

# Enhancing accessibility to quality education for girls

*A study of Dadeldhura*



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## **Abstract**

This report gives an overview of the challenges faced by public schools in providing quality education for students in Dadeldhura district of the Far West, Nepal. This study acknowledges gender equality as an important dimension of quality education and thus, seeks to explore the gender-sensitive issues that perpetuates gender inequality in teaching-learning processes. Gender inequality in education however; does not only mean determining access to education for girls and boys, but involves ensuring equal opportunities to participate in learning process without any interference caused by their gender. Thus, the study presents how socio-cultural issues are reconstructed by schools that influence gender discrimination and inequalities in schools. This qualitative research is based the field visit to Dadeldhura in which two methodologies; in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the actors involved in public education discourse. The in-depth interviews were conducted with DEO, 8 headmasters, 4 teachers, 4 parents, 1 NGO, and 3 sociologists from different NGOs. Additionally, 3 focus group sessions were conducted with 12 girls from grade 11 and 12 in Ugratara U Ma V, 65 students from grade 10 in Janata U Ma V, and 3 students in Shree Gauri Shankar U Ma V, Doti.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In August 2015, I went on my field visit to Dadeldhura district of Far Western Nepal for my research. While visiting some public schools for the data collection, the head master of one of those schools insisted me to discuss with the students of grade 10 about my study. When I entered the classroom, I was surprised by the number of students in the classroom. Not only that, the students in the classroom did not have desks and were holding their books on their lap. When I asked about their difficulties, they replied, *baani parisakyo*<sup>1</sup>.

While the number of private schools are increasing in the vicinity of public schools, the situations of public schools are not getting any better in the district. Despite the provision of the government and international education planners and partners to enhance the quality of public education, the public schools in Dadeldhura struggle to provide basic facilities and infrastructure for the students. For instance, the lack of basic infrastructure as discussed above signifies the situation of the public school. Although not every public schools in the district share the similar conditions, many schools still face challenging in maintaining the quality of education with their available resources. The common problems that schools in Dadeldhura face are: inadequate number of teachers, insufficient space for the students, and improper sanitation and water supply in the schools.

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<sup>1</sup> *Baani parisakyo* in Nepali simply means that somebody is 'used to' something.

As per UNICEF, measuring the quality of education includes the good health of the students, adequate resources and facilities for favorable learning environment, effective curricula for the acquisition of required knowledge and life skills, trained teachers, and outcomes supporting the national endeavors for education reform (UNICEF, 2000:4). However, education sector of a country is influenced by its social, economic, and politics and therefore, the assessment and monitoring at the classroom level should be encouraged to understand the challenges affecting the quality in education discourse. Besides, the overall dimensions such as teaching and learning environment, health of the learners, training for the teachers, and the final outcomes; gender inclusiveness is one of the significant indicators in measuring the quality of education. UNICEF includes gender-sensitive environment, incorporation of gender equality in education; including safe and peaceful environment for girls (UNICEF, 2004:8) as important measures to enhance the quality of education in schools.

Gender equality in education; however, does not necessary about determining access to education for girls or women, but involves ensuring quality education for both girls and boys so that both get equal opportunity in terms of education (Acharya and Parajuli, 2008:11). Gender equality in education thus, refers to the opportunity for both girls and boys to participate equally in learning process without the disturbances they face in their societies because of their gender. Gender can be understood as the activity of negotiating social conduct on the basis of normative conceptions of activities and roles appropriate for the category of one's sex (West and Zimmerman, 1987:127). Gender in other words, is a social construction which is assimilated in terms of division of work on the basis of biological sex. For instance, in Nepalese societies, girls are required to help their mother in domestic chores; while kitchen works are not considered as boys' job. Likewise, in many traditional societies, girls are considered as 'temporary property' and therefore, investing on their education is seen as unnecessary for their future (Jenkins, 2005:10). Thus, it is important to include gender inequality in terms of assessing inequalities in terms of quality education discourse because gender in education study allows to understand how girls engage differently from boys in learning process. Moreover, it allows to explore the challenges that girls face in terms of receiving quality education because of the hegemonic structure of Nepalese societies.

Thus, this paper analyzes the challenges faced by public schools in strengthening quality of education with primary focus on gender issues germane to gender equality in education discourse in Dadeldhura district of Far West. Discussions in this report is based on the qualitative data collected from various actors involved in public school discourse such as DEO, head-masters of schools, teachers, students, parents, NGOs, and sociologists. However, for clearer understanding of the situation of gender equality in the district, secondary data has been referred to include quantitative lens in the study.

## 1.2 Research Questions

- What are the challenges that public schools in Dadeldhura face while providing quality education for students?
- What are the gender-sensitive issues that perpetuate disparity in performances of girls and boys in the schools?
- What are the impact of programs implemented by the government or I/NGOs in increasing the enrolment of students, enhancing the quality of education, and strengthening education opportunities for girls in public schools?

## 1.3. Rationale and Significance of the study

The policies and program of the Nepal government has declared the year 2071-2072 as the “Illiteracy Elimination Year” with the ‘Literate Nepal Campaign’ programme (Policies and Programmes of GoN, 2014:9). However, this campaign is not the only program that has been envisioning to achieve its target at the present. For instance, the focus of Nepal Government to universalize basic and primary education have been integrated in the Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015 (“Achieve universal primary education” 2015). Likewise, the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All, in collaboration with the government, has targeted to strengthen the accessibility and quality of basic education for all (MOES, 2003:4). Nepal’s education policies and programs emphasis on primary education have dominated other plans and

programs contributing in education reform of the country (Basnet and Banskota, 2010:28). The universalized primary education although ensures access to literacy, it does not ensure economic sustainability of productive citizens of the future (Kusago and Phuyal, 2009:8). Thus, primary education ensuring literacy of the country does not guarantee that children receive quality education which will assure their eligibility for secondary level. Thus, this study explores the state of education in public schools and investigates the challenges faced by schools in maintaining quality education at secondary level. Next, most of the literature on gender issues in the Far-West discusses about the Chaupadi system perpetuating gender discrimination in the region (UNFCO, 2010:7); therefore, this study seeks to assess the gender inequality in schooling in Dadeldhura which will contribute in understanding nuances in gender issues of the Far West. Most importantly, the report of this study will be shared with Hon. Arzu Rana Deuba, whose immense contributions in the sector of education, gender, and health have brought positive impact in the development of the district. Since Dr. Deuba aspires to bring changes in the sector of education and gender in the district, the recommendations from the study can help her initiate new projects in the sector of education. Likewise, a copy of this report will be share with RUWDUC, which have been contributing resources to the schools. Thus, this report will help the organization to implement projects on the basis of discussed issues.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design and Research Methods

This chapter discusses the methodology and ethical consideration that had been considered in this study. Qualitative research method was applied in this study as it allows in identifying the possible issues related to the topic from the perspective and experience of the participants (Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011:9). Qualitative method has been approached in this study as it helps to explore the nuances in the explored topic that might not have investigated otherwise if had been relied on quantitative data. Likewise, since the study aims to explore and explain the state of education and gender issues associated with schooling, qualitative method can be useful in exploring the topic through experience of different key informants.

In this qualitative research, only two methodologies have been used for the collection of data. They are: in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. In-depth interview is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting individual interviews with the participants to explore their perspectives on a particular topic of the study (Boyce and Neale, 2006:3). In this study, in-depth interviews with different key informants provided information about different topics related to education and gender, which helped to acknowledge nuances within some issues and topics that might be essential to count on. This technique was mostly beneficial for talking with participants who do not feel comfortable while talking openly in a group. Acknowledging that every method has its weakness, the responses in the in-depth interview can be biased (Boyce and Neale, 2006:3). For instance, the participants had space to give their own opinion without the interruption of others making the data fully based on their subjectivity. Likewise, the in-depth interview tended to be time consuming.

