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Under the Weight of Muluki

The legal fight for gender equality in Nepal involves in large part the effective implementation of legislation which already exists, to counter the retrograde legacy of the Muluki Ain.

by Bharat Upreti

The Muluki Ain, the general civil and criminal code that governs Nepali society, reflects traditional mores and in today's modern context, can be called extremely discriminatory against women. First formulated under the reign of Surendra Bickram in 1853 (1910 B.S.), it was last modified by King Mahendra in 1963.

Under Hindu law, as sanctioned by the Muluki Ain, fathers, brothers, husbands as well as male and female in-laws have traditionally exercised proprietary rights over the woman. Because there is no separate personal law for separate communities, the Muluki Ain, with a few exceptions, brings many hill communities also within its ambit. As long as women from such communities remain outside the ambit of the law, they are able to enjoy customary rights, but not when the Muluki Ain catches up with them.

The primary problem with the Muluki Ain as far as gender discrimination is concerned, is in the area of property rights, family rights and what might be called sexual rights. Legislative attempts over the last four decades have been well-intentioned, but half-hearted, attempts to weaken the legacy of the Muluki Ain.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

In Nepal, effective legislative initiatives in favour of women's rights were lacking until the enactment of the Nepal Interim Constitution 1950 (*Nepal Antarim Samiksha Bidhan 2007*). Chapter II of this historic document, which deals with directive principles of state policy, provided several provisions which sought to change the status of women from chattels to that of human beings. Among other things, it directed that no discrimination be made between men and women, and that there be equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender. The law also provided room for special legislative measures for women's protection and empowerment.

Unfortunately, the provisions of the 1950 Constitution, while achieving a first in terms of written law, were not translated into practice.

The concept of equality of the sexes envisaged in the 1950 Constitution was converted into a fundamental right under the Constitution of Nepal 1958 (*Nepal Adhirajya ko Samiksha Bidhan 2017*). This Constitution was abrogated by King Mahendra in 1960. The B.P. Koirala Government, elected under this Constitution, never had the

time or opportunity to adopt legislative measures in the field of gender equality.

The Constitution of Nepal 1962 (*Nepal ko Samiksha Bidhan 2019*) also followed the same track of legislating equality of men and women before the law. In addition, it provided the executive with blanket powers to legislate special laws for the protection and empowerment of women. This Panchayat Constitution was high-sounding and did have progressive ideals, but over three long decades the lofty constitutional provisions remained untranslated into appropriate legislative measures to empower women.

Following the successful people's movement, the Constitution of Nepal 1990 (*Nepal Adhirajya ko Samiksha Bidhan 2017*) was promulgated on November 1990. The new Constitution broke new ground in terms of women's rights to equality and fair play. To begin with, as earlier, women enjoy the fundamental right to equality as citizens and the State has been given authority to legislate special laws for the protection of the special rights of women.

In making provision for gender equality, the Constitution has legitimised 'affirmative action' by providing that the government may lay down laws which discriminate in favour of women. Thus the fettered mandate has been given for the first time to make special laws in favour of women. Recognising that the problems of discrimination arise from women's minimal participation in the political process, the Constitution has made express provision to ensure minimum representation of women in both houses of Parliament (reserving three seats in the Upper House and five percent of all party candidatures for the Lower House). The experience of the General Elections of last June showed, unfortunately, that the major parties are not prepared to make the most of this unique provision in order to improve the status of women.

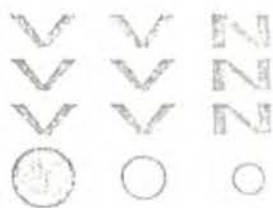
Under Article 131 of the new Constitution, all existing laws that are contrary to its provisions shall cease to exist if not repealed within one year from the date of promulgation of the Constitution. This means that all laws that conflict with the Constitution will be automatically repealed as of 22 Kartik 2048 (i.e., 8 November 1991).

There will be a very long list of such provisions, however, such as among laws which discriminate against women and in favour of men in subjects such as property rights, family

NEWS



February
1992



NEWS



February
1992

9

matters and sexual rights. This so-called automatic repeal of laws could lead to a situation of confusion and uncertainty, particularly having to do with whether a particular law or part of it is or is not contradictory to constitutional provisions. Additionally, it seems that vested interests in society will not easily accept the repeal of so many laws which serve their interests.

There are several provisions in the Muluki Ain which not only conflict with the Constitution but treat women as second-grade citizens and even as chattels. These laws may be divided broadly into three groups: laws relating to a) property rights, b) family rights, and c) sexual rights.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

The provisions of the Muluki Ain chapter on partition, inheritance and women's property deal with different modes of acquiring the right over property. Provisions under each of these chapters discriminate against women in terms of acquiring and disposing rights over property.

Right to Partition: To take the example of the right to participate in parent's property, under the Muluki Ain chapter on Partition, the son shares equal rights with his father the day he is born, whereas the daughter has to wait, unmarried, till the age of 35 to be eligible for acquiring such property. Moreover, her share of property devolves to her brothers if she gets married after receiving her share of parental property. There are several problems and impracticalities here. Brothers may prefer to partition parental property before the sister or daughter reaches the age of 35. The law is so discriminatorily rigid that even if a benevolent brother wishes to partition property in favour of his unmarried sister before she reaches 35, he has no legal means to do so. Other indirect and artificial means of ownership transfer have to be sought.

The right of married women to acquire rights to the family property [of her husband] is also problematic. A married woman cannot claim for partition so long as her husband or in-laws provide her with food and lodging. Even if it becomes impossible for a woman to live with her husband or in-laws, she cannot claim for partition until she reaches the age of 35, and 15 years of marriage have been completed.

Right to Management and Deposition: Though the existing law grants some limited

right of partition over family property, women are denied the right to manage such property. Even if ownership over property has been transferred to them by virtue of partition, women have only limited rights to dispose of such property. A man who is head of the family can dispose of the entire movable and up to half of immovable property without the consent of his wife, unmarried daughter over the age of 35, or daughters-in-law. But similar authority is not granted to a woman even if she is the senior-most and otherwise legally capable of managing family matters. A woman or unmarried daughter cannot dispose of more than half of her immovable property acquired through partition without the consent of her sons or father. Provisions made in Sections 10, 10A, 16, 19 of the Muluki Ain chapter on Partition and Section 2 of the Chapter on Women's Property provide for the discrimination cited above.

Right to Inheritance: Section 5 of the Muluki Ain chapter on Women's Property and Section 2 of the chapter on Inheritance provide for discrimination in inheritance and succession. Even unmarried daughters are not seen as fit to inherit property as long as the son or the grandson of a deceased patriarch is alive. Not only is a daughter discriminated against in inheriting her father's or ancestor's property, she cannot even inherit her own mother's self-earned property so long as her brothers and father are surviving.

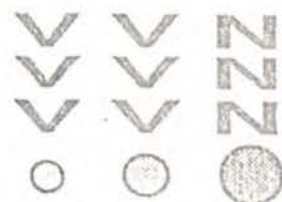
Tenancy Right: The role of rural women in cultivation, harvesting and other activities relating to agriculture is vital. However, Section 26 of the Land Reform Act 2021 (1964) completely ignores this reality and prevents the daughter or daughters-in-law from inheriting tenancy rights of her father's or father-in-law's land. The problem created by the law is especially excruciating for a family which only consists of daughters and widowed daughters-in-law of a deceased male tenant.

FAMILY RIGHTS

There are many instances of laws which discriminate against women in deciding family matters. Under the law of adoption (Section 2 of the Muluki Ain chapter on Adoption), a married man who does not have a son can adopt one, but his wife cannot do so as long as he survives. Neither can she if there is a son from her co-wife. Section 9 prohibits a married woman with a surviving husband from adopting a daughter whereas a similar restriction does not apply to men.

SEXUAL RIGHTS

Besides keeping them from enjoying equal rights in property and family matters, the Muluki Ain also regards women as sexual "vessels" for the enjoyment of men. The ownership of the wife by



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the husband is never questioned in the chapters on Husband and Wife and Adultery". If it is proved under Section 2 of the chapter on Husband and Wife that the wife has had a sexual relationship with another man, or if she elopes, her relationship with her husband is automatically terminated. The marital relations will also be terminated if she confesses before a competent court that she had had sexual relations with a man though in reality she might not have. (It is very common in the Nepali courts for women to confess under duress, to adultery they have not committed). A man will be considered by law to have remained faithful to his wife even if he has had sex with several women with the knowledge of his wife.

Section 9 of the chapter on Marriage permits a man to have a second wife under certain conditions such as if the first wife is barren, has

an incurable communicable disease, or otherwise has physical 'defects'. But a woman does not enjoy such a right against her husband (but may marry another if he dies). She cannot take a second husband even if her first husband is sterile, impotent, disabled or suffering from an incurable disease. If the wife does take a second husband under these circumstances, she is subjected to punishment with a prison term and fined under Section 2 of the chapter on Adultery.

The husband of a wife who had committed adultery can prosecute both his wife and her lover. If convicted, both the wife and her lover are subject to punishment. However, if the husband dies before or after conviction, only the lover benefits by having charges dropped or by being released. The law does not grant the same privilege to women.

THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of women's inequality is deep-rooted in the social system, and the Muluki Ain is but the means through which the Establishment has associated such inequality. Legislation is the modern means to counteract traditional discrimination, and fortunately, the Constitution of 1978 provides the basis to try and undermine the discriminatory elements in the Muluki Ain. The deeply rooted evil cannot be done away with overnight. Political awareness and legal literacy among women is important. In addition, there is a need for committed and sustained effort on the part of women and men in government, the political parties and the private sector to lead to the ultimate moment when all legal provisions, at least, will be free of discrimination. After that, the challenge will be to transfer such law into day-to-day social behaviour and interaction.

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Lady Justice: Is she unbiased? S. RAMANI



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10



HAMRA CHELIBETIHARU

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION
OF GIRL CHILDREN IN NEPAL

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Addressing the needs of the girl child could be the key to achieving a more equitable status and role for women in the long run. Of even greater urgency, however, is the need to ensure her right as a person to the full benefits of childhood.

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	In the Margins No More	1
	Numbers That Speak	8
	The Smaller Share of Food and Care?	16
	Unable to Reach School	27
	All Work and No Play	38
	Too Young to Marry	49
	The Early Prison of Prostitution	58
	Statistics at a Glance	66
	Towards Affirmative Action for Girl Children in Nepal	69
	Appendices	72



1

In the Margins No More

Increasingly, it is being recognized that girls are "uneven recipients" of progress because they have a lower status and do not enjoy the same rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood as their brothers. It appears that being young and female constitutes a double disadvantage which is accentuated by poverty. Gender¹ equality, it has been pointed out, should be a clear objective and measure of child development (UNICEF, 1990).

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child—the international community's first universal and binding policy statement on children's rights—all children, regardless of age, sex and ethnic

matched by a complicated mosaic of intersecting racial, ethnic, linguistic, regional, class and caste groupings. The spectrum of communities ranges from the very orthodox Hindu Indo-Aryan groups to the relatively gender egalitarian Tibeto-Burmans. There are differences from one group to another in the status accorded to women as judged by their, women's, health and fertility, participation in education and employment, access to resources and personal freedom, as well as the role they play within the family, community and society. The status of girls is closely linked to that of women and it is therefore a complex task to distil a "representative portrait" of the Nepali girl child.

In Nepal 82.7 per cent of the population speak languages of Indo-Aryan origin (such as Nepali, Maithili and Bhojपुरी) and 12.1 per cent speak those of Tibeto-Burman origin (such as Tamang, Newari, Rak-Kirati). Together the Indo-Aryans and Tibeto-Burmans, as classified by mother tongue, constitute 94.8 per cent of the population (Population Census, 1981). Hinduism constitutes a powerful ideological force in Nepal. About 90 per cent of the population is Hindu while 5 per cent or so is Buddhist and 2-3 per cent Muslim. The caste system exerts a powerful influence on the social organization of life in Nepal and Hindu cultural values are evident in state advocacy and the Brahminized life style of the social elite, which is emulated widely, especially by the upwardly mobile.

In this document, reference will be made to the girl child growing up in the Hindu socio-cultural environment as Hinduism exerts a pervasive influence on the private and public lives of the largest proportion of the population. In exceptional cases and within the limitations of scope and space, reference will be made to culturally distinct norms and values evident among the non-Hindu groups.

THE BIRTH OF A GIRL

Reportedly, Nepal has amongst the highest indices of son preference in the world. Sons are desired because they carry on the family name, represent an old age "insurance" and because property is transmitted through them from one generation to the next. Furthermore, they are required to conduct rituals at and after the death of the father to secure his spiritual salvation. Among orthodox Hindu groups, the birth of a boy is an occasion for rejoicing while the coming of a girl, especially a third or fourth one, is cause for disappointment or indifference.

"To be born a daughter is a misfortune" and "let it be later, but let it be a son" are common sayings in Nepali society (Ghimere, 1991). According to a disturbing proverb among the Maithili people when a girl is born the

Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmans form the majority of Nepalis

The Hindu girl as representative of Nepali girls

Sons are preferred

Culture disparages the birth of girls

earth sinks by a foot, but when a boy is born it rises up one foot to greet him. The midwife gets twice the reward if she delivers a mother of a son and at the naming ceremony five times as many things are prepared as offerings to the gods. Generally, for baby boys the rituals surrounding the birth, naming and introduction of supplementary foods are more colourful and extravagant occasions than they are in the case of girls (Acharya, 1981).

*Most parents want the first
child to be a boy*

In a study of eight different ethnic groups from diverse regions of the country, researchers found that 4 or 5 times as many adults preferred the first child to be a boy as compared to those who wanted a daughter. The differences between male and female, and literate and illiterate respondents were negligible (Acharya & Bennett, 1981).

GROWING UP WITH LESS

*Girls work more
but receive less*

Growing up in a socio-cultural environment that is organized on the principles of patriarchy has several significant implications for the girl child in Nepal. Her status, including her access to resources, is inferior to her brothers. Even though the average girl child works harder and longer hours she is valued less, has less freedom and receives less in the way of health care and food. The demands on her time for child care, domestic chores and agricultural labour, keep the young girl out of school and limit her personal, intellectual and social horizons. To a very large extent, the abject poverty in rural Nepal accounts for the neglected condition of girls. This general deprivation is compounded by gender discriminatory cultural values and practices; and scarce resources are invested preferentially in sons.

