CHILD FRIENDLY JOURNEY OF TETARIYA
OUR VILLAGE - CHILD FRIENDLY VILLAGE
Plan International, an INGO that puts children at the core of all of its activities, has been working in Nepal since 1978, focusing on marginalised communities outside mainstream development. Its main areas of interest in Nepal are water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); basic education; economic support for poor families; child protection; and child centered disaster risk reduction (DRR). Besides working continuously since its inception in the districts of Sunsari, Morang, Rautahat, Sindhuli, Banke, and Bardiya, Plan International Nepal also works in 45 other districts of Nepal.

One of Plan International Nepal’s activities is a campaign to make the village of Tetariya child friendly.

Together with local partners, Plan International Nepal works in areas prioritised by the government of Nepal. After 10 years of effort, Tetariya is now a child friendly village. During that decade, Plan International Nepal worked with the government to develop an understanding of the ideal nature of a child friendly village development committee (VDC) and what indicators should be used to determine if a village had attained that status. Despite the efforts of all, the movement took a rather long time getting off the ground as it is a new concept. That said, the coordination and collaboration of local bodies such as VDCs and district development committees (DDCs) with ministries promise an innovative beginning for children. The learning derived from this project will be a considerable help in making other VDCs child friendly, too.
CHILD FRIENDLY JOURNEY OF TETARIYA
OUR VILLAGE - CHILD FRIENDLY VILLAGE
2016
Child friendly status achieved

Analysis of the situation

Achievement will be realised only if the plan is implemented

Focus on child protection

Every child likes school

WASH becomes compulsory

Role of child clubs

Child friendly schools

Improvement in health services

Our Village - Child Friendly Village

The path to becoming a child friendly village

Moving towards 100% achievement
Child friendly status achieved

On 26 March, 2016, Tetariya VDC became the first child friendly VDC in Nepal after it got an average mark of 80% on indicators specified in the government’s Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) Strategy. For most of the indicators, its level of achievement was 100%.

It took Tetariya 10 years to reach this height as the task was new and innovative and there were no pre-existing lessons to be learned. In the process of achieving child friendly status, many problems were encountered, many lessons learned, and many solutions sought. To venture into this area, one which most other actors overlook, Plan International Nepal worked with the Central Child Welfare Board to develop the concept of a child friendly village and to identify a procedure for becoming one. The plan was finalised by a group of experts in close coordination with the District Development Committee and the Village Development Committee.

In the first stage, which ran from 2005 to 2007, seven VDCs and one municipality spread across eight districts were selected for the launching of Plan International Nepal’s child friendly campaign. In the second stage, which ran from 2008 to 2010, another eight VDCs were added. In the third stage, which ran from 2011 to 2015, an additional six VDCs in six new districts were selected. The child friendly campaign as a whole was piloted in a total of 21 VDCs and one municipality.

Initiatives to implement the concept of child friendliness were begun everywhere-in homes, in schools, and in entire villages. Child clubs played an important role in making villages child friendly. Schools; local community-based organisations, particularly women’s groups; national and international organisations; and civil society activists all worked with great enthusiasm.

Now these actors know that if habits and ways of working are changed, it is indeed possible to establish a child friendly village. Since this was the first-ever effort to do so, however, it took considerable time to transform Tetariya. The lessons learned in the process should help greatly in making other VDCs child friendly in a much shorter period and enable them to circumvent major problems and hurdles.
The path to becoming a child friendly village

Ten years ago, Tetariya VDC in Morang District was like any other village in Nepal: nobody thought much about the children who lived there. Then Tetariya, along with Inaruwa Municipality, Sunsari; Godak VDC, Ilam; Gedahiguthi, Rauthahat; Maheshpur, Bara; Fakhel, Makwanpur; Paraspur, Banke; and Dodhara, Kanchanpur, was selected by the Central Child Welfare Board for the initiation of child friendly local governance.

Discussions were started in the community and stakeholders together agreed upon and prepared various indicators that could be measured to ascertain if a village had achieved child friendly status or not. An all-party committee was formed and a child protection committee was organised under it. Acceptance of all political parties was sought as a first step towards creating a child friendly village.

Plan International Nepal had already been working in Tetariya and had formed both individual school-based child clubs and a village-level network of child clubs. These clubs played an important role in making the village child friendly. All the work in Tetariya was carried out in close consultation with the DDC and under the progressive leadership of the VDC.
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Children participating in a campaign against child marriage led by child clubs
Child clubs hold regular meetings and members consult each other and non-members about problems in the village.
Analysis of the Situation
Before efforts began, the situation of the village was analysed keeping in mind the four pillars of the Convention of Rights of the Child (CRC) - the survival, development, protection, and participation of children.

