभ्यताको इतिहासले के देखाँउदछ भने मानव आजभन्दा भोली वा भोली भन्दा पर्सी अझ असल र गुणात्मक जीवनको खोजीमै तल्लीन छ । यही खोजीकै क्रममा एक देशमा जन्मे हुर्केका नागरिक अर्को देशमा बसाइ सरे र यदि नयाँ ठाँउमै जीन्दगी वढी सहज हुने देखिएमा त्यँही प्रवासी भएर वस्ने चलन पनि मानव इतिहासमा नौलो होइन र यो अभ्यास विगतमा भन्दा हालका वर्षहरुमा अझ वढी देखिएको छ ।

जाँहीं वसेपनि दरिलो आर्थिक अवस्था, स्तरिय शिक्षा, र भौतिक तथा मानसिक सुस्वास्थ्यविना गुणात्मक जीवन प्राप्त गर्न सकिन्न । क्यानडामा केहि वर्ष अघि मात्र गरिएको अनुसन्धानले के देखाएको छ भने शिक्षित तथा आर्थिक रुपमा सम्पन्न ब्यक्तिहरु विपन्न र अशिक्षित ब्यक्तिहरुको तुलनामा सचेत त छन् नै, तरपनि कतिपय आधारभूत स्वास्थ्यका लागि आवश्यक कुराहरुमा, यीनीहरु पनि, विशेषगरी प्रवासीहरु, अनविज्ञ नै हुँदा रहेछन् । जस्को फलस्वरुप दरिलो आर्थिक अवस्था र स्तरिय शिक्षा भएका मानिसहरुलाई पनि निरोगी भई गुणात्मक जीवन जीउन सहज हुदोरहेनछ ।

यस्तो अवस्थामा स्वदेश तथा प्रवासमा बसीरहेका समस्त नेपालीहरुलाई नविनतम खबर तथा स्वास्थ्य सम्बन्धि विविध जानकारी दिने हेतुले हामीले सि.एफ्.एफ्.एन. मार्फत युवा संचार इन्टर्नेट रेडियो संचालन गरिरहेका छौं । त्यसो त विगतका वर्षहरुजस्तो नभै गत वर्ष देखि सि.एफ्.एफ्.एन. का सबै कार्यक्रमहरु शिक्षा र संचारमा मात्र केन्द्रित छन् । शिक्षा अन्तर्गत दूर शिक्षा र संचार अन्तर्गत, माथि भनिए भै इन्टर्नेट रेडियोलाई सि.एफ्.एफ्.एन. ले विशेष महत्वका साथ लिएको छ । इन्टर्नेट रेडियो सम्बन्धमा हाम्रा मित्र शालिग्राम अर्यालले सेप्टेम्बर २००९ मा प्रकासित अटवा चौतारीको वर्ष ८ अंक १७ पेज २५ देखि २६ मा लेखिसक्नु भएकोले यस कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत हाल प्रस्तुत भइरहेको रेडियो नाटकवारे मात्र म छोटो जानकारी दिन चाहान्छु ।

माथि उल्लेखित स्वास्थ्य सम्बन्धि तथ्यहरुलाई ध्यानमा राखेर हालका लागि हामीहरुले विश्वका अन्य मानवहरुलाई भै नेपालीहरुको स्वास्थ्यमा प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पार्ने विविध विषयहरुलाई समेटेर कार्यक्रम तयार गर्ने र तिनीहरुलाई रेडियो नाटकको माध्यमद्वारा प्रसारण गर्दै जाने उद्देश्य राखेका छौं । जननी र जन्मभूमि स्वर्गभन्दा पनि प्यारा हुन्छन् भने भै मातृभूमिलाई केहि सानै भए पनि टेवा दिने हेतुले यो जमर्को गरिएको हो । हाम्रो कार्यक्रम प्रसारणको माध्यम इन्टर्नेट रेडियो भएकाले आफ्नो अनुकूलता अनुसार तपाईं जहिले पनि र जति पटक पनि दोहोर्च्याएर सुन्न सक्नुहुनेछ । यी कार्यक्रम डाउनलोड गरी क्यासेट तथा सिडिमा कपी गरेर पनि सुन्न सकिन्छ । कृपया [radio.cffn.ca](http://radio.cffn.ca) मा गएर हाम्रा कार्यक्रम सुन्न र आफ्नो सुभाब भए पठाउन हामी यहाहरु सबैमा विनम्र अनुरोध गर्दछौं ।



Please visit an informational website <http://radio.cffn.ca> that is currently evolving and learn more about our mission. The proponents look forward to having cooperation and participation from many generous individuals and institutions for educating rural and marginalized people of Nepal.