*Girls are socialized
to be wives and mothers*

Women are seen as weak and dependent on men and derive their social status (including inheritance rights, ritual status and access to property) from their fathers, husbands and sons. Marriage is considered the most important event in a Hindu woman's life and a girl grows up with a notion of temporary membership in her parents' home. In the process of her socialization there is considerable emphasis on submissiveness and obedience as feminine ideals (Dube, 1988). She learns to accept that preference is always shown to male children and also learns to accept her brothers as privileged family members (Acharya, 1981).

*Sometimes girls are
sold for profit*

The low social value (and dispensability) of the girl child is sometimes reflected in extreme form in the abhorrent trade and trafficking of girls. Girls are sold for profit into prostitution. Although only a small proportion of girls meet this fate, it is a worrying thing that the practice not only continues, but is on the increase, takes place all over the country and is treated with relative complacency.

THE CASE FOR THE GIRL CHILD

Girls and women in Nepal encounter cultural, social, legal and economic obstacles that even poor boys and men do not. Health and social indicators such as sex ratio, age at marriage, causes of death data, participation in education and employment rates, and estimates of work burden amply reflect the girl child's doubly disadvantaged situation.

A commonplace is that we should invest in girls so as to ensure the health and well being of the next generation. Girls who have a positive self-image, are well nourished and educated, it is said, make better mothers. This is true but equally it should not constitute the *raison d'être* for improving the situation of girls. The Constitution of Nepal ensures equality regardless of sex and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child declares that every child has certain inalienable rights. Care for the girl child should therefore be apprehended as an *end* in itself and not merely as a *means* to guarantee maternal health and competence.

A girl is a person first and foremost, and has the potential to grow into a capable and productive adult. Concern for the girl child must not be motivated by naive sentimentality. Her situation is a direct result of social injustice and she has neither the voice nor the status to bargain for her rights. We have to challenge systematically those beliefs and values as well as those institutions that prescribe a single destiny for all girls.

Clearly, active interventions that aim to *reduce disparities* (rather than provide preferential concessions) between girls and boys need to be undertaken in every sector of development. In this effort the focus must necessarily be on the *most deprived*. While all girl children must have equitable access to resources, it is important to identify and prioritize those categories of "at risk" girls who need special and immediate attention, *viz.* those who belong to extremely impoverished socio-economic groups, those who are severely malnourished, those with disabilities, those who are unable to participate in education and are illiterate, pregnant adolescents, adolescents who are mothers, girls who are victims of social and sexual abuse and others. In this process, *gender backward areas* (where social and cultural conditions oppress and vitiate women more than in other areas) could also be identified for planned, multi-sectoral interventions which are preventive and corrective in nature.

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS

Advocates for the girl child often observe that the older women of the household are instrumental in perpetuating discriminatory attitudes concerning women's value, abilities and proper roles. In view of this allegedly

Social indicators reflect gender imbalances

Should we invest in girls only because they will be mothers tomorrow?

Social injustice underlies the secondary status of girls

The focus must be on reducing disparities and reaching the most deprived

Do women perpetuate discrimination?

ironic fact they suggest that women should be educated so that they will stop denigrating themselves and instil a positive self-image in the minds of their daughters.

The ideology of male supremacy is powerful and difficult to resist

It is necessary to understand that girls are socialized from the very beginning to accept their situation and the ideology of male supremacy which makes them prey to a whole range of discriminatory practices. This means that not only are girls and women socially and ideologically unequipped to retaliate against (or even question) the implicit and explicit injustices to which they are subjected, but that in the absence of alternative models of role and conduct, they actually espouse and propagate the dominant social and cultural values that militate against their gender group (Grover, 1990). Moreover, the rituals, practices and the social system are imbued with "a certain givenness and appear as a part of the natural order of things" and it is within these limits that women may question their subordination, express resentment, carve out a living space and thereby "collude in their own oppression" (Dube, 1988).

Self-esteem will follow the development of "critical consciousness" and equal access to resources

For this reason, women would need powerful social, cultural and economic cues to develop a sense of self-worth and transmit this sentiment to the succeeding generation. Educating women to treat themselves and their daughters better should accompany attempts to create a "critical consciousness" in women (and men) about their situation. Additionally, efforts must be made to equalize women's access to developmental resources, and to bring women and girls into the mainstream of social and economic life. This would create the climate which is required to challenge girls' self-perception of being "less equal".

There is a need for universal sensitivity to the gender question

THE GIRL CHILD: EVERYONE'S CONCERN

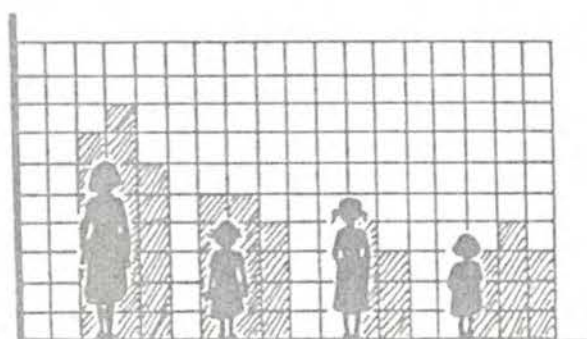
Ensuring protection, care, dignity and opportunity for the girl child must necessarily be an integral part of Nepal's child rights and human resources development agenda. It should be noted that the girl child is not the concern of only certain specialist groups or sectors. To achieve any meaningful change in her situation she has to be *everyone's concern*. At the community and State levels, we have to incorporate a gender perspective into all our explorations, analyses, programmes and our policy and legislative enunciations. All development sectors—health, education, employment—and all concerned professional communities—educators, academicians, health personnel, social planners, programme implementors—must be tuned to the special vulnerabilities and historical invisibility of girls. In order to achieve any meaningful and long lasting change the accent will have to be on integration and inter-sectoral coordination and linkages in order to address the girl child as a whole person and not as an assortment of disunited needs.

NOTE

¹ There is considerable confusion in the usage of the terms *sex* and *gender* resulting in their being used inappropriately or interchangeably. In this document, *sex* refers to the biological fact of being born male or female; thus a title such as "the distribution of the child population by sex" refers to the number of males and females in the child population. *Gender*, while based on the biological fact of sex, refers to the psychological, social and cultural interpretations of being male or female; thus a phrase such as "gender disparities in educational participation" suggests that the origins of these disparities lie not in the individual's biological make up, but in the different social treatment of the sexes.

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2

Numbers That Speak

"Of every 1000 children born in Nepal, 7 will die on their first day of life, an additional 16 by the end of the first week, another 30 by the end of the first month and another 54 by the end of the first year. Around 70,000 deaths each year. 192 a day or 8 in every hour—predominantly of causes that are either preventable or mainly manageable. Another 58 children will die between the ages of 1 and 5 leading to a total of 165 deaths for every 1000 children born in the country."

Children and Women in Nepal: A Situational Analysis, NPC/UNICEF, Kathmandu, 1991 (draft mimeo.).

By nature, girls are born stronger than boys. Given equivalent environmental factors, such as adequate nutrition and appropriate health care, significantly larger numbers of girls than boys should survive the vulnerable years of childhood. This, however, is not true for the children of Nepal. Census data clearly demonstrate that the sex ratio (number of females per 1000 males) disfavours girls at every age level and that females have a lower life expectancy. A part of the demographic imbalance may be explained in terms of under-reporting of births and deaths. However, the consistently wide numerical gap in each group and the negative secular trends suggest that large numbers of girls die. The question is "do they die of neglect?"

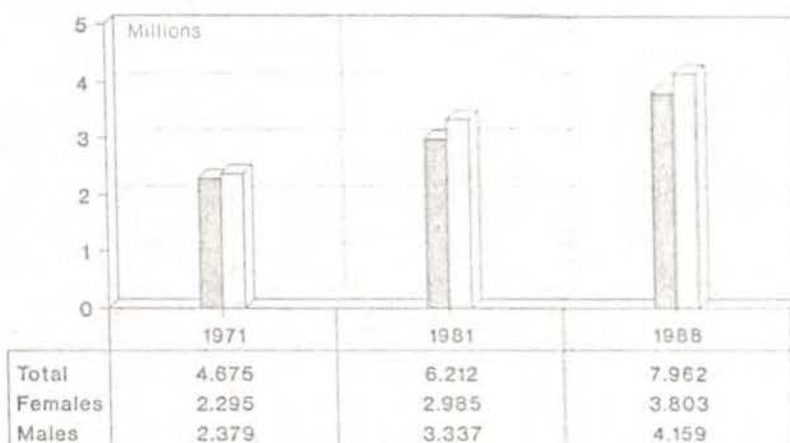
Girls are born stronger but the sex ratio is tilted against them

THE FACTS

- Children (age group 0-14 years) constitute almost 42 per cent of the total population of Nepal. In 1988, the population of girl children was estimated to be 3.8 million (about 48 per cent of the total child population).
- While their numbers have increased in absolute terms, there has been a steady decline in the proportion of girls in the child population.
- About three-fourths of the population of girl children is in the 0-9 age group; a quarter is in the 10-14 age group.
- The sex ratio (females per 1000 males) at each age level disfavours girls.

Figure 2.1

CHILD POPULATION BY SEX - 1971, 1981 & 1988*



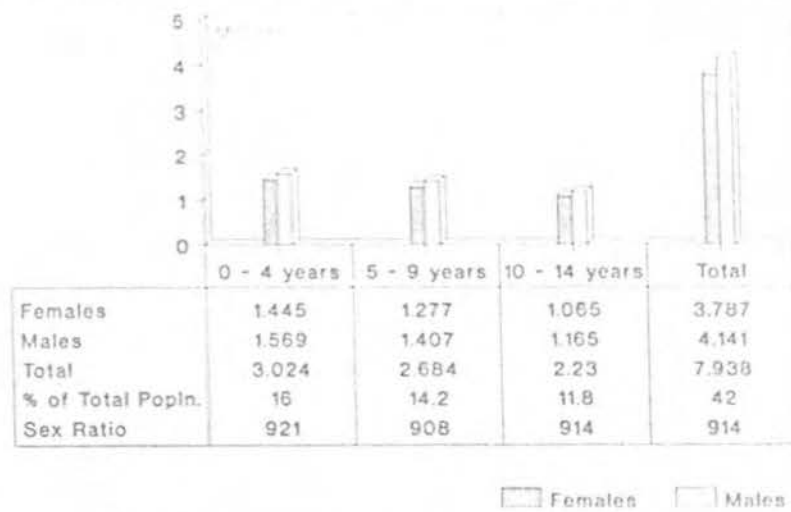
* Estimate; refers to 0-15 age group

Source: Population Census, Central Bureau of Statistics

■ Females □ Males

Figure 2.2

PROJECTED CHILD POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX, 1990



Source: CBS, 1988. Population Projection of Nepal, Medium Variant, 1980-2005.

- There has been a steep and progressive decline in the sex ratio over the last 20 years or so.
- The majority of the child population lives in rural areas; of the total girl child population of 2.98 million (1981), 2.8 million live in rural areas. The marginally higher proportion of boys in urban areas is explained by migration to towns for education and employment.
- The larger proportion of the girl child population is almost evenly divided between the hills and the Terai; a little over 8 per cent of Nepal's girls live in the mountain region.
- The crude birth rate (births per 1000 population) was estimated to be 40.7 (CBS, 1988).
- The life expectancy at birth for females is 53.52 years as compared to 54.88 years for males (1989 figures; UNICEF, 1991). The life expectancy increased by 3 per cent during 1983-89. Differential infant and child mortality rates, which are found to be higher for females than for males,

account for the lower life expectancy of females (Pradhan, 1989, p. 119).

- The infant mortality rate (IMR) declined from 186 deaths per 1000 live births in 1960 to 107 in 1990 (UNICEF, 1991). The IMR was higher in rural (115) than urban

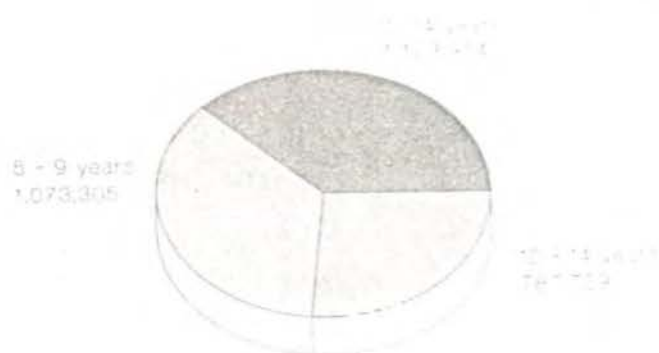
BOX 2.1

EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO SURVIVE

Article 6 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, directs State Parties to ensure, to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Figure 2.3

AGE STRUCTURE OF THE GIRL CHILD POPULATION - 1981

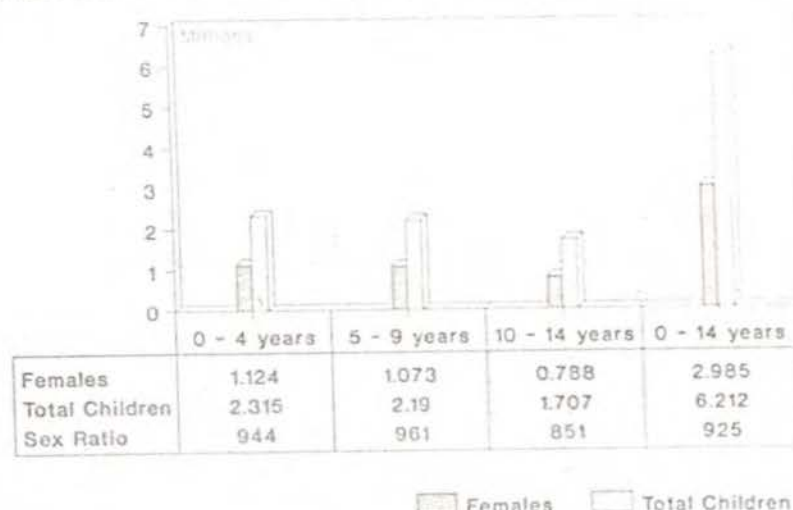


Total Girl Child Population 10 - 14 years 788

Source: National District Institute of Health
National Research Associates, Kathmandu, 1987

Figure 2.4

PROPORTION OF GIRLS IN CHILD POPULATION AT 3 AGE LEVELS



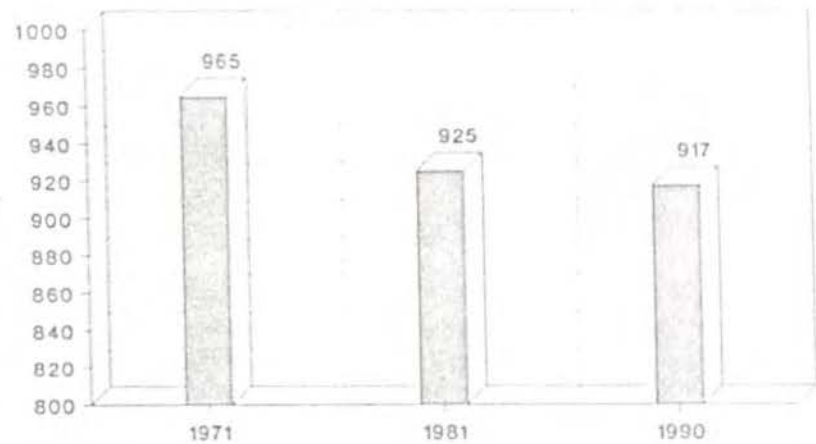
Source: Nepali Research Associates, Kathmandu, 1987

(78-80) areas. In the period 1971-81, the female IMR was estimated to be 150.38 and the male IMR to be 144.5 (Singh, 1989).