The second method applied for the data collection was focus group discussion. Powell et al. describe a focus group as a group of selected individuals in a research who participate, discuss, and comment on the topic of the research from their personal

experiences (Gibbs, 1997: 1). The focus group was useful to discuss the issues with a group at the same time to get similar or dissimilar views on the same topic. For instance, focus group discussions with female students was effective as the students were more comfortable about sharing their personal issues without the presence of their teachers or outsiders. The advantage of including focus group discussion in the research was that it allowed the participants to come up with new topic that had not been included in the questionnaire.

## **2.2 Ethical Considerations:**

While conducting the research, it was necessary to address ethical considerations. The research ensured ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and self-reflexivity. Before the collection of data, I, as a researcher introduced myself and shared the purpose of the study and the importance of their contribution in the study. Likewise, I explained that the participation in the study was voluntary and none of the participants were hurt physically or emotionally during the process of data collection. All the participants were treated respectfully as their contributions was immensely important for the research success.

Anonymity and confidentiality was maintained to ensure no identification of participants was revealed by others (Richards and Schwartz, 2002:138). Before the interview I asked the participants whether or not they wish to remain anonymous in the research because in some circumstances, participants may not like to remain anonymous and maintain ownership of their ideas or narratives (Richards and Schwartz, 2002:138). Likewise, before recording their voices in the recording device I asked the participants for their permission. However, many teachers and head masters were not comfortable in sharing their names or recording their voices as they were sceptical about the use of data after the research. In such case, I had to depend upon hand written notes. The data gathered from the participants were stored in my personal hard drive (with password) which was only accessible to me.

Self-reflexivity was addressed in the research by involving 'self' with the research throughout the process and learning from it (Dickson-Swift, James, and Liamputtong,

2008:24). It was important to be self-reflexive throughout the research process as I had my own biases as a researcher which could have affected both the research process and the result of the study. Thus, before taking the interview, I was aware that the issue that uncomfortable situations during some questions may occur during the interviews. In order to avoid that kind of situation, I did not force the informants to give answer to those questions in which they showed some hesitation. Also, by putting my 'self' in the place of the interviewees, I narrowed the gap between the participants and myself as an interviewer. I was aware whether or not the questions were clear enough to understand or had negative implications that might hurt the participants. More importantly, I addressed them respectfully for being part of my research.

In the field work, all interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in Nepali language, which I later translated into English. The notes and data from the interviews were later synthesized through coding. Coding is a label given to the data segments that depict similar themes that emerge from the data collected (Charmaz, 2006:5). The repetitive themes that emerged for the coding were selected and then compared, analyzed, and presented as findings of the research.

### **2.3. Research Limitations**

The data in this study has several limitations. The findings discussed in this report are based on the data collected from the key informants from Samaiji VDC, Kailapalamandu VDC, Mastamandau VDC, Nawadurga VDC, and Amargadhi Metropolitan. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot generalize the overall state of education of the district. The reason behind visiting only certain VDCs was due to short time period. Second, the field research was conducted primarily in Nepali which was then translated into English language. Although I tried my best to ensure the accuracy of the translation, there can be certain possibilities for nuances being lost during the translation.

### **2.4 Research Site and Sample**

The primary research for this study was carried out in Dadeldhura district of the Far West development region on August 2015. The reason for choosing this sample site

was based on the contribution of Hon. Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba in education sector of the district. Similarly, it was convenient to conduct interviews in Dadeldhura, particularly because of the people's familiarity with the contribution and work of the Dr. Deuba in the district. Likewise, RUWDUC in Dadeldhura assisted during my field visit by arranging meetings with the DOE including arrangement for my stay during my field visit.

The population of the study was key informants related to the public schools in Dadeldhura, through whom I can discuss the state of education in Dadeldhura. Snowball sampling method was adopted in order to reach the respondents and the sample size was not fixed prior to the data collection. Since the research group was not easy to select through random sampling strategies, snowball sampling strategy was chosen to select the sample site and research sample for the study. Snowball sampling strategy helps to recruit or find participants or respondents through the social networks from the informants or participants who had contributed in the study (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guset, and Namey, 2005:6). Subsequently, I proposed RUWDUC, Dadeldhura based NGO to help me reach the targeted sample for the study. The sample sites for the study was chosen as per the suggestion of DEO, Mr. Durga Datta Bista, Dadeldhura. The VDCs and schools for the visit were selected on the basis of their distance between each other and the socio-economic challenges in the VDCs that may affect education in the community. The research sample for the study included the DEO, Head Masters of schools, teachers, parents, students, NGO, sociologists, and locals.

## 3 Literature Review

### 3.1. Education Reform in Nepal: National Plans, Programs, and Policies

Nepal has taken a step in development and proliferation of the uniform national plan of universal education system (Bhatta, 2009:1). The first initiative of the National Education Planning Commission Education in Nepal (NEPC 1956) implemented during the year 1956-1961, which envisioned in universalizing free primary education by 1985 (1). This initiation of the national education plan had been further supported by different international and national initiatives such as the Karachi Plan (1960), the Jometien and Dakar (1990 and 2000), National Education System Plan (NESP) (1971), Basic Needs Fulfillment Program (1985), and Basic and Primary Education Program (1992) (Bhatta, 2009:1). Such financial and technical support from both national and international agencies have formulated remarkable progress in the history of education system in Nepal. On the other hand, such supports have at some point have influenced the interim national educational plans in the country. This section presents brief reviews of some educational reform and programs that have been authorized by the national policy and legal framework. It is important to speculate the history and state of education system at national level before scrutinizing the findings of researches on any part of the country in order to perceive the clear picture of the impact of the national plans, programs, and their implementation and effectiveness at the grass-root level. Moreover, progress in the education system in the country is depended upon the educational policy and programs (Kusago and Phuyal, 2009:12). However, the national plans and programs discussed in this report are based on the issues related to the topics of this research. Thus, the purpose of this paper is not to evaluate the impact or effectiveness of the introduced educational programs and policies in local level. Likewise, education system in Nepal has been equally affected by the political and government changes in the country. However, discussion on the effects of such political changes in educational development is beyond the scope of this paper.

#### Nepal's Education Act

The Education Act (1971) provides a basic legal structure for the comprehensive administration and management of school education in Nepal (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:4). The Education Act in 1971 initiated free primary education in public schools including their textbooks. Also, the act implemented free education provision for girls, ethnic minorities, disadvantage groups and children from families below the poverty line (4 secondary). The Education Act in Nepal have been further amended during the interval of several years. The amended acts under the Nepal Education Act 1971 are as follows: Education (First Amendment) Act: 2033 (1976), Education (Second Amendment) Act: 2036 (1979), Education (Third Amendment) Act: 2037 (1980), Certain Nepali Act Amendment Act: 2041 (1984), Judicial Administration Reform (Fourth Amendment) Act: 2045, Education (Fifth Amendment) Act: 2049, Education (Sixth Amendment) Act: 2055, Education (Seventh Amendment) Act: 2058, and Education (Eight Amendment) Ordinance: 2060 (Nepal education Act, 1).

#### **The Ninth Plan:**

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) envisioned to develop quality and skilled human resources in order to alleviate poverty of the country (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:12). The Ninth Plan's educational policies valued the agriculture as the main sector generating employment opportunities for the people of the country; therefore, main focus was to develop the technical, vocational training to generate skilled manpower in secondary and higher secondary level. The ninth plan acknowledged the disparity on the basis of gender and marginalized groups and communities and introduced free basic education opportunities for everyone (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:12). Thus, unlike the stress under universalizing primary education in the country, the policies of the Ninth Plan focused on creating educational opportunities to marginalized group on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and disability. Moreover, it committed to strengthen secondary and higher education by meeting the demands of the local market and development by supplying technically skilled manpower for the country.