Then, in order to track the progress of the VDC toward achieving child friendly status, indicators related to these four pillars were selected. With the support of Plan International Nepal, two people from each ward were trained to identify and collect information about the situation of children.

A plan for each ward was formulated using the information collected.

Then, with the participation of civil society activists, the VDC prepared a five-year plan for and a statement of commitment to child friendliness.
A women’s network was also formed as part of the effort to make Tetariya a child friendly village.
Achievement will be realised only if the plan is implemented

As one step in the implementation of the plan, a child club was formed in each village and organised under a village-level child network.

In 2011, the government implemented the CFLG Strategy and Tetariya formed its own CFLG committee.

The community was informed about the indicators specified in the CFLG Strategy and began to work toward securing at least a minimum level of achievement in all of them.
On 23 December, 2011, Tetariya was identified as a VDC with 100% birth registration. All newborns are registered within 35 days of their birth.
On 5 March, 2013, Tetariya became an open defecation-free VDC.
Child clubs played an important role in the effort to end child marriage.
On 15 September, 2013, a free and compulsory basic education campaign was executed and all children aged from 5 to 12 began to attend school.
On 20 December, 2013, all children in Tetariya had received a course of basic immunisations and Tetariya was declared a fully immunised VDC.
The VDC carried out its annual “monitoring and review of progress made” meeting with the direct participation of all stakeholders. The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) also began to track progress by periodically sending a monitoring team. As suggested by the ministry and following all of the procedures prescribed, the VDC prepared a children status paper and a five-year investment plan.
After securing an average score of minimum 80% on all indicators, Tetariya was declared the first child friendly VDC in Nepal on 26 March, 2016. A grand programme was organised in its honor.

All national and international organisations active in the VDC, child and youth clubs, representatives of government offices, and the general public participated in the programme, which included a cultural show and pageantry to mark the occasion.

Now that the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) has issued Tetariya VDC a certificate declaring it a child friendly village, the total budget of the village has been increased by 15%.
Invited guests and dignitaries committed to the child friendly village

A letter of appreciation given to Tetariya by the MoFALD for child friendly Tetariya

Certificate of child friendly Tetariya
Members of a child club performing a street drama to raise awareness against a child marriage
Moving towards 100% achievement

Tetariya was not contented with simply achieving the minimal marks needed for each indicator. Instead, it sought to get a score of 100% in each of the indicators specified in the CFLG Strategy.
FOCUS ON CHILD PROTECTION

On June 15, 2016, under the child friendly campaign, Tetariya VDC was declared free of child marriage.

Members of a child club taking pictures of guests attending the ceremony to declare Tetariya VDC free of child marriage

Ceremony to declare Tetariya a child marriage - free VDC
Now, no child under 18 years of age has to marry.

अब तेलियाभाषा बालबालिकाहरूले उम्रें नपुगी विवाह गर्न बायो हुन पर्ने छैन।
Presenting song on child marriage free village declaration ceremony
EVERY CHILD LIKES SCHOOL

No child in Tetariya VDC is out of school and no child is pressured to marry. Fear is not used as a means to enforce discipline while teaching either.

The VDC listen to the opinions of children and the VDC endorses plans recommended by the Children’s Council.
Tetariya's WASH campaign paid particular attention to sanitation in households and to developing the habit of hand-washing. Soap for hand-washing after toilet usage was placed near tubewells and taps.
Tetariya worked hard to become an open defecation-free village. During its toilet construction campaign, technical and financial assistance was provided as needed and toilets were constructed in all houses.

Open places were cleaned of human waste and other filth, thereby reducing people’s vulnerability to disease.
Role of child clubs

Child clubs and the village-level child network played a significant role in making Tetariya child friendly. The children’s resource center established in the VDC organised different child-led programmes through which children got the opportunity to learn themselves and to teach others. Girls led the campaign against child marriage.
Door-to-door campaigns were launched to promote the immunisation of all children.
A meeting of the Children’s Council to plan the work children thought to be carried out in the village.

Children established and operationalised a Children’s Council to develop and formalise their opinions in written plans. It got the VDC to endorse the plans it had adopted.