The risk of dying in the perinatal period is 1 in 10. According to current estimates as many as 49 per cent of all infant deaths may occur in the

Figure 2.5

DECLINING SEX RATIO IN THE CHILD POPULATION



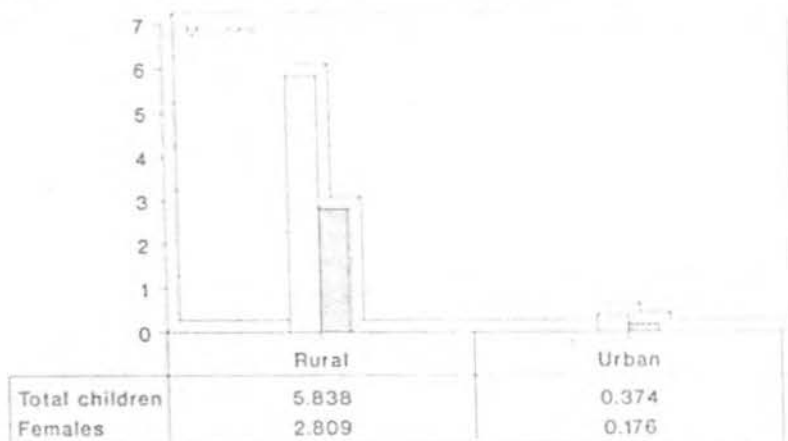
Note: 1990: Projected figure

Sources: Nepal Research Approach, 1987 & CFS, 1986

□ Females

Figure 2.6

GIRL CHILD POPULATION BY RESIDENCE, 1981



□ Total children □ Females

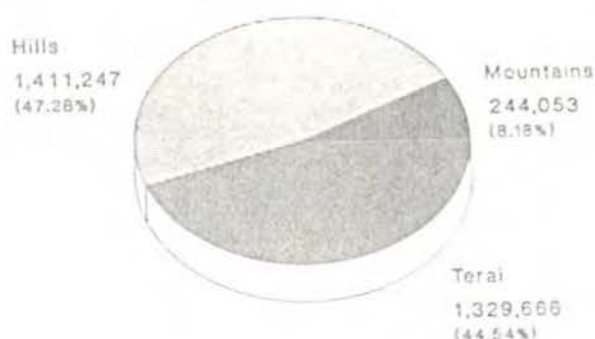
Source: Population Census, 1981

neonatal period. In the first four weeks more boys die than girls but later the trends are reversed (UNICEF, 1991).

- The under-five child mortality rate (U5MR) declined from 297 per 1000 in 1960 to 165 in 1989 (UNICEF, 1991). In 1975 the U5MR for females

Figure 2.7

GIRL CHILD POPULATION BY REGION, 1981



Source: Population Census, 1981

was estimated to be 133 while that for males was 108 (Singh, 1989).

- According to available, adjusted age specific death data there is no consistent pattern of sex differentials.
- There is some evidence which suggests that there are more deaths among second, fifth and sixth born girls as compared to boys of the same birth order. For every two, fifth born boys who died there were three, fifth born girls who died (Gubhaju, 1984).

WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY

The 1981 census returned a numerical excess of 0.24 million boys over girls in the 0-14 years age group. According to population projections this number was 0.35 million in 1990 and will climb to 0.4 million by the year 2000 (CBS, 1986). The figures demonstrate that the proportion of girls in the population is declining rapidly and this is cause for worry.

Normally, more boys than girls are born (between 103 and 105 boys to every 100 girls; in Nepal the figure varies between 103 and 108; Tuladhar, 1989). In time, because of more infant male deaths their numbers even out. In developed countries, the proportion of females in the population is higher than males because more females survive and have a higher life expectancy. [Even in regions of developing countries, where the status of women is high, population statistics favour females. A case in point is the sex

There are many more boys than girls

The sex ratio declines with increasing age and has been deteriorating in the last two decades

NUMBERS THAT SPEAK

TABLE 2.1

ADJUSTED AGE-SPECIFIC DEATH RATES BY SEX
1974-75, 1976 & 1977-78

Age Group	Males			Females		
	1974-75	1976	1977-78	1974-75	1976	1977-78
<1	141.2	128.4	109.9	123.0	137.9	97.9
1-4	33.2	32.6	23.4	35.9	37.2	22.1
5-14	4.8	5.2	4.7	5.6	6.1	5.2

Source: Demand Creation and Crystallization for Family Planning by B. Chapagain & R.L. Shrestha. In *South Asia Study on Population Policies and Programmes - NEPAL*, UNFPA, 1989, p. 163.

ratio of 1032 females to 1000 males in Kerala, India.] In the situation where there is an excess of female deaths, the sex ratio, begins to tilt in favour of males. This is how it is in Nepal. The two worrying trends are that in childhood the sex ratio continues to decline with increasing age and that for the child population as a whole the sex ratio has been plummeting in the last 20 years and will continue to do so

*The deteriorating sex ratio
reflects the inferior
position of girls*

The sex ratio at each age level indicates that there are more boys than girls. It has been observed that these trends, which are consistently true for the three geographical regions, reflect "the greater demand for sons over daughters, less access to health care for girls and neglect of girl children due to the inferior position of women to men" (Pradhan, 1989, p. 105). The deteriorating sex ratio shows that the health of females has been deteriorating correspondingly. Additionally, it indicates improvements in the health sector, the improvement in the health of males over females, the neglect of female children by intervention programmes and unequal access to available health services (Pradhan, 1989, p. 120).

*Are female births and deaths
adequately registered?*

A perplexing contradiction emerges from vital statistics data in Nepal. Sex disaggregated death rates show that there are more male deaths. This would suggest one of three things, that there are fewer female births to begin with, that female births are not registered, or that more girls die but their deaths go unreported. The last two contentions are more likely to be borne out with appropriate data. Clearly, there is a significant need to collect and examine sex disaggregated births, deaths and causes of death data; existing gender neutral information does not supply a satisfactory explanation for this demographic paradox.

*Deprivation in girlhood
could explain the very
high MMR*

The maternal mortality rate (MMR) is a sensitive index of the status of women and girls and their access to health care. The high MMR in Nepal (officially, 850 per 100,000 live births; however, figures as varied as 460/100,000 and 1100/100,000 have been reported; UNICEF, 1991; the World Bank MMR estimate was as high as 1500-2000: 100,000 in 1989) demon-

strates, among other things, that women have a poor health status—the beginnings of which may be traced to deprivation in girlhood.

In accordance with the national population policy, a fifteen year (1985–2000) population target has been set. During this period attempts will be made to reduce the IMR from 107 to 45, the U5MR to 70 and increase life expectancy at birth from 51 to 65. This will be achieved through *inter alia* population control programmes, universal immunization, reduction of maternal mortality and anaemia control (UNICEF, 1991). While these efforts will naturally have some positive impact on the survival and health of girls, equitable impact on the lives of boys and girls will have to be ensured. This might even call for some “positive discrimination” in goal articulation, strategy development, service delivery, surveillance and reporting until at least such time as distorted demographic patterns are righted.

*A population policy to
alleviate distressing
demographic trends*

NOTE

¹ For detailed tables see Appendix I.

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3

The Smaller Share of Food and Care ?

Gender specific data on the health and nutritional status of children in Nepal are unavailable. This in itself is a telling comment on the neglected gender dimension in child health (UNICEF, 1990a). Food consumption patterns, especially for children are not known but it has been estimated that 36% of the Nepali population consumes less than minimum recommended levels (UNICEF, 1991a). Data from other South Asian countries demonstrate that while poverty is at the root of malnutrition, social customs and traditions conspire to reduce girls' access to whatever limited food and health resources are available (UNICEF, 1990b). It can be surmised

that such a situation obtains in several parts of this country, especially in the "gender backward" districts.

For girls, as for others, undernourishment is both the cause and the effect of a depleted physical constitution as it makes the individual vulnerable to infection and disease and retards recovery. In turn poor physical health leads to further malnourishment, and so the cycle continues. Undernourished girls grow into underweight, short-statured, anaemic women, who are sickly and whose productivity is undermined. When they begin to bear children they are heir to a variety of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. They produce low birth weight babies with low chances of survival. The very high maternal mortality rate (see p. 14) is clearly indicative of the impoverished health status of Nepali girls and women. Furthermore, the low sex ratio at every age level demonstrates that girls probably suffer from environmental disadvantages—such as low access to food and less health care that far exceed and negate their biological headstart.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS IN OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

According to recent analyses, gender discrimination in health care and feeding practices are prevalent in Asian, African and Middle Eastern countries (UNICEF, 1990b). It appears that high female mortality in early childhood is concentrated in countries which accord a high preference to sons and low status to girls and women. Perhaps observations in such countries could provide clues to the situation in Nepal, which is said to have among the highest indices of son preference (Luhan & Thapa, 1989), and also suggest directions for information gathering and programme actions.

Some general findings in other countries indicate that:

- more boys than girls are immunized and treated by hospitals, and girls, when brought to hospital, arrive in a worse condition;
- girls have a higher rate of death from measles, diarrhoea and respiratory infections;
- compared to boys, girls receive less adequate and less appropriate health care;
- boys are breast fed longer, girls are weaned earlier;
- sons are shown preference in distribution of more nutritious foods;
- most mothers consider their own nutritional needs secondary to those of male members of the family and they pass on the same "self-abnegating" attitude to their daughters; and,

*Gender specific
data on children's health
status are unavailable*

*Undernourishment in
childhood initiates a
vicious cycle of disease and
malnourishment*

*High son preference societies
neglect the health and
nutrition of girls*

- adolescent pregnancies and early child bearing are common and result in escalated rates of morbidity and mortality among young women and girls. (UNICEF, 1990a & 1990b).

THE SITUATION IN NEPAL

The health infrastructure cannot keep pace with population growth

The grim reality is that, "Nepal suffers from some of the worst health conditions in Asia, with the brunt of mortality and morbidity falling on young children and their mothers" (USAID, 1990). The population growth rate far exceeds the agricultural production growth rate as well as the national capacity for health manpower development. The health infrastructure is neither large enough nor equipped to manage the health needs of the population; the access to and utilization of available health resources are correspondingly low. There are a total of 863 doctors in Nepal of whom 60 per cent work in the Kathmandu valley; this leaves an average of 1 doctor per 52,356 population in the rest of the country. The per capita health budget is less than half the average figure of other low income countries US\$ 1.85 as against US\$ 4.00 (UNICEF (1990b)).

THE HEALTH AND NUTRITION OF GIRLS AND BOYS EARLY CHILDHOOD (0-5 YEARS)

- The main causes of death in the perinatal and neonatal periods are congenital abnormalities, prematurity, birth injuries, neonatal tetanus and low birth weight;
- In early childhood girls and boys are susceptible to a wide range of hazards as a result of food shortages, weaning or frank disease;
- The interaction of diarrhoea and malnutrition cause serious growth faltering. A third of all under-5 deaths (about 43,000) are due to diarrhoeal diseases which persist because of poor personal and environmental hygiene, low access to safe drinking water and low latrine use;
- The Ministry of Health estimates that 30,000-45,000 children (0-1 and 2-5) die every year as a result of acute respiratory infections alone or combined with diarrhoeal diseases;
- Helminthic infestation (estimated between 86 and 91 per cent) is considered to cause as much as 20 per cent or more loss of calories consumed;
- 1.7 million children under-5 (total under-5 population in 1990 was 2.9 million) suffer from protein-energy malnutrition (that is 3 out of every 5 children).

The 1975 Nepal Nutrition Status Survey (to date the only compre-

hensive study in the area) found that 65 per cent of children 6 months to 6 years of age were mildly or moderately malnourished and an additional 5 per cent were severely affected according to the weight-for-age criterion. Based on height-for-age data, the survey showed that 48 per cent of children 6 months to 6 years were stunted, nearly 3 per cent wasted and another 4 per cent suffered both from wasting and stunting (UNICEF, 1991a).

The Surkhet Anaemia Survey (1981) found that 32.7 per cent of 0-4 year olds were suffering from anaemia (UNICEF, 1990a).

According to studies 1.4-2.3 per cent children manifest Bitot's spots (UNICEF, 1991a).

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD (6-12 YEARS)

Research shows that the nutritional status of young children in Nepal has not improved in the last 15 years, and more alarmingly, in many cases has become worse (UNICEF, 1991a). Bacterial meningitis, tuberculosis and malaria constitute major health problems in the middle childhood years. The combination of repeated respiratory and ear infections often result in deafness. (As part of their domestic chores girls begin to cook from a very young age; the likelihood of their developing repeated or chronic respiratory conditions due to this daily activity in smoke-filled and confined environments cannot be ruled out.) In urban areas older children are exposed to unprotected working conditions and increased mortality from road traffic accidents especially for those exposed newly to a "road culture".