#### **The Tenth Plan:**

The main objective of the Tenth Plan (2002-2006) was to improve the quality of education to generate skilled manpower (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:13). The main objectives of the Tenth Plan was to strengthen education accessibility by making it inclusive in terms of gender, and marginalized groups and communities (NPC 2003 in 13). Similar to the Ninth Plan, the Tenth Plan focused on supplying technically skilled manpower to alleviate poverty of the country. However, the Tenth Plan introduced the new educational system by decentralizing authority and leadership at local level for improving the quality of education (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:13). The decentralization approach in the education system involved the involvement of community in managing school to enhance the performance of the public schools (Bhatta, 2009:152). In contrast to the centralized education system under the government responsibility, the main objective of the decentralization was to divide the responsibility such as school management, planning, and monitoring under the supervision of Resource Centers (RCs), Regional Education Directorates (REDs), District Education Offices (DEOs) and School inspectors under the Ministry of Education (MOE) to prepare a District Education Plan (DEP) at the local level (Bhatta, 2009:163).

### **School Improvement Plan (SIP)**

The School Improvement Plan in education system was introduced to support the decentralization reform in educational policy under Basic and Primary Education Program (BPEP II) (SIP 1) in 1998/99. The SIP has become a medium to propose or plan necessary resources, programs, and educational benefits by involving different stakeholders such as head masters, school management committees (SMCs), resource persons (RCs), DEOs, including Nepal Government and the donor agencies. The main concept of the SIP program is to encourage the involvement of community in school affairs including other local stakeholders such as NGOs, INGOs, and community based organizations for school development programs and issues (CERID, 2005:39). The purpose of SIP is to analyse the proposal by the schools that aim to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the schools; either by providing ideas or solutions to the problems faced by schools and the communities. Thus, the SIP measure supports the decentralization reform in Nepal's education system by engaging the related

stakeholders at the local level in order to strengthen school management and develop better teaching and learning environment in the schools (CERID, 2005:7). Furthermore, the program provides capacity development for the related stakeholders such as DEOs, SMCs, and head-masters of the schools in order to make the plan effective and sustainable. Also, SIP funds the program organized by the schools for enhancing the quality of the schools and their programs for the communities.

### **Education for All – National Plan of Action (EFA\_NPA)**

The Education for All-National Plan of Action (2001-2015) started by the Dakar Framework for Action affirmed to provide technical support and resources necessary for educational development in the country (MOES, 2003:4). The main objective of the EFA is to ensure basic and primary quality education for all children in the country. The National Plan of Action then, designed its framework on the basis of the EFA goals to be achieved by the year 2015 by reintegrating national policies in education such gender inclusion more priority in enhancing teaching-learning conditions in schools and ensuring free and quality basic and primary education for children (MOES, 2003:5). Also, the EFA goals were emphasized by the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan in educational development and supported by other programs such as SSRP and MDG goals. EFA although mainly targeted to enhance accessibility and quality at primary level, it support improving education at secondary level, building teachers' capacity and services (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:5), ensuring basic education rights of ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups, and organizing programs and campaigns for “out-of-school” youths, adults, and disadvantaged groups and communities to improve efficiency and capacity for the development.

### **The Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP)**

Minister of Education (MOE) implemented the SESP with the support from the Asian Development Bank and Danida in 2003. The program reinforced the Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP), which was implemented during 1993-99 with the support from ADB and the Department for International Development of the UK

(DANIDA, 2009:15). SESP envisioned to improve the quality of public secondary education, enhance accessibility to school with a particular emphasis on girls and student from marginalized communities and disadvantaged groups, and strengthen the decentralized system of educational administration, planning, and management and develop human resources and institutional capacity in public school (DANIDA, 2009:8). The SESP further recommends to improve the policy framework for SSRP plan. Likewise, SESP collaborates with the national 10<sup>th</sup> plan in poverty alleviation and human development (DANIDA, 2009:16) including other programs such as EFA. Since accessibility to basic education endeavors has been immensely supported by the international and national education planners and enthusiasts (EPCD, 2007:1), basic education has been easier to access and enrolment in secondary education has increased. However, strengthening accessibility does not necessarily ensure the quality of education provided. The SESP therefore focuses on improving the quality of the secondary level education and productivity of skilled manpower for the development of the private sectors (DANIDA, 2009:9). The evaluation and assessment of the performance and outcomes from the project have further suggested the sustainable management and further plans and recommendations for national development in education sector.

### **School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP):**

The School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) is funded in the partnership of fourteen development agencies under a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) (The World Bank, 2015:1). At present, the pooling development partners are Asian Development Bank, AusAid, Denmark, EU, DFID, Norway, Finland, UNICEF and World Bank; while, the non-pooling partners are Japan, WFP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNDP, INGOs, and USAID (Upadhyay,2009:97).The Government of Nepal envisioned to achieve its SSRP objectives of enhancing Basic and Secondary education for the years 2009/10 till 2013/14. Nevertheless, the SSRP plan has been extended until 2015/2016 fiscal year in order to reflect on and monitor the performances and implementation of the program during the duration of 2009 till 2013 and evaluate its effectiveness (MOE, 2013:1). The SSRP was designed to elevate the achievements of other programs such as EFA, SESP, and others (MOE, 2009:1). The Ministry of Education had taken the

initiation of introducing school reform programs in the education sector by integrating the on-going services during the period of initiation. The SSRP Plan focused on integrating the grades (1-8) as basic education by 2012 and grades (9-12) into secondary education and harmonize coordinate between the different departments such as CTEVT, HSEB, and Universities (MOE, 2009:10). Likewise, SSRP ensures the key policy goals such as inclusion, participation, and decentralization in secondary education system. Furthermore, the SSRP plan focused mainly on different programs such as Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED), Basic and Secondary Education, Literacy and Lifelong Learning, Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT); including Teacher Professional Development, Capacity Development, Monitor and Evaluation, Finance, Aid Management and Coordination (MOE, 2009:5). The overall approach of the SSRP plan was to decentralize the governance, management, resources, and assure quality teaching and learning conditions in secondary education (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:32). Moreover, SSRP system introduced TEVT at the secondary level of schools (grade 9 and 10) to provide options for students to enter the technical field after their completion of their school (Haddad, Vongsingha, and Chaiyasook, 2008:32). The main objective of introducing technical education was to promote innovation and entrepreneurship for development.

### **Policy Provisions on enhancing education accessibility for girls:**

Despite the efforts and to eradicate gender disparities in the education sector by both national and international development agencies, gender inequalities still perpetuate in the many parts of the country. Gender inequalities still remains the target of many international or national educational programs. The UN Millennium Summit 2000 had adopted eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015; among which MDG 3 on “Gender equality and empowerment of women is noted as unlikely to be achieved as declared by the MDG report 2013 (UNDP Millennium Development Goals). Recommendations for girls’ scholarship had been amended since the 1955 as reported by Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC). Likewise, different programs since the introduction of Education Act 1971 had implemented special attention in improving enrolment of female students and teachers including

those from ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, government has made a provision regarding the recruitment of at least two teachers in schools, which is facing challenges to be implemented due to problems such as lack of female teachers (CERID, 2009:14). In terms of promoting education opportunities for girls, the High Level National Education Commission (HLNEC) in 1999 highlighted the concept of providing equal opportunities for girls in education (ERDCN, 2011:11). Likewise, the Interim Constitution 2007, Three-Year Interim Plan (2007-2010). Education Act 1971, Education Regulations (2002), EFA (2001-2015), SSRP emphasized the commitments to ensure girls' accessibility in education. With the mission to provide education for all, basic and primary education have been provided free by the nation. Likewise, special scholarship schemes have been managed by the government of Nepal (2067/68) on the basis of students' eligibility (ERDCN, 2011:14). Similarly, the international agencies and partners have been supporting the government in educational programs that serve to the education rights of girls by providing incentive schemes and scholarships.

