



International Day of the Girl Child, 2016



The International Day of the Girl Child (IDGC) is about celebrations: the day is about celebrating the girl child, celebrating her goals and her aspirations, her ambitions and her wants, her rights. It is about a recognition of girls rights along with a recognition that girls from around the world face unique challenges. Borne out of this realization, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/170 from which point onward October 11th is marked as the International Day of the Girl Child.



The year 2016 saw Nepal mark the International Day of the Girl Child with much zeal and commitment at a national level. In building up to the Girl Summit event that was organized in March where the National Strategy Against the Girl Child was released, the IDGC event sought to ensure that it was building on the momentum of the Girl Summit and to echo the Government of Nepal's commitment to end child marriage by 2030. CARE Nepal was a proud part of this event wherein two of its projects that focus on adolescent empowerment were engaged, the *Tipping Point Project* that works specifically to address the underlying causes of child marriage in Nepal and *Udaan* that works with out of school adolescent girls for their empowerment.

CARE has been supporting the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) in Nepal to meet its commitment of ending child marriage by the year 2030 and thereby also contributing to the Sustainable Development Goal No. 5, to achieve Gender Equality and empower all girls and women. The national level program was organized to allow the school going children from around Kathmandu to learn about child marriage as a real problem in some of the communities outside of the capital. The event saw notable dignitaries including Mr. Bishnu Prasad Lamsal, Secretary, MoWCSW; Mr. Narayan Kafle, Joint Secretary, MoWCSW; Mr. Naresh Kumar Chapagain, Director General, DoWC; Mr. Tarak Dhital, Executive Director, CCWB from the government among others. The government bodies together with the civil society organizations reaffirmed their commitment to end child marriage and contribute to a more gender equal future.



Amidst the presence of policy influencers, Kusom Pasi was given the opportunity to give the opening address at the event. Kusom spoke of the challenges her community in Kapilvastu goes through in tackling the issue of child marriage and her points were well received by those in influential positions, as well as the school going adolescents of Kathmandu who are very often unaware about the problem of child marriage in and around Nepal.



The three day event which was a fun-fair and targeted chiefly the adolescents and brought together a range of adolescents from different geographical locations to discuss the issue of child marriage. The event included documentary screenings, life skills sessions on child marriage, theatre, poem recitations, experience sharing, where CARE supported adolescents took the lead and shared how pervasive child marriage is and how they feel it can be dealt with as we advance ahead united by the common desire to put an end to child marriage.



The United Nations reports that over the last 15 years, the global community has made significant progress in improving the lives of girls during early childhood. Although more girls today are likely to enroll in primary schools, receive vaccinations and are able to consume nutritious food, when the same girls enter the second decade of their lives, there is a host of challenges they are faced with that often go unaddressed- child marriage is one such challenge. Therefore celebrations like the IDGC serve to remind the local, national, international community that girls are key actors in today's globe and that their concerns and needs must be addressed. Celebrations like the IDGC serve to remind us that girls need to be celebrated, her goals and aspirations need to be celebrated, her ambitions and wants need to be celebrated, her rights need to be celebrated.



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