The results of a survey of school-age children (conducted in 1984; N=312) showed that 12.82 per cent had signs of anaemia, 11.21 per cent had signs of Vitamin B deficiencies, a high proportion had dental problems and Vitamin A deficiency was noted in 3.52 per cent of the children (UNICEF, 1991). Of course the small sample size does not allow for generalization across the whole population of middle age group children.

SOME INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO GIRLS AND WOMEN

Breastfeeding is practised universally in Nepal. Traditionally a girl's weaning ceremony is held at five months and a boy's at six months of age, and they are introduced to semi-solids for the first time. The ceremony, however, does not mark the termination of breast feeding or the switch to or continuation of solid foods. Empirical evidence would be required to confirm the claim that the earlier weaning ceremony amounts to gender discrimination (as suggested in RIDA, 1991). Studies have shown that 95-100 per cent babies are breastfed upto the age of 12 months (e.g. Shreshtha & Pak, 1989 and Asrang, 1987, quoted in UNICEF, 1991b) and that prolonged breast-feeding

Inadequate dietary supplementation in infancy is a problem

*Under-age pregnancies
often lead to various health
complications*

without adequate supplementation is a problem. This is borne out by the high rates of malnutrition in children aged 6-12 and 13-24 months.

About 60.2 per cent of girls between 15-19 years are married (UNICEF, 1990a). In general menarche occurs between the ages of 13 to 16. Girls who become pregnant within two years of menarche have a higher incidence of perinatal complications since their bodies are physiologically and anatomically immature for child bearing. Young child bearers have higher rates of miscarriage, abortion and infant deaths. There is a negative correlation between maternal age and the infant mortality rate as illustrated in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1

MATERNAL AGE AND IMR

Maternal Age	IMR
Less than 20 years	183
20-29 years	138
30+	123

Source: *Children and Women in Nepal—A Situational Analysis*, UNICEF, 1991 (draft mimeo.).

Pregnancy related health problems most likely outnumber such problems as skin diseases, intestinal parasites, diarrhoea and respiratory infections in terms of severity and frequency. The T12 immunisation rate among women 15-44 is 32 per cent. Women hardly avail of health services as health posts are often located at a considerable distance from habitations and may be inappropriately staffed (lacking women staff).

Nutritional anaemia, which is common among adolescent girls and women, constitutes a major nutritional public health problem. Many pregnancy related problems become chronic and therefore put stress on the country's human resources in terms of social costs and loss of productivity. Maternal morbidity and disability are estimated to be at a rate 3 to 4 times higher than maternal mortality (World Bank, 1989, quoted in UNICEF 1991a).

HEALTH SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Health functionaries

HMG has developed several cadres of health personnel to reach services to women and girls through community based health programme approaches. These cadres include Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), Village Health Workers (VHWs), Community Health Leaders (CHLs), Maternal and Child Health Workers (MCHWs), Community Health Volunteers (CHVs who are female) and Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).

There are 675 Ilaka Health Posts in the country but in almost half of them there are no ANMs who are the most important and appropriately qualified personnel for implementing MCH activities. However, 75 per cent of the health posts do provide some amount of MCH services. An attempt is being made to train up and appoint local MCH workers where there are no ANMs. TBAs are being trained in aseptic delivery methods and it is observed to be having a positive impact on mortality.

Health posts and MCH activities

SPECIAL SERVICES AND INTERVENTIONS: HEALTH

- The Ministry of Health's Public Health Division oversees the integrated public health services through Regional Health Directorates in each of the five development regions and District Public Health offices in 75 districts;
- The Expanded Immunisation Project (EIP) became fully functional in 75 districts in 1988 and by 1990 it was almost fully integrated with the regular health activities. Recent reports of coverage show that the 1990 immunisation targets have been met with BCG 100 per cent, DPT3 85 per cent OPV3 84 per cent and Measles 71 per cent (UNICEF, 1991a);
- The National Programme on the Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases (CDD) has been implemented by HMG since 1982. The programme has focused on training and public education;
- The Ministry of Health has begun to train women Community Health Volunteers in early detection, diagnosis and case management of Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI).

Evaluations of governmental health interventions show that their effectiveness is constrained by *inter alia* inadequate personnel, insufficient training resources, weak links among various services and the unchanged situation in the country with regard to personal and environmental hygiene. The need to provide recognition to health workers in programmes such as EIP and to train greater numbers of frontline workers to deal with ARI and diarrhoea has been emphasized.

SPECIAL SERVICES AND INTERVENTIONS: NUTRITION

The National Nutrition Policy Coordination Committee (NNPCC) was constituted in 1977

EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO HEALTH AND NUTRITION

BOX 3.1

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child enjoins State Parties to recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. State Parties are directed to take appropriate measures to reduce infant and child mortality, to provide health care services, to combat disease and malnutrition, to supply health care information to all segments of the community and to develop preventive health care.

Article 24 also expects all cosignatories to the Convention to "take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children"; this section is especially pertinent to the girl child.

and, in accordance with HMG's policy to address and resolve the underlying causes of malnutrition, proposed a multi-sectoral approach to nutrition interventions with coordinated inputs from the health, agriculture, education and women's development sectors. The need to establish a National Nutritional Surveillance system has also been suggested recently.

Some important programmes are as follows.

- In order to reduce inter-regional food imbalances The Nepal Food Corporation(NFC) purchases food from surplus areas and sells it at subsidized prices to the poor.
- The Nutrition Section of the Ministry of Health started the implementation of its programme in 1987/88. Nutrition related activities, including growth monitoring, deworming, anaemia control, CDD, Vitamin A supplementation and nutrition education, are carried out by VIWs in 42 districts.
- The Nutrition Section also focuses on family food production and consumption in the agricultural sector, incorporation of health and nutrition in formal and non-formal education and intends to increase the level of income, knowledge and skills of rural women as well as their health and nutrition status through community development activities.
- The Salt Trading Corporation markets iodised salt in Nepal and costs are subsidised by HMG.
- The Goitre and Cretinism Eradication Project aims to provide iodized oil injections to all under-5s and to all women of child bearing age in remote mountainous districts.
- Food-for-Work projects supported by the World Food Programme (WFP) distribute 2000 metric tonnes of food as wages per annum (compared to 34,000 mt/year by the NFC).
- WFP's Nutritious Food Programme distributes food to women and malnourished children through community distribution.
- A number of international NGOs, such as SCF (UK), UMN and Redd Barna, have a strong nutrition component (including growth monitoring, nutrition education, micro-nutrient supplementation) in their programmes.

The impact of nutrition interventions has been modest on account of low coverage, weak monitoring and surveillance activities and also because of leakage and wastage of food in food distribution programmes. The collective impact of the programmes implemented by international NGOs is difficult to gauge because of their multiple foci and approaches.

THE HEALTH AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF GIRLS: A DISCUSSION

Except for those available in a very small number of micro-level studies, gender specific data on the health and nutritional status of children in Nepal do not exist. There have been no national level nutrition surveys since 1975 (when the last National Nutrition Survey was conducted) but available information suggests that as a group women and children suffer poor health. It can be assumed safely that girls suffer morbidity and mortality patterns that are at least similar to those of their male peers, although demographic indicators suggest that they are in fact worse off.

There are no systematic data on dietary consumption patterns, access to food within the household, or access and utilization of available health services. In view of observations in other high son preference societies, it is unlikely that there is no gender based discrimination in intra-household food distribution patterns. Anecdotal evidence does seem to confirm this assumption (see Box 3.2). Even if girls eat "as much" as their brothers it is pertinent to ask whether they eat "enough" given their heavy workload and the attendant energy expenditure.

The staggering rate of maternal mortality in Nepal (see p. 14), along with the high rate of low birth weight deliveries (29%) and high maternal morbidity rates (3-4 times higher than the MMR), are eloquent indicators of the poor pre-pregnancy health status of girls. High maternal mortality while reflecting the low availability of appropriate health services, is positively related to anaemia, non-achievement of maternal height and weight potential, and repeated pregnancies that are too early, too close and too many. Maternal death is the tragic end of the road for girls whose health and nutrition deficiencies have accumulated to fatal proportions.

During adolescence all girls undergo

BOX 3.2

INTRA-HOUSEHOLD FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The usual pattern of intra-family food distribution is illustrated from the district of Palpa in a report on food and nutrition (Redd Barna Community Development Project).

"One or more family members (usually the cook-mother or daughter or daughter-in-law of the household) serve food onto plates for the rest of the family at mealtimes, waiting until they have finished before they themselves eat their portion or what is left. Awareness and consideration of the food needs of the servers varies from household to household, such, that mother and daughter may well lose out from this arrangement in the hungry season.

"This intra-family distribution seemed to accord best with what we know of requirements, in poor, small nuclear families. Here not only food, but field work, water collection and even cooking and serving was most equally shared between mother and father who also shared child care and feeding so that both could do their specific agricultural tasks. The bigger the family, and the greater the number of daughters, the more stratified the eating hierarchy among older children and adults, the greater the difference between male and female consumption, both in total amount and in content (e.g. men eat more, and more meat), and the fewer males involved in child care and feeding.

"No particular attention is paid to women's diet during pregnancy: she is not given any special encouragement to eat more than usual. She will watch the rest of the family eat into what should be her share when they are hungry."

- Quoted in *Children and Women in Nepal—A Situational Analysis 1991*, UNICEF, 1991 (draft mimeo.).

*Adolescence presents an
opportunity for
'catch up' growth*

a growth spurt. Scientific studies have shown that girls who are stunted and malnourished throughout childhood, if fed adequately during this growth spurt can experience "catch-up" growth, achieving an adult size almost as great or even as great as children who were better nourished throughout their childhood (Rohde, undated). Health and nutrition interventions aimed at adolescent girls—who are probably the most crucial segment of the population from the point of view of the "quality" of the future generation (Gopalan, 1984)—then become critical. This is not to suggest that adolescent girls must be addressed only because they are "tomorrow's mothers". Rather it makes good all round developmental sense to target this age group as adolescence provides an exceptional "second" opportunity to make good deprivations suffered in childhood. It should be noted that isolated, mono-focal interventions (such as distribution of iron-folic acid tablets) will have limited, if any, impact. Comprehensive approaches which include education, training and strong health and nutrition service components would be required.

*The health
establishment must
take note of the
flesh trade*

The flesh trade undermines grossly the health of girls and young women and should constitute a specific area of concern. Thousands of Nepali girls are sold into prostitution in Indian cities where they are exposed to sexually transmitted diseases and possibly AIDS (see later section "The Early Prison of Prostitution"). While a beginning has been made the trafficking in girls and the health of returning girls and women has not as yet received the serious attention of policy makers and the health establishment. Adequate measures need to be taken in order to pre-empt the importation and spread of the diseases and to protect the health of girls and women.

*There are no health/nutrition
programmes specifically
for girls yet*

At present there are no health/nutrition programmes that are directly beamed at girls, except perhaps for health and nutrition education that is imparted to out-of-school girls in non-formal (*cheli beti*) education classes in six districts of the country. This state of affairs is likely to continue as long as there is no gender disaggregated information on *inter alia* dietary consumption patterns, cultural factors that inhibit access to food, knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding the management of illness, and access to and faith in modern health services.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve girls' health and nutritional status it must first be acknowledged that environmental factors make them more susceptible to present and future malnutrition and disease. In seeking to eliminate health and nutritional inequalities between the sexes governmental and non-governmental organizations and international agencies will have to address both cultural and economic factors.

1. An essential prerequisite and on-going activity for health/nutrition advocacy, planning, programming, and budgetary allocations is *systematic quantitative and qualitative information gathering* in order to identify the causes that underlie the enormous gender disparities in demographic indicators. However, the acknowledgement and redressal of gender inequalities in access to health and nutrition care need not be postponed until adequate information on the subject is available. Findings in other countries where similar socio-economic conditions exist and the differentials in demographic indicators in Nepal allow for an educated guess that the health situation of girls here requires special attention in order to prevent it from deteriorating further given the pressures of food, population and poverty.
2. Affirmative action should be undertaken to provide equal health and nutrition coverage and benefits for boys and girls and this can be achieved by setting up *gender specific health and nutrition goals and objectives* within the larger framework.
3. All *health and nutrition-related reporting, surveillance and monitoring methods* should treat girls and boys as two separate groups in order to yield information on gender imbalances. Disparities among children in different socio-economic and cultural groups should also be noted.
4. *Values, norms, customs and rites* that in any way undermine the girl's physical, mental or emotional health should be removed systematically through appropriate political and advocacy actions. All those involved in family and child care should be sensitized to ensure that the girl receives her fair share of food, health care and other resources essential for her growth.
5. *Health and nutrition education programmes* should be specially designed or expanded to include girls to enable them to understand their own needs and how these can be met. School based health and nutrition teaching should also be sensitive to the gender dimension. The possibility of harnessing adolescent power in educating the community about health and nutrition should also be explored.
6. The development of community based child care, fuel, water and sanitation services should be encouraged to *reduce the girl child's work load*. Likewise the transfer of appropriate technology to poor communities which enable girls to save energy and labour and release them for education and their own personal development should be undertaken.
7. Every effort must be made to *delay marriage and child bearing*. This will involve a multi-sectoral approach including girls' retention in schools, the enactment of appropriate legislation, effective health and family welfare education and services, awareness campaigns and advocacy at all levels.
8. At present those *girls who get pregnant before the age of 18* are classified as "high risk" if and when identified. The effort should be broadened to include all

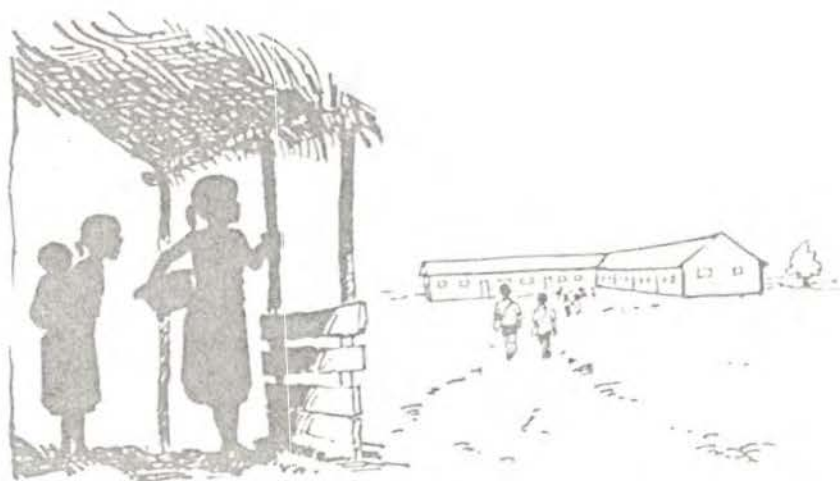
cases of under-18 pregnancies and special efforts to provide ante- and post-natal services to them must be made.