**Table 3.1: Types of scholarships provided by Nepal government**

SN	Scholarship Scheme	Eligibility Criteria	Amount (NRs.)			
1. Basic Education						
1.1	Dalit Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All dalit students studying in grade 1-8.</li> <li>Having at least 80 % attendance</li> <li>Admitted from 2068 Baishaka.</li> <li>No multiple scholarship</li> </ul>		Mt.	Hill	Terai and Urban
			Only Stationery	Rs. 200 / student	Rs. 175 /student	Rs. 150 / student
			Only Uniform	Rs. 400 / student	Rs. 350 /student	Rs. 300 / student
			Both	Rs. 600 / student	Rs. 525 /student	Rs. 450 / student
	Girls scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SMC should select the students and any one of the scholarship schemes (stationery, uniform or both) based on the parent's financial status and should distribute in presence of the parents.</li> <li>Admitted from Baishakha, 2068</li> <li>No multiple scholarship</li> </ul>		Mt.	Hill	Terai and Urban
			Only Stationery	Rs. 200 / student	Rs. 175 /student	Rs. 150 / student
			Only Uniform	Rs. 400 / student	Rs. 350 /student	Rs. 300 / student
			Both	Rs. 600 / student	Rs. 525 /student	Rs. 450 / student
	Girls scholarship in Karnali zone	All the girls students from Karnali zone	NRs. 1000 (Rs. 100 per month for 10 months) for the students studying in grade 6-8 and 1500 (Rs. 150 per month for 10 months) for the students studying in grade 9-10.			

*Source: Educational Resource and Development Center Nepal (ERDCN, 2011:13).*

## 4 Findings and Discussion

This section is organized thematically on the basis of the themes that emerged from the data collection: interviews and focus group discussions. These selective themes are analyzed as the findings of this research. The themes that are selected for the analysis are: Challenges of Public Schools in providing quality education for children, Who goes to public schools in Dadeldhura?, Girls' participation and gender issues in Secondary education, and lessons from the establishment of the feeder hostel in Gaira.

Overall, these findings contribute to the discourse of quality education and gender inequalities. However, these findings are based upon the data collected from DEO, 8 headmasters, 4 teachers, 4 parents, 1 NGO, and 3 sociologists from different NGOs; including three focus group discussions with 12 girls from grade 11 and 12 in Ugratara U Ma Vi (Dadeldhura), 65 students from grade 10 in Janata U Ma Vi (Dadeldhura), and 3 students in Shree Gauri Shankar U Ma Vi (Doti).

### 4.1. Challenges of public school in quality enhancement

Dadeldhura is the head-quarter of Far-Western Development region in Nepal. Despite the altitude and its location, the district has road access and other development facilities. Similarly, every VDC and Metropolitan City has access to schools. There are two kinds of schools in Dadeldhura: 1) public (community) schools and 2) Institutional (private) schools similar to other parts of the country (EPCD, 2012). Similar to schooling system in other parts of the country, public schools run under the supervision of Nepal government. On contrary, private schools are operated by private partners and entities. Public schools are classified into 5-2-3-2 structure on the basis of their education levels. Primary schools starts from grade one to five, lower-secondary education consists of the duration between grades 6-8, grade 9 and 10 are considered as the secondary education, and grade 11-12 as higher secondary education (EDCD, 2012). Although this structure has been reintegrated by SSRP (MOE, 2009:4), (1-8 as basic and 9-12 as secondary), schools in Dadeldhura are still categorized on the basis of 5-2-3-2 structure. For instance, primary schools till grade 5 are called Pra Vi, schools with classes till grade 8 are called Ni Ma V, and schools with

grade 10 that include 11 and 12 are categorized as U MaV. The primary, secondary, and high schools in Dadeldhura are therefore located near to each other in order to maintain the distance between each other. For instance, when the students complete primary education till grade 5, they get admitted in the NI Ma Vi or U Ma Vi situated in the same location.

The different educational reform programs in the public schools have brought enormous changes in expansion of student enrolment in primary and secondary schools. For instance, EFA, SIP, and SSRP initiatives were some of the programs that came up while discussions with the head-masters. Also, Dadeldhura is one among three model building districts with Kapilbastu and Rasuwa, where SSRP (2008/09) was first implemented (MOE, 2009:4). Thus, the initiative to quality enhancement in public education have been the main target of such programs. However, public schools in Dadeldhura face many challenges which make it difficult to achieve such goals.

The government of Nepal is responsible for facilitating physical, financial, and human resources in public schools. However, the resources supplies of the schools depend upon their education levels. For instance, the allocated financial supplies of the secondary level schools will be greater than that of the primary level. The government provided resources, physical, financial, and human resources however have not been enough for running schools. The school have to seek alternatives to sustain. Thus, when the school management are struggling to afford the necessary equipment necessary to run their schools, it is hard to expect for quality development in the education they provide. For instance, when asked about the challenges of schools in providing quality education, the common responses of the head-masters were,

There are not adequate teachers on the basis of allocation, so we have to manage some teachers by ourselves and seek for alternatives for their salaries . . . (Head-master, Samaiji Pra. Vi.)

We need all kinds of resources; furniture, stationary; so we are not totally dependent upon the government for resources. But it is challenging and we need to find for alternative here and there ... every VDC has schools , but quality is challenging as teachers for English, Maths are not managed

and students struggle in these subjects . . . (Head-master, Shree Bhumeraj Pra Vi).

Even though government provides stationary and some scholarships, it is not enough to run the school, so we have to look for alternative funding . . . We don't have enough teachers compared to the ratio of students, so we manage by ourselves and we have to manage for paying their salary. (Head-master, Ugratara U MaV)

The decentralization of education sector administration have divided its responsibility to make education policies more effective in all parts of the country to DEO, resource centers (RCs), Regional Education Directorates (REDs), and other stakeholders in the community. Similarly, the SIP initiative has been supporting the decentralized education reform by assisting schools to make or propose necessary resources and programs. Although such mechanism has been established to make public education accessible to every child in the country, the schools faces challenges in managing with minimal resources. One analysis of such problems can be the expansion in the enrolment of the students in schools.

The government of Nepal, with the support of international education planners and humanitarian aid agencies have initiated different policies with the motive to provide education for all and create educated manpower for the development of the nation. It is the policies of the country that have influenced in expansion in school attainment, which has both good and bad sides. For instance, according to MDG 2013 data, Nepal is likely to achieve the MDG goal 2 of ensuring universal primary education and has succeed from 93.7% in 2010 to 95.3% in the year 2013 (MDG, UNDP:2015). The expansion in primary school attainment also ensures their participation in the secondary level which is supported by educational policies such as elimination of school fees, incentives for girls and disadvantaged communities, teachers' training, recruitment and redistribution of teachers with minimum qualifications, and curriculum development (EPCD, 2008). The positive side of such policies is that they create educational opportunities for children from all background. For example, according to the Flash I Report 2070 (2013-2014), the net enrolment rate in

Dadeldhura has been progress by 93.8% in primary level, 90.6% in basic level, and 80.4% in Secondary level (Dadeldhura Flash Report, 2014:13)<sup>2</sup>. However, the expansion in school attainment do not necessarily ensure the acceleration of resources and support from the government. Thus, the increase in the number of students in school will be difficult to maintain with the number of allocated teachers which results in poor quality of education.