Now, the child club network must be allowed to participate and voice its opinion in meetings and discussions organised by schools, the VDC, and other bodies which organise public work.
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A joint meeting of child club representatives, mother’s group and CFLG
The school enrollment campaign was a success due to the initiatives of child clubs and support from all. Now, no children of school age are out of school.
CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

Schools are now child friendly and children no longer fear going to school as they once did. The principle of “learning without fear” is applied in classrooms and much learning is experienced through engagement in fun activities. Child friendly infrastructure has been constructed in schools.
Child friendly infrastructure has made children feel comfortable.
Separate toilets have been constructed for boys and girls.
There are sufficient playgrounds in the school and classroom activities are not limited to lecturing alone. Instead, teachers have begun to implement hands-on activities.
Child friendly communities

Every house of Tetariya is child friendly. No child is forced to engage in child labor.
A guardian helps children go to school.
Child clubs are forums for discussing child marriage and other key issues.
Child clubs worked tirelessly against child marriage, the elimination of which was deemed the most difficult to achieve of the 39 child friendly indicators adopted. After it is adopted the objective of zero tolerance to child marriage, Tetariya was able to stop all planned child marriages, and, in consultation with the concerned families to postpone them till both the girl and the boy reach marriageable age. Now the villagers are aware of the negative effects of child marriage, the incidence of this practice has declined.
There are no differences in the raising of boys and girls and no discrimination between them. All understand that educating daughters brings happiness to a family. Nobody prevents either girls or boys from attending child club activities. Almost all the children of Tetariya are involved in a child club.
Child clubs have helped to develop leadership skills. Not only are children now confident about expressing their opinions but they are also equally active in executing and getting others to execute the decisions they make. The Child Council meets regularly to discuss, draft, and approve proposals and plans to send to the VDC. Representatives of child clubs take part in VDC meetings, in particular to present and discuss their plans.
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Improvement in health services

Continuous effort has ensured that all the children in Tetariya have received a full complement of basic immunisations.
Pregnant women get regular health checkups and take capsules of iron and folic acid, so they have been bearing healthy children.

The work of female community health volunteers has become easier.
To ensure that all the children of Tetariya were 100% immunised, female community health volunteers put a great effort into seeking out children who had been left out and ensuring that they were immunised. Mothers’ groups were also wholeheartedly involved in the campaign.
Mothers’ groups discussing health, education, and other issues related to children
Tetariya is self-reliant for many goods. The main income sources of villagers are agriculture and livestock-rearing. The villagers are becoming aware about how they can make their children’s futures bright.
Our Village - Child Friendly Village

Government Institution and Organisations Involved in the Child Friendly Campaign in Tetariya

1. Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare
2. Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
3. Central Child Welfare Board
4. Department of Women's and Children's Development
5. Plan International Nepal
6. District Public Health Office
7. District Education Office
8. District Drinking Water Office
9. District Agricultural Development Office
10. District Child Welfare Board
11. District Development Committee
12. Office of Women's and Children's Development
13. Tetariya Village Development Committee
14. District Children Protection Committee
15. Community-based organisations and clubs
MINIMUM INDICATORS

The minimum indicators specified in the CFLG Strategy are as follows:

Child Survival

► Exclusive breastfeeding for six months.
► Compulsory basic immunisation.
► Twice annual provision of Vitamin A capsules to children aged 6 months to 5 years.
► At least four medical checkups for every pregnant woman.
► Delivery by expert health workers.
► Immunisation of pregnant women against tetanus and daily consumption of iron capsules.
► Arrangements for safe drinking water in all households.
CHILD PROTECTION

► Compulsory birth registration for all children below five years of age.

► Continuous reduction of the rate of child marriage.

► No usage of child labor in any hazardous work.

► Execution of action plan to reduce violence against children, trafficking, exploitation, misbehaviour, and domestic violence.
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

- Attendance of early childhood development classes by all children below four years of age.
- Attendance of school by all children aged from 5 to 12 years.
- Provision of informal education to those deprived of formal education.
- Separate toilets for girls and boys.
- Provision of extracurricular activities by all schools.
CHILD PARTICIPATION

- Participation of children aged from 12 to 18 years in the decision-making processes of local bodies.
- Incorporation of the plans and programmes of children.
- Recognising of the opinions of children to school management committees.
- Representation of child clubs in health management committees.
- Establishment of a network of child clubs in every VDCs and functional child clubs in every ward of every municipality.
Tetariya VDC is located 15 km north of Biratnagar. This 15 sq km village is peopled mostly by Tharus but other indigenous and marginalised groups, including Dalits, live here, too. A total population of 6,004 people, 2,996 females and 3,008 males, live in 1,365 households. There are 1,485 children under the age of 16 (40% of the total). Boys, who total 770, slightly outnumber girls, who total 715. The main occupation in Tetariya is agriculture.

There are seven schools, 13 early childhood development centers, one health post, and 20 women’s groups in Tetariya. One children’s resource center and 11 child clubs work explicitly for children. Out of 3915 VDC, Tetariya feels proud to be the first child friendly VDC in Nepal. There are many lessons to be learned from Tetariya. Its experience will definitely help to create a bright future for Nepali children.
तेतारिया मायाको चिनो
मा.वि.स. को कार्यालय
तेतारिया, मोरह
साल: २०७२ चतुर्दश गतेका १४ गतेभित्र