9. Girls in the 5-15 years age group should also be covered by *appropriately modified MCH services*.

10. While a beginning has been made, it is time that *the threat of AIDS was recognized seriously*. Facilities to test and rehabilitate potential victims and to educate the community about the causes, consequences and protection against the disease must be set up.

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4

Unable to Reach School

Very often the macro-level correlates of female literacy are cited in support of proposals to increase girls' participation in education. These correlates include lower fertility rates, lower infant and child mortality rates, lower population growth rates, higher age at marriage, higher life expectancy and greater participation by women in modern sectors of the economy. While the alleviation of vexing demographic trends is a worthy preoccupation, the significance of education for girls' *own* intellectual, personal and social development cannot, and must not, be overlooked, especially in the prevailing context of the global commitment to

*A variety of resources
will have to be
mobilized to achieve
educational goals*

children's rights and the concern to close gender gaps.

In Nepal, the female literacy rate is 18 per cent and almost 2 out of every 3 girls do not attend school because of a mix of economic and cultural factors. Among those girls who do enrol in primary school there are high rates of wastage and stagnation. Primary level education has been declared as one of the basic needs of the people and IMG proposes to provide universal primary education by the year 2000. In order to achieve this goal, IMG will have to mobilize a variety of resources and activate a number of special, sectorally-coordinated measures to attract, enrol and retain girls in school and to make it possible for their families to "release" them for education. Furthermore, schools and teachers will have to play an active, interventionist role with regard to reducing gender imbalances in order to truly achieve education for all and education for equality.

*There has been rapid
growth in the
education sector*

SCHOOL EDUCATION IN NEPAL: THE CURRENT SITUATION

In the last four decades, there has been rapid growth in the education sector. From 321 in 1951 the number of primary schools has increased to 15,834 in 1990. There has been a corresponding increase in the number of pupils—8,508 in 1950 to 2.5 million in 1990. The gross enrolment figure reached 86.3 per cent of 6-10 year old children in 1988 from less than 2 per cent in 1951. The number of teachers grew from 640 in 1951 to almost 64,000 in 1989.

Primary education in Nepal is a five year course for 6-10 year old children. In 1971, the National Education System Plan introduced a comprehensive plan of national education in order to systematize and accelerate educational development in the country. Curricular reform was initiated, along with a proposal for the gradual elimination of tuition fees and textbook charges. The *free primary education* and the *free textbook policy* of IMG, which were introduced in 1975 have resulted in an impressive expansion of primary education.

TABLE 4.1
SELECTED EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS

Primary Enrolment	Gross Net	83% (female 62%) 62% (female 31%)
Children completing primary level (% of first grade)		27%
Trained teachers		36%
Female teachers (% of total)		10%
Trained female teachers		7%

Grade repetition varies from one region to another. The rate of repeaters is presented in Table 4.2. In the present system a child requires between 9 and 12 years to complete the primary cycle of education. The drop-out rate in each grade at the primary level is also very high.

Secondary education starts after the completion of primary education and also constitutes a five year cycle; the first two years of this cycle are sometimes called "lower secondary". There has been a steady progress in the growth of enrolment in secondary education over the last four decades, the figure climbing from 1680 pupils studying at this level in 1951 to 306,000 in 1988. The government's goal of achieving universal primary education by the year 2000 will make it necessary to enlarge secondary educational facilities in order to accommodate the increased number of children seeking enrolment at this level.

GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

Nepal's development plans have always emphasized the need for special intervention strategies to promote girls' and women's education and several effective initiatives have been undertaken. This has been reflected in a progressive increase in girls' enrolment at all levels of schooling. Both the proportion of girls and their absolute numbers have grown significantly. While the relative increase is noteworthy, it is clear from educational statistics (see Figures 4.1-4.4) that even now *not enough* girls are participating in education. Even though they are enrolled girls are less likely to attend school and more likely to drop out sooner than boys. Accurate estimates of school attendance are not available but it can be suggested safely that large disjunctures exist between school enrolment and attendance, especially for girls. The Ministry of Education and Culture has correctly pointed out that much more needs to be done to improve girls' participation in education and that the dramatic rise in girls' enrolment "is no cause for complacency" (MOEC, 1991, p. 23).

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR GIRLS

The MOEC has a separate unit known as the "Office of the Women's Education

UNABLE TO REACH SCHOOL

TABLE 4.2

Grade Repetition

Grade 1 :	44%
Grade 2 :	18%
Grade 3 :	13%
Grade 4 :	15%
Grade 5 :	17%

Source: UNICEF, 1991

TABLE 4.3

Drop-out Rates

Grade 1 :	18%
Grade 2 :	10%
Grade 3 :	9%
Grade 4 :	11%
Grade 5 :	22%

(Source: *ibid.*)

BOX 4.1

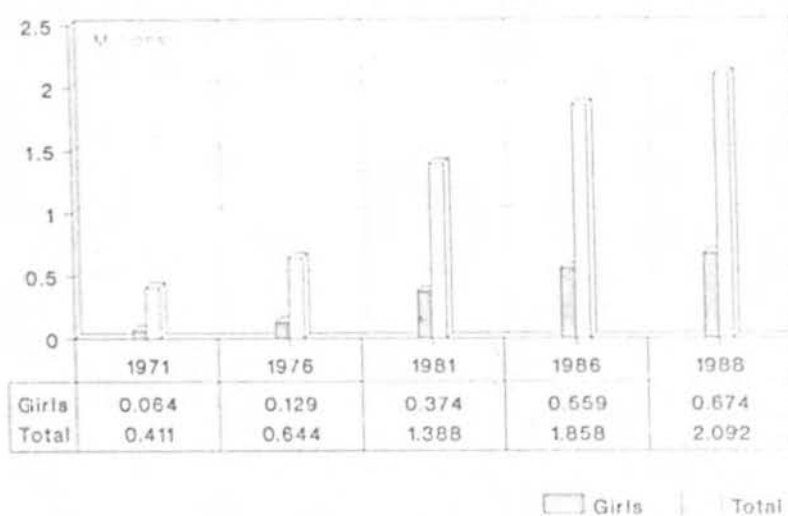
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has dwelt on the availability of educational services (Article 28) and the key axioms of education (Article 29) at some length. The child's right to education, and equal opportunity in it, is specified. The need for governments to make primary education compulsory and free for all and, to take measures to encourage regular attendance and reduce drop-out rates are emphasized. Education, it is declared, should be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

Some of the general obstacles to widespread school education in Nepal are the low "survival rate" of primary pupils, inadequate community participation in the provision and maintenance of physical facilities, a low level of public awareness with regard to the value of education, insufficiently appropriate curricula, the inadequate numbers of trained teachers, and limitations in supervision and monitoring.

Figure 4.1

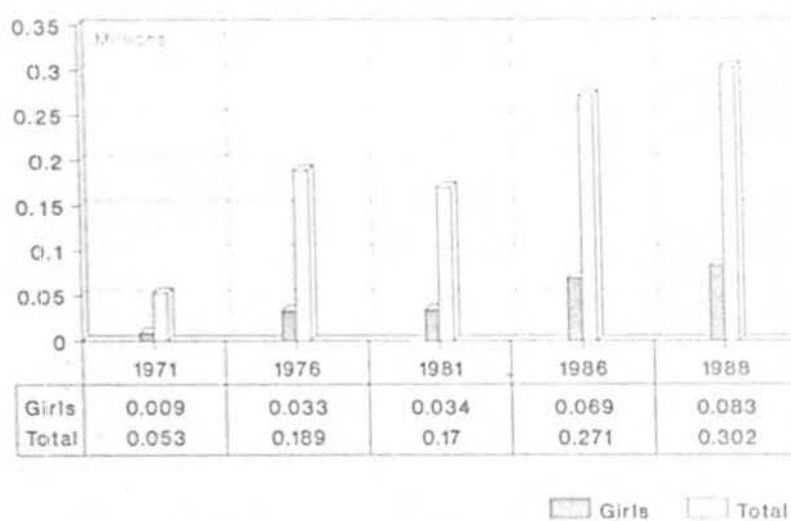
NUMBER OF GIRLS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL, 1971 - 1988



Source: Meeting Basic Educational Needs in Nepal, MOEC, 1990.

Figure 4.2

NUMBER OF GIRLS AT THE L. SECONDARY LEVEL, 1971 - 1988



Source: Meeting Basic Educational Needs in Nepal, MOEC, 1990.

Figure 4.3

NUMBER OF GIRLS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, 1971 - 1988

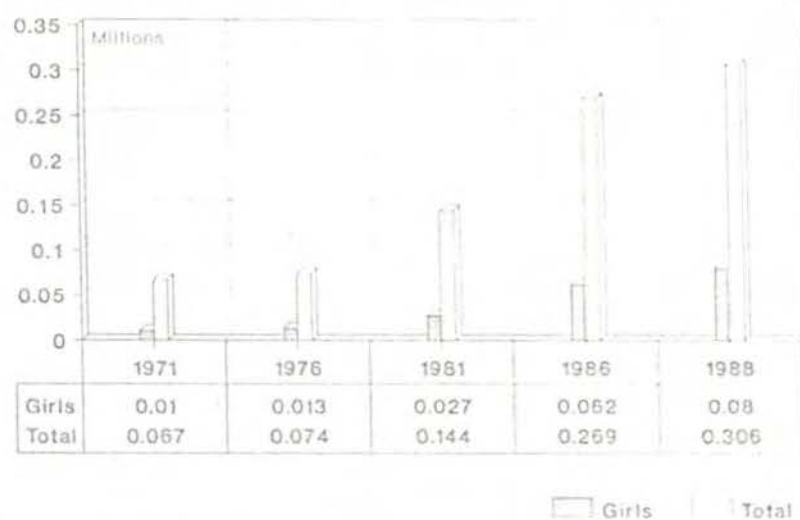
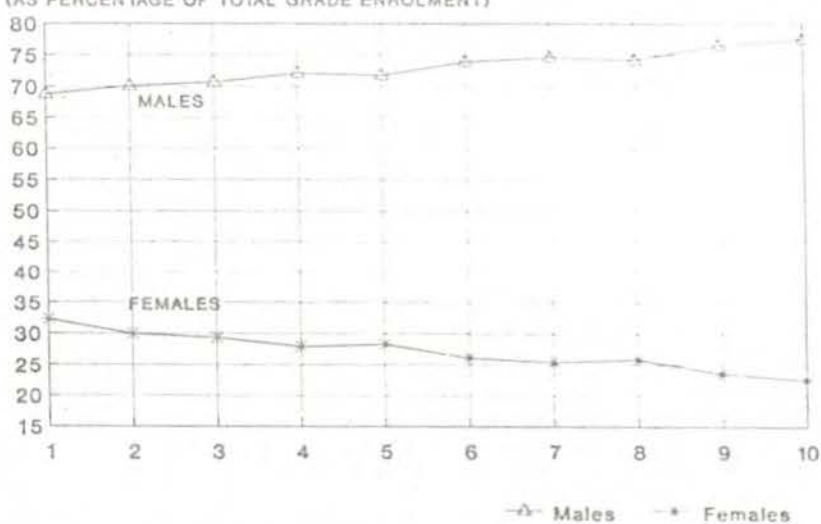


Figure 4.4

MALE/FEMALE ENROLMENT DIFFERENTIALS, GRADES 1-10, 1988 (AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL GRADE ENROLMENT)



Programme" to take care of plans and programmes for promoting the education of girls and women in the country.

- In 1969, HMG launched the *Equal Access of Women to Education* programme with the general aim of increasing girls' enrolment in primary schools. Special attention was focused on girls in remote and disadvantaged areas. The programme was redesigned and called the *Education of Girls and Women in Nepal* (EGWN) in 1983. Girls are selected on a quota basis for schooling as well as for training as primary school teachers.
- In 1984, the Education for Rural Development/Seti Project initiated an innovative practical scheme known as *Cheli Beti*, with the aim of providing out-of-school girls with functional literacy skills in a flexible 2 hours per day, 9 month programme. The *Cheli Beti* programme was developed specifically for young girls in the Far Western Region and incorporated regionally specific language and culture. It is now being implemented on a national scale.
- In the *Incentive Scheme*, 5 per cent of the total school girl enrollees receive a monthly stipend of Rs. 25 each and another 5 per cent receive a lump-sum grant of Rs. 200 as uniform allowance. Women teachers are recruited on a preferential basis which is expected to encourage girls to join school.
- A 100 centres are run under the *Women's Non-Formal Education Programme* in order to impart some education to 2000 girls and women. At the present rate of increase the country would have provided NFE to 88,500 girls and women by the end of the year 2000.
- The *Primary Education Project* introduced the *Shiksha Sadan* functional education programme for boys and girls. Enrolment records show that 70 per cent of the participants are in fact girls. The objective of the programme is to bring children upto a level of education so that they can join the formal system at the 2nd or 3rd grade.

Source: *Meeting Basic Education Needs in Nepal*, HMG Ministry of Education and Culture, Kathmandu, 1990.

SCHOOL PARTICIPATION: DETERMINANTS AND DETERRENTS

Although no independent research study has been conducted to examine the factors that facilitate or limit girls educational participation some important findings have emerged from general educational investigations. According to a study entitled *Determinants of Educational Participation in Rural Nepal* (CERID, 1984), some of the principal reasons for girls' attendance or absence from school were as follows:

- *traditional views*-which hold that girls' education is not necessary and is not a rewarding investment because they marry into other families;
- *girls' assumption of domestic and child care activities* from an early age leading to irregular attendance and dropping out of school; participation in earning activities has a similar effect;
- *segregation from men and early marriage* in some areas (especially the Terai) prevent girls from attending school.