However, enhancement in the quality of education has been focused by the schools. The programs initiated by the government and also at times started by the schools themselves have been effective in education enhancement. For instance, when asked about the measures taken by schools to enhance the quality of education, the informants responded,

Our school is providing English medium education. We are different than other school in a sense that we believe in the concept of “teachers can do”, which not only motivates teachers to work hard, but also ensures good education for the children. (Head-master, Shree Bhimiraj Pra Vi)

Students are not persistent once they receive their scholarship, so we initiated a rule that a student will only get scholarship with 75% attendance, similar rule has been applied to take books and other resources. “Parents in the school program”—initiated by the policy—help the parents know how their children are performing ... At times, we invite guest speakers to give extra knowledge for students that is not relevant to their course book... (Head-master, Ugratara)

In our school, children’s club, “Chetana Baal Club” has been very successful in initiating awareness programs in the community in which children themselves take the leadership. (Head-mistress, Saraswoti Ni Ma Vi).

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1.

We have been providing extra classes for students of grade 8 and 10 to motivate for their exams. Also, we conduct parents meetings . . . we have also facilitated hostel to manage students' time. (Head-master, Shree Bhuwaneshori U Ma Vi).

These are few examples of schools that have created a strong image in terms of quality enhancement. However, lack of teachers remain the main challenge to foster the quality for the students. Although the schools are successful in maintaining the students' number, allocated number of teachers by the government is still low compared to the ration of teacher and students. Likewise, insufficient resources is another challenge for the schools to sustain. Some schools that I visited are in need of basic infrastructure such as desks for students, supply of water, and proper toilets. When schools are facing challenges in providing these infrastructure, the policies of providing one computer lab, library and science lab per school for education enhancement is likely to consume time.

#### 4.2. Who goes to public schools in Dadeldhura?

Once a foreigner came to our school for observation. He asked, "Nepal's government schools are very poor. Why so?" But, I said, "Public schools are very strong. Your thinking is wrong." I asked him, "Have you recognized who are the students in public schools?" (bhumiraj bagh chaur)

So, who are the students in public schools? When asked similar question, the head masters and the teachers in schools replied,

Mostly children from poor families and dalits are enrolled in the school. (Head-Master, Shree Bhuwaneshowri U MaV)

Due to awareness regarding the importance of education, participation of students have changed for some years;

students from Dalit communities are increasing these days. (Head-Master, Janata U MaV)

The population of Dalits are more in this school. Mostly, Rawal, Tamrakar, Khadka . . . (Head-Master, Sambhunath Ni MaV)

Who comes to public schools are very poor. In some cases there are students who do not have a meal before coming to school . . . (Head-Master, Ugratara U MaV)

The above responses from the participants answer the question raised. The answers here suggest that public schools are facilitating education accessibility to poor and disadvantaged groups in the district. Compared to the private schools in Dadeldhura, government schools provide free education or education with nominal charges for children of all background. Likewise, scholarships for the girls and the disadvantaged groups and communities are some measures taken by the government to enhance global target of providing education access for all. Inclusion remains the main target of any educational reform programs initiated by the government of Nepal as the social or ethnic background remains an important dimension in education discourse.

In Dadeldhura, the ethnic groups are categorized as *mallo jati* and *tallo jati*. *Mallo jatis* are usually the higher class groups such as Brahmin and Chettris. While, *tallo jati* include are the dalits such as Tamrakar and Sarkhi. Besides, different actors related to schools, I interviewed some sociologists, working for different development projects in Dadeldhura. When asked about the socio-economic condition of the district, they shared similar thoughts,

When we first observe, it seems like things are better here unlike what we had heard before. But, people have not forgotten their traditional beliefs. The issues of untouchability still exists here. . . (Pandey, sociologist)

Here, discrimination and untouchability still persist. In some places they have three taps in the same place, one for *mallo jati*, one for *tallo jati*, and one for women to use during their *chau* (menstruation) . . .  
(Bhattarai, sociologist)

Thus, hierarchy in terms of caste system perpetuates as *Tallo jaat* and *Mallo jaat* in the district. Most likely, children from *mallo jati* go to the private schools which are generally termed as “boarding schools” by the locals. It is believed that private schools are better than the government schools therefore, despite the fee structure of the private schools, higher income groups send their kids to the private schools. Private schools are preferred by parents as they believe that they are inherently better than the government schools in terms of quality and thus, can have positive impact in the future of the students who participate (Bhatta, 2014:84). On the other hand, those who cannot afford the fee-payable private schools send their children to the public schools.

Dalits are regarded as the backward group in terms of their social and economic status. According to the participants’ responses, the enrolment of the Dalit students have succeeded in recent years due to the provision of the global education-for-all movement and their incentive schemes. For example, the student information as per the status report (2071) from DEO, Dadeldhura are as follow:

Student Information:

Community	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Total
Total Students	22910	12531	4985	1824	42250
Girls	12098	6698	2578	998	22372
Dalit	6624	2706	740	193	10263

*Source: Dadeldhura Flash Report 2071*

Although the participation of students from Dalit communities suggest inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the national educational target, their enrolment do not necessarily suggest their persistence in attendance. However, the provision of inclusive education has changed the lives of some students who would not have gotten this opportunity otherwise. Thus, public schools have been enhancing their accessibility to Nepali from all economic and social background and therefore, undermining the service and capability of the school (as the foreigner in the start of this section above) can be contemptuous.

#### **4.3. Girls' Participation and Gender Issues in Basic and Secondary Education.**

When asked about the enrolment of girls and boys in the schools, almost every schools that I visited have high enrolment of girls compared to the boys. According to Flash Report 2071, the girls' enrolment in Dadeldhura constitutes 51.6% at primary level, 52.26% at lower secondary level, 51.5% at basic level, 50.7% at secondary level, 51.2% at secondary (9-12), and 52.5% at higher secondary level (Dadeldhura Flash Report, 2071:17). However, the report does not illustrate the drop-out rate of girls and boys in schools. The findings here, presents gender issues in schooling.

Public schools have provided various provisions and incentive programs to enhance the accessibility to education for girls. For instance, the Welcome to School Program provides annual incentive of around Rs. 500 for girls to encourage their enrollment in schools (CERID 2006a in gender issues 15). However, the ensuring girls' enrolment in education does not necessarily enhance their accessibility to quality education. For instance, the social and culture issues influence the participation of girls at school as gender issues exist more at higher levels of schooling (lower secondary and secondary level) (CERID, 2009). When it comes to discourse on gender in schooling, both boys and girls experiences in their schools and lives are determined by the social construction of gender. However, focus on the girls' education and experiences have been given in this study as Nepalese societies are built in a hegemonic structure which perpetuates gender inequalities. And, girls generally experience discrimination as they are considered as 'temporary property; by their parents (Jenkins, 2005:10). Therefore,

the findings in the study are based upon the gender discourses in Dadeldhura experienced and shared by the participants. The participation of female head-teacher, school teacher, and students helped me get insights on gender issues in schools. Among the head-teachers interviewed, only one school was running under the leadership of female head-teacher, Bina Khadka (Saraswoti Ni Ma V).

Although most of the head-teachers shared that awareness regarding importance of education for girls has brought immense changes in the gender inequalities, when asked about gender friendliness in the schools, they shared the same problems that have been continued since decades. Lack of proper sanitation, toilet facilities, and drinking water are still counted as major problems that have direct impact on the students' irregular attendance. Therefore, the participation of girls are affected by the lack of such basic facilities in secondary and high schools.