## **Creating Momentum: The Bricks and Mortar for Spreading Ideas**

**Benjamin Wood**

**CFFN**

Over the past year, CFFN has radically changed its outlook. Whereas once the organization's goal was to bring about prosperity, justice, and equality through debates and political means, its focus has narrowed to finding innovative ways of delivering education to the masses. The idea is that a stronger, more educated population can better affect its own environment. This is a much more long-term solution, but it can lead to a country that sustainably changes itself, leading to prosperity, justice, and equality on many fronts.

At the organizational level, CFFN's challenge is how to take this new mandate and be so successful with it that other organizations, businesses, and even governments examine our methods or ask for advice. How does the message of spreading education reach those who can help do so? How can that message gain enough momentum and reach a

critical mass such that the support and resources for CFFN’s initiatives are as wide and diverse as the people they will serve? This is a lesson important for the continued growth and success of CFFN as a whole, and to any other organization looking to flourish and accomplish their goals.

My quest for an answer begins with Malcolm Gladwell. Gladwell is a writer for the New York Times and author of international bestselling psychology and sociology books. His first title, *The Tipping Point*, is considered by many as one of the most influential books published in the last decade. It explores, through the use of many extraordinary stories, how ideas, rumours, and products spread through a society. *The Tipping Point* defines the three agents of change as, “the Law of the Few, the Stickiness Factor, and the Power of Context.”

The Law of the Few suggests that successfully spreading an idea involves the influence of three different types of people: connectors, mavens, and salespeople. Connectors are the people who have many acquaintances across different social groups, the people who “have a special gift for bringing the world together.” They are able to spread an idea to a wide array of different people with different interests, who can in turn pass the idea to all their peers that have similar interests. Mavens are information specialists, the gatherers of knowledge that connect everyone with new information. A maven is very much interested in solving problems with the information they have, or can find. They, along with the connectors, have the social skills to start an idea epidemic. Lastly, the salespeople are those that can persuade other to act, they can “persuade us when we are unconvinced of what we are hearing.” These people can convince others of the importance of an idea, or how it will be successful. Together, connectors, mavens, and salespeople make up the messengers that spread the idea.

The Stickiness Factor discusses the message itself. Stickiness is the quality that a message needs in order to spread. The idea itself needs to be memorable such that it evokes change and action. The best messages are short, targeted, and relevant to the audience. Also, people often need to be exposed to messages several times before they can be retained – they stick better through repetition. The challenge is as much to create a compelling message as it is to have it repeated.

The *Tipping Point*’s final message, the Power of Context, states that “sensitive to the conditions and circumstances of the times and places in which they occur.” The environment itself can affect how an idea can spread. Fortunately, it is possible to change the environment. For example, CFFN’s Community Child Care Centre gives young siblings a place to be so that their older brothers and sisters can go to school without them – this leads to a learning environment with fewer distractions and interruptions. By changing the environment, we’ve created an environment where messages can spread. Group dynamics also plays a role in the power of context. Groups are susceptible to pressures and dynamics that can spread ideas.

Malcolm Gladwell brilliantly outlines in *The Tipping Point* how vital the people, the message, and the context are at creating idea epidemics. The many examples Gladwell uses illustrate how possible it is to use them to become successful. The question we should be asking ourselves is how can CFFN use Gladwell’s theories to bring the light of knowledge to the margins of society? How can the Law of the Few, the Stickiness Factor, and the Power of Context work together to ignite passion for our initiatives?



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