Educational participation was generally higher when:

- the level of the father's education as well as the mean educational status of adults in the household was higher than average;
- the school was closer rather than further from the home;
- the nature of household occupation was not cottage industry or labour based; a professional job as a household occupation was found to affect significantly and positively girls' educational participation;
- there was ethnic similarity between teachers and pupils;
- teachers possessed appropriate training and qualifications;
- the teacher/pupil ratio was low;
- physical facilities in the school were adequate.

One of the main findings of the study was that "sex is the most important predictor of educational participation" (p. ii)

In another study (CERID, 1987) findings which were generally consistent with the above results were recorded. Most drop-outs were from agricultural families. It was observed that there was a strong inverse relationship between household income and early withdrawal and that "need to work" was the primary cause of dropping out of school. There was also a strong inverse relationship between family size and early withdrawals. Caste discrimination was cited as a reason among "lower" caste groups. Interestingly, factors such as early marriage, distance

BOX 4.2

WHAT THE PARENTS SAY: SOME FINDINGS OF THE RIDA STUDY

"... in the households currently not sending children to school 70 per cent of children were girls. Also, the percentage of never-enrolled girls exceeded that of boys. Data also reveal that parents who are currently sending at least one child to school tilt heavily in favour of the boy child. About 40 cent of the respondents revealed explicit preference to educating boy children and 52 per cent of the respondents categorically stated that the boy child ought to have a higher level of education i.e. at least above Grade 10, than a girl child. The two main reasons cited for this preference were: i. the girl child ultimately "belongs" not to the natal but to her future husband's household, and ii. the future role of a girl is bound to be confined to the four walls of the house. Poverty imposes high opportunity costs of sending girls to school for the large majority of parents.

The majority of parents stressed the need for free education and elimination of all financial costs, not only exemption from school fees but also free provision of school uniform, stationary etc."

- Quoted from *The Situation of the Girl Child in Nepal - A Survey Report*, RIDA, 1991 (draft mimeo.).

from school and children's health did not emerge as main reasons for dropping out.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

*Physical conditions
and methods of
instruction in
schools need
to be improved*

The low motivation of communities to send their daughters to school is probably compounded by the low motivation of girls themselves who may not find the school an attractive environment to be in. Often schools have little to offer in the way of physical facilities. It is common to find classrooms that are dimly lit, poorly ventilated and, despite low attendance, overcrowded. Leaking roofs, mud floors, little or no furniture, the absence of black boards and chalk and teaching and learning materials characterize most classrooms. Not infrequently, the only teaching aid is a single textbook that has been provided free of charge. Enquiry based learning and creativity are correspondingly minimal because of the variety of resource constraints. Teaching methods emphasize didactic instruction and encourage rote learning. A significant proportion of teachers is untrained; in fact the percentage of trained teachers has *decreased* from 39 per cent in 1976 to 36 per cent in 1990. Only 10 per cent of teachers are women. It has been observed that teachers' enthusiasm and commitment increase when they are provided with support, encouragement, improved training and essential instructional materials. Similarly, parents' interest and pupil attendance and performance are enhanced when there are improvements in qualitative aspects of education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

*ECE programmes
will have a
positive impact
on girls' educational
participation*

Preschool education is limited to the children of the urban elite and there is no programme to provide such a service on a national scale. Some under-sixes attend school with their elder siblings [though they are seated in a separate *shishu kakshya* (infant class) where they are taught the Grade 1 curriculum]. The large number of these children (5 per cent of total enrolment according to government records of 1988) reflects the interest of communities in an early education facility. Apart from the psycho-social benefits to the young girls and boys themselves, preschool education centres (with age-appropriate curricula) attached to all primary schools, would liberate older sisters from child care responsibilities and allow them to attend school. In fact, given present circumstances, opening up preschool centres would have a significant positive impact on the school enrolment, regular attendance and retention of girls.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Currently, the educational infrastructure in Nepal is poised for rapid and massive expansion in view of the goal of universal primary education by the year 2000. If qualitative modifications accompany the proposed quantitative expansion, it is likely that the positive impact on boys' and girls' access to education, enrolment and attendance rates, as well as, retention and performance will be maximized. At a time like this it is necessary to integrate gender related concerns in the proposed measures so as to ensure that the goal of universal education is achieved as much for girls as it is for boys. Given present trends, it is unlikely that there will be a dramatic transformation in the social and economic reality of the country within the next eight or nine years. Consequently, special steps to address the factors that limit girls participation in schooling will have to be taken to achieve the universalization of education.

The Basic and Primary Education Project, slated for implementation in 1992, emphasizes the need for a holistic approach in educational planning and the necessity for national scale implementation of effective educational strategies. The project is an integral part of the 8th National Development Plan (1990-1995) and addresses a number of issues raised at the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtein, 1990). Successful activities of the Primary Education Project and the Seti Education for Rural Development Project will be replicated.

Concern has been expressed for the importance of increasing girls' participation in education. However, the emphasis appears to be on encouraging girls to integrate into the proposed educational design rather than on how the educational system can be made capable of accommodating to the cluster of reasons that keep girls from attending school. Experience in other contexts has shown that unless affirmative action is undertaken, the process of equalizing access and opportunities for males and females in the natural course of things can be an extremely slow process. The magnitude of gender differentials in enrolment, attendance, wastage and stagnation rates should constitute a measure of the success of educational interventions.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

While there is some information available on why girls do not attend school there is almost none on factors facilitating girls' educational participation. Research which identifies reasons why girls do attend school as also why they do not attend should be supported. Findings from such studies can be used as powerful tools for advocacy in education and related sectors. Furthermore, ways and means to increase girls' participation should be sought from community members and incorporated in educational planning.

UNABLE TO REACH SCHOOL

Integrating gender concerns into educational planning is essential

The BPEP emphasizes a holistic approach for planning

Efforts must be made to accommodate the school system to girls' needs

Information needs

Some measures that should be implemented to increase girls access to school are listed below.

School Related Factors

- A *reasonable amount of flexibility* should be introduced in school timings, attendance requirements as well as performance and achievement criteria in order to accommodate to girls' need to participate in domestic and agricultural activities. The local School Management Committee should be entrusted with the responsibility of fixing the school schedule.
- There should be provision for *lateral entry* in order to enable those girls who have been forced to drop out to resume their studies, even after extended periods of absence.
- All *teachers* should be *sensitized* to the issue of girls' education. They must understand why it is necessary for girls to be educated, and what each of them can do in their individual capacity to enrol and retain girls in school. This sensitization should form a fundamental component of pre- and in-service training.
- More *women teachers* should be recruited to the education system; rigid selection criteria should be relaxed until a larger proportion of women joins the teaching force.
- The *school curriculum* should be scrutinized with a view to rid it of gender bias and to increase the relevance of school learning to the lived reality of girls and boys. In fact the school curriculum can play a *positive, interventionist role* if it challenges those cultural values that deprecate women.
- *Non-formal systems of education* should be viewed as a *conduit* to formal education. The effort should be to enrol as many girls in the formal stream at the appropriate level. Short-term non-formal education should not be allowed to supplant formal education; it is and should remain an *interim* measure until universal primary school education is achieved. Short-term programmes are not always successful in making a person literate on a permanent basis; this requires sustained exposure to education. It has been observed that individuals can relapse into illiteracy even after some years of schooling. This has important implications for the allocation of scarce resources.

Home Related Factors

- Multi-media information dissemination should be undertaken to *educate the community* about the need and importance of educating children, especially girls. An effort should be made to project "success stories" which

emphasize how equitable educational participation for girls can be achieved.

- Community members should be encouraged to assume the responsibility of ensuring that all children, including girls, complete at least the primary school cycle. The assistance of community level functionaries (such as health workers) and local groups (such as women's groups) should be enlisted for this purpose.

NOTE

For detailed tables see Appendix II.

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5

All Work and No Play

The labour of young girls and boys is critical to the household economy all over the developing world. Children "earn their keep" and contribute economically by assuming domestic responsibilities and "releasing" adults for productive, remunerative work. They may also do so by participating directly in the family occupation, be it agriculture or a trade, or else by working beyond the household for a wage which goes to supplement the family income.

In fact, children's involvement in the work of the family gives them the opportunity to learn traditional

skills and the ways of their household and community; to that extent work constitutes an important part of their socialization. Sadly, however, in poor countries such as Nepal the labour of young children, especially girls, is exploited knowingly or unknowingly, both in the home and in the wider labour market.

Very often children's labour power is exploited

WHEN IS CHILD LABOUR EXPLOITATIVE ?

In the context of the extensive poverty in Nepal, it may be unrealistic, even irrelevant to say an uncompromising "no" to children's work without first distinguishing labour that is exploitative from other forms of work. Work that amounts to the exploitation of children could be categorized as follows:

Not all work is exploitative

- that which is inappropriate to the child's age and strength;
- that which is hazardous and injurious to the child's physical, mental and social well being;
- that which denies the child opportunities for schooling and play and inhibits thereby all round development;
- that which separates the child from home and family;
- that which employs children rather than adults (when large numbers of unemployed adults are available) because youngsters can be paid less, threatened into submission, and because they do not have the "voice" or power to organize and bargain collectively (e.g. all forms of employment in the informal sector); and,
- that which uses the labour of some children, rather than others, on account of their membership in a group (such as their gender group), and thereby denies the group opportunities that other children might normally get (e.g. girls' involvement in domestic work because it is considered appropriate to their gender role and so that their brothers may go to school and their parents may work outside the home.)

The above categories are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive. They do however, cover most forms of work (ranging from cooking in smoke-filled kitchens to weaving carpets in surroundings that are not protected and conditions that are not controlled) that are injurious to health or close down children's "developmental options."

YOUNG GIRLS' WORK

At Home

By the time they are 5 or 6 years old, girls begin to participate in domestic work. They cook and clean, fetch water, fuel and fodder, tend animals, wash

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY

Girls' domestic work is considered to be "familial duty"

clothes, and manage and care for their younger siblings. Despite all this work, girls are not valued as much as their brothers who are seen as potential wage earners. In fact, girls' work is regarded as familial duty rather than productive endeavour (Chatterjee, 1990). For this reason and because household tasks defy quantification and monetary valuation, girls' work is "invisible". In agricultural families girls work in the fields and depending on the season, they may participate in back breaking agricultural activities, such as weeding, harvesting, winnowing, threshing and food processing. [It has been observed that where women are potential wage earners, female children receive a larger share of household resources, than where women are economically unproductive. "The economic productivity of women in adulthood is perhaps a more important determinant of female child survival than many other socio-economic factors. This is also supported by the hypothesis that high demand for female labour in agriculture (such as in rice growing areas, where women are crucial to transplanting and other operations) supports less discrimination against female children" (Chatterjee, 1990, p. 57)].

CHILDREN'S ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION RATES

Information gathered in micro-level investigations clearly demonstrates that on the whole girls do more work than boys of the same age. This however, is not reflected in census data.

Household activities are not considered to be work in census data

According to the 1981 census the economic participation rate of girls (10-14 years age group) was 52 per cent which is lower than that of boys in the same age group (61 per cent). The data clearly underestimate girls' labour as household activities are not considered to be "work". (See Table 5.1.)

There appear to be regional differences in girls economic participa-

TABLE 5.1

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION RATE OF CHILDREN (10-14 years)

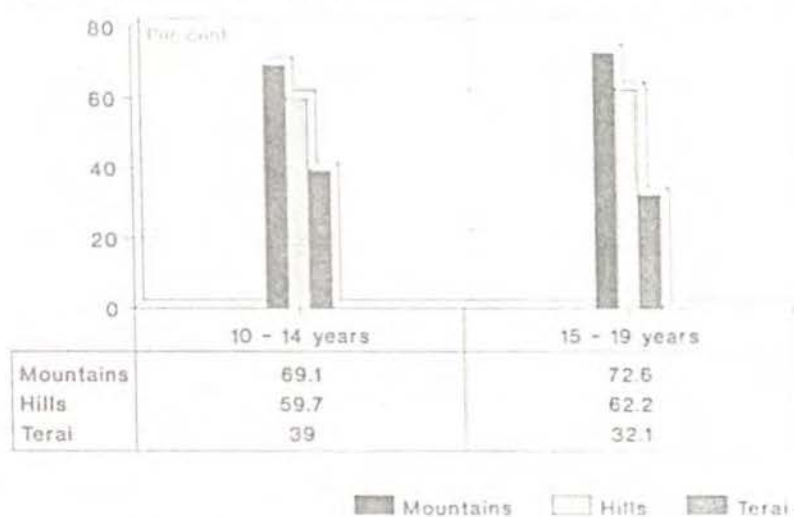
Year	Total	Female	Male
1952/53	27.78	25.64	29.48
1971	50.45	40.06	59.24
1981	56.98	51.96	61.28

Source: Population Censuses

tion. The highest rates are observed in the mountains and the lowest in the Terai. This possibly reflects the difficult living conditions (high density of population on land, small size of land holdings and ecological deterioration)

Figure 5.1

GIRLS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION BY AGE AND REGION, 1981



Source: Population Census, 1981

in the high mountains and the relative restrictions on girls' mobility (that increase with age) among the orthodox Hindus of the Terai.

Girls' Workload

A more accurate picture of girls' workload is provided by research that examines the amount of time they devote to labour activities. The Nepal Rastra Bank/Multi-Purpose Household Budget Survey (NRB/MPHBS) data (see Table 5.2) clearly illustrate that:

- girls work more than boys (sometimes more than twice) in all age groups;
- their work burden increases with age
- their work burden is highest in the mountains and lowest in the Terai and in between in the hills
- there does not appear to be a distinct relationship between grade of poverty and the number of working hours for boys and girls.

Time use pattern information based on NRB/MPHBS data reveal that domestic work, including child-care, constitutes 70 per cent of the total work burden of children of both sexes in the 6-9 age group, and over 50 per cent in the 10-14 year age group at all poverty levels and in all regions.

For the 6-9 year age group, child care accounts for about half of the domestic work burden.