Additionally, other issue that incorporate irregularities in girls' participation in schools is *Karya Bhoj*, household chores. For instance, the participants shared similar thoughts regarding girls' irregularities in schools:

When girls enroll in secondary level, there is higher chances of them to drop out from school due to their inconsistency in attendance. *Karya Bhoj* remains the main problem for them to miss their classes, fail in exams, and drop-out from schools. Mostly, girls have to help their mothers during their adolescence so they do not have time to complete their homework and prepare for exams. (Head-teacher, Saraswoti Ni Ma Vi)

The drop-out issue starts from grade five when physical growth starts among girls. In the poor families, the fathers mostly migrate to India as it is nearer from here. So, when the fathers are not at home, the girls have to assist their mothers in the field and look after the cattle. So there is high chances of girls to drop out of schools. (Teacher, Ganesh Man Pra Vi)

Likewise, the focus group discussions with the students gave me an opportunity to listen to their perspective about their reasons for irregular attendances,

We have to cut grass for the cows and help mother in the kitchen. So, we do not get time to go for tuitions or study for exams.

The above responses from the participants illustrate the problems that affect the participation of girls in schools. Even though girls' education is prioritized by the government and global educational planners and supporters, *Karya Bhoj*—girls' involvement in household chores—restrict them from engaging in school related activities. Thus, although education is accessible for these children, they are not able to participate equally like the boys in schools and exam, which have adverse effect in their grades and performance in exams.

Early marriage also remains the major factor that affects the education of girls. The culture of marrying at an early age of 15 or 16 still prevails among the *tallo jatis*. For instance, the head master of Shree Bhuvaneshwori U MaV shared,

Since girls' do not perform well in class, they tend to drop out early or repeat classes when they reach in higher levels. This year in SLC result, almost girls' performance was nil. Girls do not show much interest in education. They mostly engage in talking with each other. Also, the time during class 9 and 10 are regarded as time to get married, so they do not have competitive feelings in terms of education or exam.

Likewise, head teacher of Janata U MaV explained,

Still the Dalit communities remain backward in terms of awareness regarding education. If there are 30 students in grade nine this year, the next year only 15 students will graduate for grade ten. Parents send off their daughters when they are in class 8 or 9. Likewise, adolescent boys go to Delhi, Madras, Punjab as laborers. Although people now understand the importance of sending girls to school, they still do not about their daughters completing their education till SLC or above.

Nevertheless, there are examples of girls in the high schools (grade 11 and 12) who are already married. Although early marriage remains significant in the region, the culture of sending married women for education is slowly transforming the society. However, such cases generally in the families with high level of income. The culture of marrying at an early age is mostly common in the case of young men who leave their schools due to poor performance in schools to migrate for India for employment opportunities. Mostly in such cases, men marry at early age and leave their wives at home while they migrate for job opportunities. Thus, young women who are left behind engage in household work and take the responsibilities of family members.

Another recent problem observed among schools in the Dadeldhura is epidemic fainting of girls in school which affects their class participation. Madam, Bina Khadka of Saraswati Ni MaV explained,

Recently, in schools we have observed *Kaapne Rog* (Shivering disease) among girls. When one girl starts, it influences other girls in the class room too. We say it is psychological problem, but the villagers think that it is spirit of god. They say that since the girls crossed the temple of Bhairab during their menstruation on the way to school, the spirit of god has possessed their bodies. The girls have not stopped coming to school, but the classes has been disrupted.

Such incidents shared by head-teacher is common in rural schools in Nepal. For example, in his study on Epidemic of hysteria in a school of rural eastern Nepal, psychiatrist Ravi Shakya (Shayka, 2005:4) mentions such cases as mass sociogenic illness, a psychological phenomenon that outbreaks when the students cannot deal with certain stressful situations or anxiety. No female teachers in the school was found to be the reason behind the girls' stress in the eastern Nepal. Likewise, Dr. Pashupati Mahat from the Centre for Mental Health Counselling describes the condition when a girl influences faint in other peers as "a case of Psychogenic Faint" (Joshi, 2012). The condition he describes, "is like a cry of help, and a way of calling attention upon themselves, and their fears". Such conditions generally occur due to fear of exams, homework, and other stressful situations such as sexual harassment, parental dispute,

and interpersonal relationships (Mahat in Joshi, 2012). Thus, without psychological background on the topic, it was difficult for me to intervene in such situation. Therefore, no participants with such conditions were interviewed for the study. However, when asked about the other issues that may create anxiety and fear among girls in the schools, the head master mentioned certain behaviors of male teachers such as pinching girls inappropriately has been complained by the students. Since the head teacher is female, children feel comfortable in sharing such issues. Likewise, the concept of *Chau*<sup>3</sup>, (menstruation) also discriminates girls in schools. For example, as per Bina Khadka, the head-teacher, teachers do not usually go in-front of the girls as there can be cases that some of them are under their menstrual cycle and thus boys and girls sit separately in the classroom. Thus, gender issues as such does not only perpetuate gender discriminations, but also prevails psychological trauma among girls. Moreover, such issues affect the participation of girls in schools which has negative impact on their school lives. Such issues, however did not come across during the conversations with male head-teachers or students. Thus, the importance of including female teachers in the study was to discover the nuances in school discourse that perpetuates gender inequalities.

#### 4.4. Lessons from the establishment of hostel in Gaira

Apart from research in the schools in Dadeldhura, I visited Shree gauri Shankar U MaV in Gaira. The school is situated in the highway between Dadeldhura and Doti. Hence, nearby VDCs from both Dadeldhura and Doti are the catchment area of the school. The purpose of the visit to the school was to explore the state of hostel in the school. Dr. Arzu Deuba Rana had contributed in the construction of the buildings for the hostel, while RUWDUC provided technical support needed. The mission of the establishment of the hostel was to facilitate the students to enhance their attendance and participation in school. Likewise, the vision of the hostel was to provide productive

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<sup>3</sup> *Chau*: In the Doteli language, *Chau* means menstrual cycle of women. The prefix *Chau* is also used in *Chaupadi*, a traditional ritual in the Far West. In this ritual women are considered untouchable during their menstrual cycle and are separated from others. In such situation, women generally remain in sheds. During the field visit, I did not encounter any cases of *Chaupadi*. However, the DEO mentioned that the system still prevails in many villages in Dadeldhura district.

environment for students at secondary level to prepare for their exams. However, due to certain challenges, the hostel could not achieve the goals targeted.

The school hostel is located high on the bluffs above the highway opposite to the school. There are two separate buildings for the hostel, one for girls and the other for boys. Recently, the hostel was hit by the lightning and therefore, needs repairing. At present there are four teachers staying in the hostel, in which some stay with their wives and children. While, there are only three students in the hostel.

According to the hostel in-charge, students use the hostel during their exam period for 4 to 6 months. However, until now the hostel has been used as their rented room by the students. Since the hostel was not properly managed, students had to cook their own food spending hours in the kitchen, which according to him was not effective for the time management of the students. Likewise, the concept of hostel was new to the parents and thus, it was difficult to convince the parents to send their kids to stay in the hostel. Moreover, students there has responsibilities both at school and at home. Although they stayed in the hostel, they had to visit their home once or twice a week to assist their parents in household chores. Thus, the hostel was only utilized as a rented room by the students. After learning from two to three year experience, the school management has now planned to reopen the school hostel from Bhadra 2071.

From Bhadra 2071, the hostel will run as the part of school and the management committee have already organized meetings with the parents of grade 8, 9, and 10 about the importance of hostel. The hostel has already received 42 proposals from the students who want to stay in the hostel. From now onwards, the students will not be allowed to cook their own food and therefore, will have to pay nominal charges only for their food.