There are regional differences in girls' economic participation

Time use pattern data provide more accurate information about girls' workload

TABLE 5.2

CHILDREN'S WORK BURDEN BY AGE, SEX, REGION AND POVERTY LEVEL
(Time spent in hours)

Poverty Level ¹	Rural						Urban			
	Mountains		Hills		Terai		Hills		Terai	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Ultra Poor										
6-9 yrs	4.39	3.05	3.86	2.23	3.21	2.22	2.83	-	-	-
10-14 yrs	7.7	4.39	8.43	4.82	5.59	2.46	7.01	0.5	-	-
Poor										
6-9 yrs	4.26	2.71	3.26	1.96	3.12	1.86	2.58	0.83	2.84	1.78
10-14 yrs	7.28	4.21	6.82	3.78	6.53	3.78	5.6	2.11	5.67	2.67
Non-Poor										
6-9 yrs	4.28	4.17	3.19	1.7	2.21	1.34	1.2	0.44	1.99	0.79
10-14 yrs	7.93	4.77	7.66	4.41	5.37	2.84	3.63	1.53	4.37	2.23

Source: Based on NRB/MPHBS, 1984/85.

Note: Using the Nepal Rastra Bank/Multi-Purpose Household Budget Survey (NRB/MPHBS) data, the World Bank recently classified the absolute poor in Nepal into the Ultra Poor (those below the Ultra Poverty Level (UPL) and with per capita monthly income between Rs. 50-80) and the Poor (those above the UPL but below the Poverty Level (PL) and with per capita monthly income between Rs. 100-145). The Non-Poor are those just above the PL and have a per capita monthly income of Rs. 220-250.

In the 10-14 year age group household chores such as cleaning and washing, constitute the major share of domestic work. The third most important set of tasks includes fetching water and fuel and fodder collection (for the hazards of water fetching, see Box 5.1).

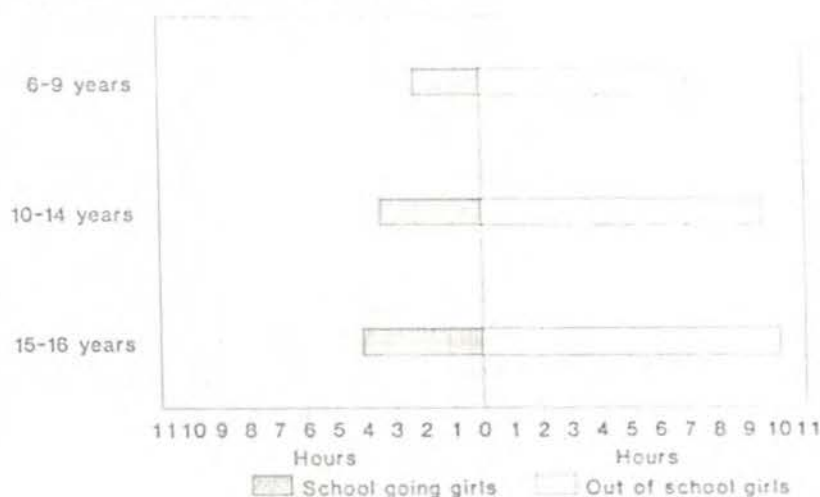
Results of the RIDA survey study on the situation of the girl child in Nepal demonstrated a similar pattern of findings. The results of the time use pattern investigation were based on amalgamated data from 400 households in 8 ethnic groups. In addition to showing that girls work more than boys and that their workload increases with age, the findings showed that out-of-school children work twice or thrice as long as their school going peers (see Table 5.3) on domestic work, and subsistence and conventional economic activities.

WAGE LABOUR IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR: THE CASE OF GIRLS IN THE CARPET INDUSTRY

It is estimated that children (below 14 years) and minors (14-18 years) form 33.11 per cent and 19 per cent of the carpet industry workers respectively (UNICEF, 1991). Few data exist on the situation of girls in the carpet weaving

Figure 5.2

WORKLOAD OF GIRLS BY AGE



Source: The Status of the Girl Child in Nepal: RIDA, 1990.

TABLE 5.3

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE WORKLOAD OF SCHOOL GOING
AND OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

Age Group	School Going		Out of School		Total	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
6-9	2.32	1.82	7.04	4.39	3.98	2.42
10-14	3.50	2.23	9.54	9.55	5.79	2.95
15-16	4.13	3.11	10.13	7.92	7.13	3.59
TOTAL	3.18	2.20	8.94	6.19	5.44	2.81

Source: The Status of the Girl Child in Nepal-A Survey Report, RIDA, December 1990, Table 6.6, p. 178.

industry, and the exact number of children involved in it is not really known. According to one study there are 526 registered carpet factories in the Kathmandu valley alone, with a total labour force of 17,435 of which a large number are children. In the RIDA survey 3 such factories were covered. A total of 51 children, 26 girls and 25 boys in the age group 10-18 were interviewed to gain insights into the conditions in which children weave carpets. It was observed that sometimes children as young as 9 years of age are inducted into the carpet weaving industry. Some of the important findings with regard to girls were as follows:

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY

Few data exist on girl wage workers in the informal sector

- most girls came from agricultural homes; some came from homes where either the father or mother or both were involved in carpet weaving;
- about 69 per cent (or 18) of the girls were illiterate; others had obtained between 1 and 4 years of schooling;

BOX 5.1

HOW WATER FETCHING AFFECTS HEALTH

Carrying water is one of the most arduous of tasks in the rural areas of developing countries; a task which is usually carried out by women and children. Carrying water on the head requires strength in the neck and considerable skill, a skill often acquired at around nine years old (*sic*). The task of carrying heavy loads over long distances requires a great deal of energy, which comes from metabolized food. The longer the distance and the more difficult the terrain, the greater the quantity of food needed. Women [and children] carrying water are frequently exposed to malnutrition, anaemia and water related diseases.

A major problem arising from carrying water is the early ageing of the vertebral columns. Where children are concerned, the main problem associated with carrying heavy loads of water is the effect on the growth of bones. When children begin to carry water, they are still growing and a deformity known as scoliosis of the vertebral column may occur, particularly when water is carried on the hip or shoulder. Carrying water on the hip may also cause deformed pelvic bones in children. People carrying water on their backs with a head strap [this is a common method in Nepal] exhibit a marked cranial depression, and many suffer from severe headaches. Also, because of the development of the neck muscles, they may have problems with the thyroid gland. Other problems include fractures, slipped discs and damage to the knees.

Providing more appropriate means of transport and siting water supplies within a reasonable distance may lessen the health problems of women and children. One of the aims of the Water Decade is to reduce health problems by providing safe water close to the houses. By reducing energy requirements, women [and children] will be less vulnerable to malnutrition; by providing safe water the incidence of water-related diseases will decrease; by reducing walking distances the skeleton will not suffer as much, and one of women's [and children's] many carrying tasks will be considerably reduced.

- Excerpted from "Women carrying water: how it affects their health" by Annie Dufaut, *Waterlines*, 6(3), January 1988, pp. 23-5.

- none of the girls were attending school currently, though all except two expressed a desire to be educated.
- poverty was the most commonly stated reason for working; other reasons were death of a parent, lack of educational facilities, maltreatment at home and expectation of a better life in the city.
- most girls and boys (60 per cent) did not complain about the conditions in their place of work;
- girls worked for an average of 12 hours a day at the loom and were willing to work longer;
- twenty-one of the 51 children had health complaints which were not necessarily related to carpet weaving; 32 children felt that the work was hazardous.
- on average a child earned Rs. 37 (about US\$ 1) per day and in most cases wages were surrendered to the parents or guardians;
- sixty-eight per cent of the girls were separated from their immediate families and came from the eastern, central hill and mountain regions of the country

The study does not provide any qualitative information about the working conditions in the carpet weaving industry. It can however be surmised that conditions are not very different from those in other developing nations (see Box 5.2).

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Because they are required to work, large numbers of girls never enrol in school. Even those who do enrol are forced to drop out before completing the primary cycle of education. Girls who are denied schooling are not only deprived of literacy and education, but also of the valuable opportunity of interacting with and learning from peers.

Play is an essential part of any child's physical, motor cognitive, social and emotional development. Through play children learn to be creative, practice their language skills, participate in group activities, learn to cooperate, and cope with distress. Mechanical and repetitive work can be boring and stultify the young mind and body—indeed rob it of its childhood.

Children's work obviates opportunities for schooling and play

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE SAFEGUARDS

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child enjoins State Parties to:

1. . . . recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. . . . take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of this article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, State Parties shall in particular:
 - (a) provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment,
 - (b) provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment; and,
 - (c) provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of this article.

Child labour in factories, mines and other hazardous industries is forbidden by Article 20 of the Constitution. Section 14 of the Nepal Civil Rights Act prohibits em-

BOX 5.2

GIRL CARPET WEAVERS IN IRAN

Burra (1987) has observed that in Iran—

"(girls) . . . spend the entire day on narrow planks. They are unable to move and their work makes them adopt a squatting posture, invariably doubled up. Despite their youth, some children suffer from a form of ankylosis of the whole of the lower part of the torso. Many are sickly, suffering from tuberculosis or anemia. By the time they become adults, they are often round-shouldered and have deformed arms and legs . . . a large number of them are subsequently sterile or have very difficult pregnancies because of the fixed posture they have had to adopt".

- Quoted from *A Report on Indian Women from Birth to Twenty* by Meera Chatterjee, New Delhi: NIPCCD, 1990.

ployment of children who are under the age of 14 years as does Section 17 of the Factory Act. While these provisions exist, there is no comprehensive legislation against child labour in Nepal. The Nepal Law Reform Commission has prepared a draft Children's Act which when promulgated will afford children a variety of protective measures.

*Is legislation against
child labour
the answer?*

It is debatable whether the enactment of appropriate laws against child labour will produce the desired deterrent effect. In fact, experience in other developing countries shows that wherever such laws exist they are grossly violated. This is primarily so because a large proportion of children's work is invisible and because, at the best of times, the informal sector (in which most wage earning children are located) is, by its very nature, impossible to control or regulate. Moreover, poverty forces children to be "willing victims"—they will endure pitiful working conditions rather than risk losing their source of income.

PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION: THE NEED FOR A COORDINATED APPROACH

*Child labour
is both the
effect and the
cause of poverty*

At the same time as child labour results from poverty, through denying children opportunities for education and training, it perpetuates the low skill-low income-poverty-exploitation cycle. The eradication of exploitative child labour must be our guiding goal. However, given the slow pace of change in the socio-economic environment of the country, it will take a while to reach it. In the short-term it is necessary to take measures to ensure that the work burden of young girls is lessened, that they receive at least some education and training, and that the working conditions in child labour intensive industries are regulated.

Lessening Young Girls' Work Burden

- Given that a large proportion of young girls' time is taken up in caring for younger siblings, it is recommended that *early child care centres* are established in conjunction with primary schools, so that girls may attend school. If such an arrangement is not feasible, the formation of Community Groups which will provide child minding facilities during school hours should be encouraged.
- It is recommended that the strain on young girls to collect fuel and fodder and to fetch water is reduced by:
 - transferring *appropriate technology* to the villages, such as the use of solar energy and bio-gas, fuel production from waste and the growing of fuel trees;
 - provision of *drinking water* in all habitations;

- Additionally, the technology of *smokeless chullahs* which reduces drastically the health hazards associated with cooking on traditional hearths, should be introduced in villages, in order to protect the health of all members of the family, including girls and women who do almost all the cooking.
- Importantly, all families should be encouraged to promote more *equitable work sharing* among boys and girls at home.

Opportunities for Education

Alongside efforts to make communities appreciate the importance of educating girls, certain measures will have to be taken within the educational system to afford girls the opportunity to obtain some of the benefits of schooling.

Non-Formal Education

The *Cheli Beti* programme has been received positively. Through evening classes girls are trained in literacy and numeracy. The programme should be expanded and enriched. At the same time the effort should be to try and integrate girls, who have attended *Cheli Beti* classes and achieved some amount of competence in literacy, into the formal school system.

Formal Education

The formal school system should allow for lateral and multi-point entry in order to accommodate girls who have had some education.

In order to attract and retain girls, school timings should be fixed according to the convenience of the majority of girls and boys in the catchment area. Schools should also be responsive to seasonal demands for child labour and every effort should be made to make the summer holidays coincide with the harvesting season, or shorten or lengthen the school day according to the demands on children's time. This kind of flexibility should be available in at least the primary school years.

Legislation

Even though it is appreciated that law without accompanying public opinion is of limited value, the enactment of suitable legislation would reaffirm the State's commitment to protect children from abuse and exploitation. Such legislation would also empower social organizations working for children to ensure that young labourers are not exploited in the workplace and that unscrupulous employers are appropriately penalized. Of course girls' labour inside the home and other forms of household related work would continue to stay outside the ambit of such legislation. Programmes to universalize education and alleviate poverty would probably be the only means of reducing girls' domestic drudgery.

The Need for Information

Both qualitative and quantitative data are required to inform efforts aimed at releasing young girls from work that restricts their development. Data that demonstrate the negative effects of certain forms of work on girls' health and development need to be gathered in order to corroborate theoretical claims. Regional data which analyse different work patterns also need to be collected. In this context the work burden and needs of urban girls must be identified.

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6

Too Young to Marry

Marriage is almost universal for both males and females in Nepal. There is a marked association between the degree of Indo-Aryan influence on a community and the proportion of early marriages. The relative behavioural freedom allowed to a woman in choosing her partner and later conducting her married relationship also differs from one community to another. As compared to their peers from the Tibeto-Burman ethnic groups, girls from orthodox Hindu communities are married earlier to boys from villages which are more distant from their natal homes, and in general have far less freedom in issues pertaining to their marriage.

THE SITUATION IN NEPAL

Early marriage is very common in Nepal

The Muluki Ain (of 1963) fixed the legal age at marriage for girls at 16 and made polygamy and child marriage illegal. A girl can marry after the age of 16 years with the consent of her parents or guardians and at 18 years she can marry without their consent. The corresponding ages for men are 18 and 21 years. Almost a quarter of the districts have a mean age at marriage that is below the legal age. In practice child marriage is common and it is estimated that 40 per cent of all women are married before the age of 16 years. The payment of dowry and bride price is against the law (Social Reform Act of 2033 B.S.) but is permissible if it is a custom of the community. This contradiction leads to more child marriages to avoid excessive payments.