The hostel in-charge is also a full time teacher at the school. He has been teaching in the school for about 16 years. As per the teacher, hostel will enhance the SLC result of the school as the students will be inclined to study when they do not have household chores. Moreover, the students in hostels from other schools have performed well in exams. Thus, he believes that the schools should encourage parents to send their kids to the hostel for better achievement.

Likewise, during my visit to the hostel, I got to meet with the girls staying in the hostels who have already submitted their proposals for Bhadra. According to those girls, they enjoyed staying in hostel as they are living with friends and can assist each other in their studies. Among those, two of them were siblings. The girls also shared that the family problems at home often disturb their studies.

In conclusion, the school management in the two-three years after the establishment of the hostel have realized the challenges and hence, has planned to overcome those challenges. When asked about the recommendations for other schools thinking of implementing hostel facilities, the hostel in-charge shared that while constructing the building they never thought about maintaining the distance between the girls' and boys' hostel. Therefore, he advises the schools to create a distance between the boys' and girls' hostel to prevent from unnecessary incidents.

## 5 Conclusion

Traditionally, education has been the sector that receives an immense international investment and national budget in the country. The state of public schools in Dadeldhura determines the effectiveness of the national efforts, plans, and programs in education reform at the bottom line. The situation of the public education may or may not relate to other schools in the country. However, the struggle faced by the schools due to social and cultural values suggest the challenges for the national plans, programs, and policies to achieve national goal of education reform in the country. Likewise, the study shows the impact of schools in reconstructing or reproducing the traditional cultural values and structure. For instance, the cases from the schools suggest how gender inequalities and discriminations are perpetuated in school. More importantly, this study explores equality in education, not in terms of accessibility, but in terms of quality education and equal participation of both gender and marginalized communities.

## 6 Recommendations to Hon. Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba

The public school discourse suggest fatalistic sentiment towards education reform in the country. This report, however does not contribute recommendations or suggestions for the national efforts, plans, programs, and policies in educational reform. Nevertheless, this study acknowledges and supports the recommendations of the literature and reports reviewed for strengthening the arguments in this paper. Since this study envisions to enhance the quality of education for girls in Dadeldhura, following recommendations are proposed based on the findings discussed in this report. Honorable. Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba's privileged position and her immense support gender issues and women's right in the district shows prospect in enhancement of quality education for girls in Dadeldhura.

- Acknowledging that education reform is a slow development process, no measures can determine sudden change in the mindsets of the population. Schools are social institutions that can bring change in social practices. Thus, in the societies where traditional values and beliefs such as gender discriminations are deeply rooted, the schools should not only focus on expansion of students' enrolment, but also initiate programs and curricula reflecting on the social issues prevalent in the societies.
- Hon. Dr. Deuba's position and leadership in the government sector and private agencies can leverage support to the local youths in the district. While communicating with some young people, I realized that youths in Dadeldhura are seeking for opportunities to contribute their capacity in the betterment of

the region. Thus, investing in the leadership development of the young leaders can determine the better future of the district.

- Due to better facilities and access to road in the district, situations of schools in the Municipality are better than the schools in the remote VDCs, therefore target of the further research and educational reform programs should be given to those areas.
- Access to the internet for students can enhance their creativity and learning. However, providing internet facilities to the schools does not ensure students' access in the long-run. Thus, by partnership with the communication centers or ICT entrepreneurs, an information center can be established in the district, which will run under the leadership of the students interested in learning computers and technology. Nevertheless, proper planning should be made for the sustainability of the service provided.
- According to the study, the annual scholarships provided by the government for girls and marginalized communities have not been effective or sufficient in encouraging students to participate in schools. Thus, fellowship program for girls and marginalized communities under the name of Honorable can foster opportunities for outstanding students who wishes to continue their further studies, but commits to contribute in the development of their villages as the part of the long term fellowship.
- RUWDUC in Dadeldhura, which runs under the leadership of Honorable has contributed their support in different schools supplying necessary resources and helping in the construction of physical resources. Interviews with the headmasters and teachers in the study suggest that RUWDUC is most likely to confront more proposals for supporting programs and physical resources in the schools. However, the lessons from the hostel construction in Gaira suggest that the schools should acknowledge possible challenges that they may face before submitting their proposals.

- It was beyond the scope of this paper to explore the investment of budget in the construction and support of the hostel construction. However, if the investment could have been endowed in developing leadership programs for students or supporting the basic supplies such as construction of proper toilets, supply of water in the toilets, and supply for the basic infrastructures such as desks; the investment would have created positive impact in strengthening students' attendance and enhancing child-friendly environment.

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## 8 Appendices

### 8.1 Appendix 1: Progress in SSRP Key Indicators, DEO, Dadeldhura

**L.4.6 Progress in SSRP Key Indicators**

SN	Indicators	National in 2013-14		District Progress (2013-14) ## %
		Target ** %	Progress ** %	
<b>1</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>			
	New entrants with ECED Experience	64	56.9	58.0
	Gross Intake Rate	130	141.8	130.2
	Net Intake Rate	94	91.6	94.0
<b>2</b>	<b>Gross Enrolment Rate</b>			
	ECED/Pre-Primary	87	76.7	68.7
	Basic	132	115.7	120.8
	Secondary	66	50.4	53.6
<b>3</b>	<b>Net Enrolment Rate</b>			
	Primary	99	95.6	93.8
	Basic	85	86.3	90.6
	Secondary	27	32.2	80.4
<b>4</b>	<b>Teacher with required qualification and training</b>			
	Basic	88	93.6	91.2
	Secondary	93	66.0	69.6
<b>5</b>	<b>Student teacher ratio (Approved position)</b>			
	Basic	37	41	36
	Secondary	28	47	42
<b>6</b>	<b>Repetition Rate</b>			
	Class 1	2	17.5	20.7
	Class 5		5.3	11.7
	Class 8	4	5.1	6.1
<b>7</b>	<b>Learning Achievement</b>			
	Class 5	71	NA	47
	Class 8	56	NA	39

Source: \*\* विद्यालय क्षेत्र सुधार योजना २०१६-१७, तालिका १.१, शिक्षा मन्त्रालय  
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Source: DEO, Dadeldhura. (2014). *Dadeldhura Flash Report 2071 (2014-2015)*.  
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## 8.2 Appendix 1: Participation Information Sheet

### सहभागीताका लागि जानकारी

डडेलधुरामा शैक्षिक गुणस्तर र शिक्षामा छात्राहरूको पहुँच बढाउनु ।

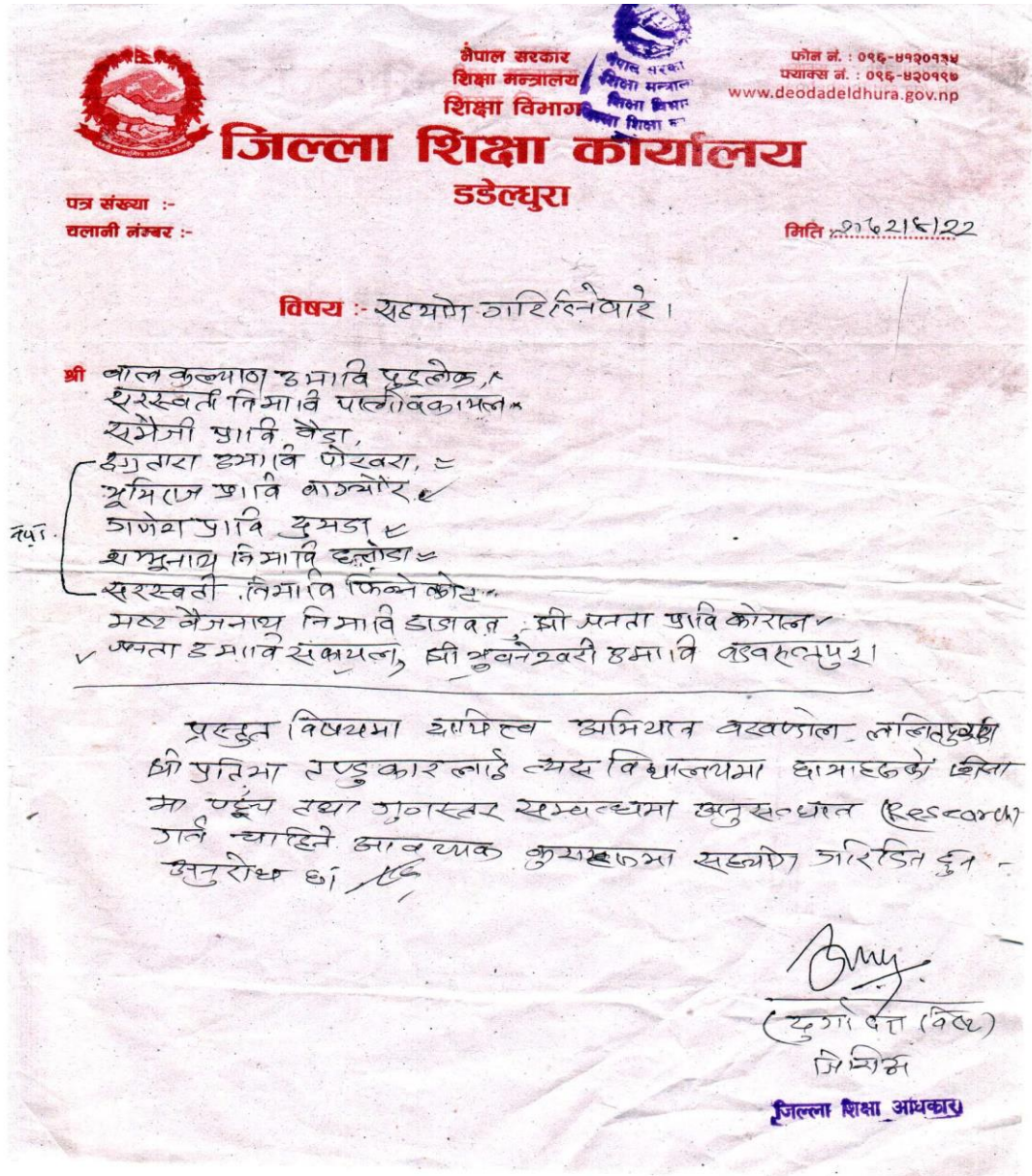
आदरणीय महानुभावहरू

तपाईंहरूको यस अनुसन्धानको विषय डडेलधुरामा शैक्षिक गुणस्तरता र शिक्षामा छात्राहरूको पहुँचमा स्वागत छ । म प्रतिभा तण्डुकार, अनामनगर, काठमाडौंवाट यस क्षेत्रमा विषय अन्तर्गत रिसर्च गर्दैछु । म दायित्व अभियान NGO मा Daayitwa summer fellowship 2015 अन्तर्गत माननीय डा.राजू राणा देउवा ज्यूसँग काम यहि विषयमा गर्दै छु । माननीय ज्यूके आधारमा म यहाँ डडेलधुरामा शैक्षिक उपलब्धि बढाउनु के सहयोग गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने बारे बुझ्न चाहन्छु । हजुरहरूको सहायताले नै यस विषयमा पुरातत्व ल्याउनेछ भन्ने आशाका साथै ग हजुरहरूलाई यस रिसर्च अन्तर्गत Interview र discussions का लागि भाग लिए आहवान गर्दछु ।

यस अर्न्तवार्ता तथा discussion मा सोदिएका प्रश्नहरूको जवाफ दिनु कठिनाई भएमा हजुरले अन्तरक्रिया विचैमा रोकन सक्नुहुनेछ । यस विषयमा तपाईंले आफ्नो परिचय यदि दिन चाहनु भएन भने पनि ठिकै हुनेछ । तपाईंका आज्ञा र जानकारी विपरित यस अन्तरक्रियाका केही Information कसैसँग बाढनु नमिल्ने भएका कारण हजुरको सहमति एकदमै जरुरी छ । यसै अन्तरक्रियालाई मेलै रेकर्ड गर्नु हजुरसँग आग्रह गर्दछु । यस रेकर्ड मेरो आफ्नो उपयोगको लागि मात्र भएको हजुरलाई जानकारी गराउँदछु । यदि केही संका र प्रश्न भएको आधारमा हजुरको आवाज रेकर्ड गरिने छैन । अन्तरक्रिया गैले यस रिसर्चको रिपोर्ट तयार गर्नका निमित्त उपयोग गर्नेछु । यसभन्दा अघि र पछि यो ज्ञाता पनि उपयोग गरिने छैन । यदि हजुरलाई यस सुचीका बारे थप जानकारी चाहिएको सम्पर्क गर्नु होला

प्रतिभा तण्डुकार,  
दायित्व समर फेलो २०१५  
दायित्व पब्लिक सर्भिस फेलोसिप  
बखुण्डोल ललितपुर  
९८४१६६९०८२, ०१५५४३९५७, ०१५५२८०५९

## 8.2 Appendix 2: Letter from the DEO, Dadeldhura



### 8.3 Questions for the interviews and focus group discussions

#### Questionnaire for Schools

1. Children from which communities are enrolled in this school? Does the distance of the school affect children's enrollment? Children of which socio-economic background are mostly enrolled in this school?
2. What are the measures adapted by school to enhance the quality of education in school?
3. What are the impact of certain programs implemented by the government or I/NGOs in increasing the enrollment of students and enhancing the quality?
4. What are the challenges that school faces in terms of its management, teachers training, parents' participation, students' enrollment, and SLC result?
5. How is the net enrollment of girls different from boys in the school? According to your experiences, is it a recent change? What can be its causes?
6. Do students drop-out from the school? Difference between boys and girls dropout rate? Why do they drop out? Actions that school take to improve the dropout rate?
7. How effective is the girls' scholarship schemes and what are its impact in increasing their participation?
8. Is the school gender friendly space? Are there enough female teachers/ proper sanitation facilities/special programs for girls?
9. Is the Chaupadi system still prevalent in this area? Does menstruation hampers students' attendance? How has the perception on such issues changed?
10. How do students perform in the SLC? What are the options after SLC?
11. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations for the education reform policies in Nepal?

### Questionnaire for Parents/ Students

1. In which school do you/your child study? Which class do you/your child study?
2. Do you/your child regularly go to school? Is there any issues that affect school going regularities? For instance: work load at home, distance of school, menstruation or other health issues, etc.
3. What are the role of teachers/ school management/parents in providing quality education in school?
4. Differences between private and community schools in your locality?
5. Change in the concept of gender issues in education (then and now)?
6. What is the impact of communication/ information exchange/ and the internet among students?
7. What are your future plans? What do people generally do after finishing their schools/ colleges?

Questionnaire for key informants (NGOs/ sociologists/ locals)

1. What is the name of the organization that you are affiliated with? How long have you been working in this district?
2. What are the socio-cultural issues that you find different in this place?
3. What are some critical issues, challenges in society that you think still prevalent in this place although there have been quite a lot of changes at present?
4. What is the state of education in this district?
5. What the socio-cultural norms that perpetuates gender disparity and inequalities?
6. Is there any programs that has been undergoing to minimize such perception?

#### 8.4 Appedix: Photos from the field



*Photo: Girls' hostel*

*Shree Gauri Shankar U MaV, Gaira*



*Photo: Boys' Hostel*

*Shree Gauri Shankar U MaV, Gaira*