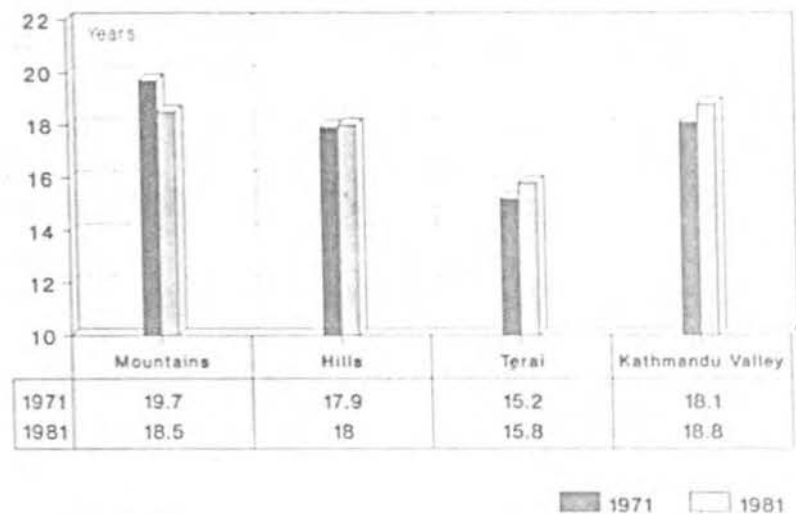
There are sharp regional variations in age at marriage

There are extreme variations in the age at marriage—a low of 13.7 years for the Terai district of Mahottari and a high of 25.8 years in the mountain district of Mustang have been recorded. Urban women marry later than their rural counterparts the average ages being 18.5 and 17.1 years respectively.

Among the Tibeto-Burman tribal groups who live in the mountains the age at marriage is on the whole higher for both men and women as compared to the Terai based Brahmins and Chhetris. In the Terai, consistent with conservative Hindu tradition, in which child marriage is highly valued, the incidence of under-16 marriages is three times higher than in the hills and six times higher than in the mountains.

Figure 6.1

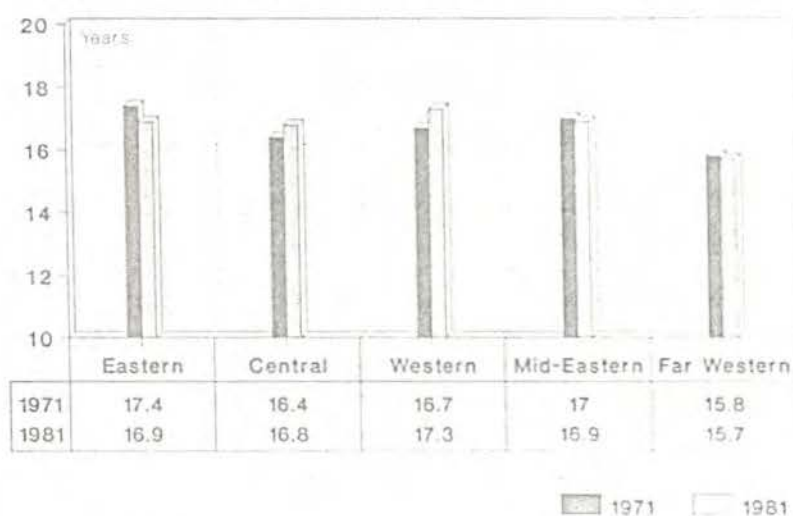
GIRLS' MEAN AGE AT MARRIAGE BY REGION, 1971 & 1981



Source: CBS, 1987

Figure 6.2

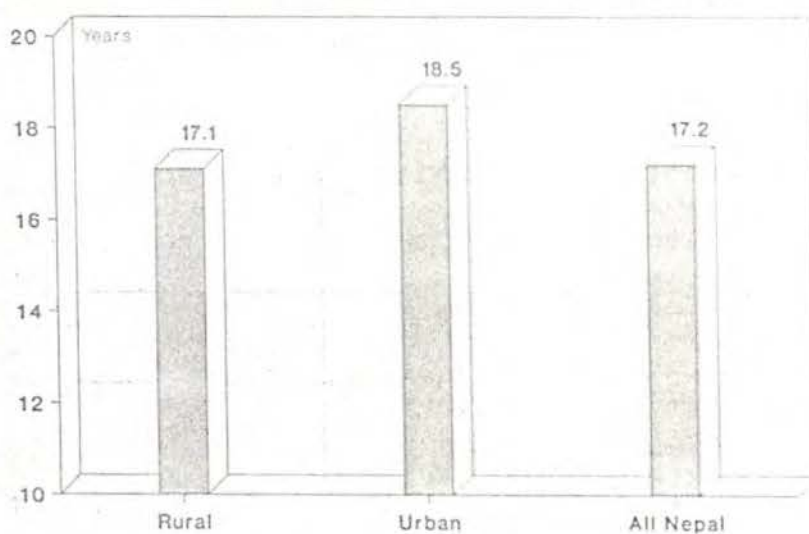
GIRLS' MEAN AGE AT MARRIAGE BY ZONE, 1971 & 1981



Source: CBS, 1987

Figure 6.3

GIRLS' MEAN AGE AT MARRIAGE BY RESIDENCE, 1981



Source: CBS, 1987

SOME IMPORTANT RESEARCH FINDINGS

In a population of 450 ever-married females and 393 ever-married males from 8 different ethnic groups (Acharya & Bennett, 1981), it was found that:

TOO YOUNG TO MARRY

- 9.4 per cent males and 22.5 per cent females were married before they completed 14 years;
- only 2.5 per cent women and 6.4 per cent men had married after age 25;
- the majority of women (63.1 per cent) were married between 17–25 years;
- the proportion of child marriages (before age 14) was higher for boys and girls of the top and bottom socio-economic strata;
- the incidence of early marriage is declining; compared to 8.8 per cent (9 cases out of 102) of females of 50 years and above who were married between ages 1–9, only 0.9 per cent (1 case out of 116) of the 10–14 age group were married at the time of the study; similarly, 51.2 per cent of the women in the 35–49 age group were married by the time they had completed 16 years, while the comparable proportion for the females of the 15–34 age group was 34.3 per cent;
- there was some evidence that economic betterment in some Tibeto-Burman communities was associated with earlier marriage;
- The pattern of early marriage in 5 of the sampled communities is given in Table 6.1.
- the Parbatiyas of Bakundol and the Maithilis of Sirsia (the most orthodox Hindu groups) reported the largest numbers of early marriages;
- the lowest proportion—8.6 per cent—of marriages before age 17 were reported among the Barangaole—the extreme Tibeto-Burman group.

TABLE 6.1
PATTERN OF EARLY MARRIAGE IN 5 ETHNIC GROUPS

	1–9 yrs	10–13 yrs	14–16 yrs	Total (under 16)
Lohrung Rai (N=50)	–	6%	30%	36%
Newar, Jyapur (N=45)	2.2%	26.7%	13%	41.9%
Tamang (N=45)	–	12.8%	36.2%	59%
Parbatiya (N=54)	14.8%	9.3%	50%	74.1%
Maithili (N=74)	23%	56.7%	16.2%	95.9%

Source: The Rural Women of Nepal: An Aggregate Analysis and Summary of 8 Village Studies, by M. Acharya & L. Bennett. *The Status of Women in Nepal*, H (9), Kathmandu: CEDA.

HINDU MARRIAGE

Hindu *dharma* sanctions and advocates universal marriage and according to the Vedas the ideal marriageable age is 16 years for girls and 25 years for boys. *Kanyadaan*, the gift of a virgin, is an important feature of Hindu marriages and vests the giver (the father) with spiritual credit. Marriage and maternity, according to the Hindu way of thinking, should be the goals of every woman's life. Chastity before marriage and single-minded fidelity afterwards are highly prized social values, which exercise a significant influence on the socialization of girls. From an early age a girl realizes that she is the "wealth of another". Her family feels the need to "protect" her until a suitable husband is found; after marriage this task devolves on him. In preparation of her future roles of wife and daughter-in-law, a young girl is trained to be hard-working, obedient, modest and self-abnegating. Marriage determines a woman's position in life as an adult and is based not on emotional ties of the couple but on an alliance between two families. A woman derives her full caste identity only after marriage.

Early marriage is common among orthodox Hindu groups such as the Maithilis. By the time she is 9 or 10 years old, the parents of a girl may start looking for a husband for their daughter. A Maithili girl may be married off by the time she is 12 or 13. Although she leaves her parents home only at puberty, there is a marked change in her behaviour after marriage—her movements are restricted and she hides her face from members of her husband's family. The practice of giving cash (*tilak*) to the bridegroom at the time of marriage puts a strain on family resources. While this practice is more common among the relatively wealthy, families may sell their land in order to get their daughters married. Since the "price" of adult husbands is high, parents prefer to marry young girls to teenage boys who are "cheaper" (Acharya, 1981).

MARRIAGE AMONG THE TIBETO-BURMANS

Different types of marriage are seen among the Tibeto-Burman groups (who are influenced to differing extents by the Hindu or Buddhist religious ideologies)—the major types being monogamous, polygynous and polyandrous. The last two are more characteristic of wealthier than poorer households. The patrilocal residence pattern is almost universal in Nepal but it is less traumatic among non-Hindu groups in which women are permitted or even encouraged to communicate with their future husbands. In these groups couples may be related by birth (eg. cross-cousin marriages are preferred among the Tharu, Kham Magar, Tamang, Lohorung Rai and Baragaonle people), and generally belong to the same village or to villages that are located within less than a few hours walk of one another. As a result

In Hinduism marriage and maternity are upheld as the goals of every woman's life

There is a marked change in behaviour after marriage

Women marry later and can express freedom and choice

marriage does not entail a dramatic change of social and familial environment, and inter-family relationships provide women with strong support in their affinal households. Furthermore, these women have greater freedom to break marital ties and opt for remarriage. This freedom of choice is found to be greatest among Tibeto-Burman speaking groups such as the Magar, Baragaonle, Tamang and Rai.

Women who marry late contribute more years of labour to their parents household

Among ethnic groups whose women marry late a daughter's labour is highly valued because late marriage allows for more productive years in the natal home. At the time of marriage the groom is expected to give the bride's parents a token payment for the "mother's milk that nourished her". This payment also appears to be a compensation for the "loss of labour power" to the natal household, and sometimes among the Baragaonle, parents may agree to marital co-residence only after a year or several years of the wedding as they explicitly refuse to relinquish their daughter's labour (Schuler, 1981). Similarly in Magar society, the "bride givers" have a higher ritual status than the "bride takers" and the loss of a woman to the bride's lineage is compensated by services and presentations given over a number of generations.

It has been suggested that girls are married late so that their natal homes may derive at least some economic benefit from their adult daughters' labour (Schuler, 1981). Among the Kagbeni of the Western High Mountains and the Tharu of the Far Western Inner Tarai, the need for a daughter's labour for as long as possible is cited as the reason for late marriage. Kagbeni parents often try to delay their daughter's marriage so that she may continue to work in her natal home unhindered by obligations to another household.

WHY EARLY MARRIAGE IS HARMFUL

Early marriage is socially and psychologically stressful

Early marriage almost always spells the cessation of education. In the traditional Hindu setting, premature departure from the natal home and entry into a new household peopled by relative strangers, is both psychologically and socially stressful for the young girl. Her opportunities to develop personally and socially are restricted because of virtual incarceration in the domestic sphere and she may be required to observe strict "purdah" in front of older male affines from a young age. In fact the new bride is "often assigned to the most arduous domestic tasks, and her performance is likely to be closely scrutinized, particularly in the early months. The demands on her labour are only likely to be relieved when another new bride enters the house..." (Acharya, 1981).

THE BEARING OF CHILDREN BY CHILDREN

A girl in Nepal may bear her first child by the age of 14 or 15 and face a long (at least 25 years) and hazardous reproductive journey ahead. While the years between 20 and 30 are the safest period of a woman's life for child bearing, it has been reported that almost 10 per cent to 20 per cent of babies born in developing countries are to girls in their teens—little more than children themselves (Royston & Armstrong, 1989).

According to 1986 estimates 40 per cent of Nepali women had given birth to one child between the ages of 15 and 19 years. Girls who start having children early, generally have more children, at shorter intervals (thereby entering three of the obstetric "at risk" categories of "too early", "too close" and "too many") than their peers who start later (WHO, 1989). Early marriage enlarges a woman's fertility span; poorly nourished bodies burdened with the physiological stress of repeated pregnancies result in physical depletion, birth complications and the delivery of low birth weight babies who have reduced chances of survival.

Often bearing a child, especially a son, wins a young daughter-in-law acceptance and support in her husband's family. It is doubtful of course that young girls *choose* to get pregnant, given that they can exercise little or no control over either their bodies or their sexuality. Nonetheless, among young married girls pregnancy follows close on the heels of menarche which is incorrectly accepted as the biological announcement of reproductive maturity. According to one study the onset of menstruation precedes the achievement of skeletal maturity. Even 2 years after menarche a girl may have between 2% and 9% of pelvic growth and 1% of height still to achieve. As a result of the disproportion between the infant's head and the size of the mother's pelvis (cephalo-pelvic disproportion) obstructed delivery is most common among adolescent mothers (Royston & Armstrong, 1989).

At the macro-level early pregnancy has significant negative correlates. Population growth is higher because of the reduced age gap between successive generations. Infant mortality is higher both on account of the weaker average constitution of babies born to young mothers and because of poorer "maternal competence" skills among them. Maternal mortality among young mothers is also higher than that among older women.

For women in developing countries, the combination of early pregnancies and poor health services results in an average lifetime risk of 1 in 15 to 1 in 50 of dying due to pregnancy related causes; the average lifetime risk for women in developed countries is 1 in 10,000. This observation is borne out by the alarmingly high maternal mortality rate of 850 per 100,000 live births in Nepal (also see Chapter 2). One study reported that, consistent with findings elsewhere, early child bearers in Nepal have higher rates of miscar-

*Early mothers
are obstetrically
"at risk"*

*Bearing a son
wins approval*

*Early marriage
is a cause of high
population
growth*

*...and the
higher life
time risk of
dying due to
pregnancy
related causes*

riage, abortion and infant deaths. In addition, girls who become pregnant soon after menarche (which occurs between 13–16 years of age) had still-birth rates 1.6 times higher, and infant mortality rates 1.8 times higher than women who became pregnant at a later age (UNICEF, 1991). As children are born exclusively within wedlock, delaying marriage would have a significant effect on decreasing maternal and infant morbidity and mortality.

EARLY MARRIAGE: CAUSES AND CORRELATES

While few data on the reasons for and the correlates of early marriage are available in this country, research done in some regions of India where comparable practices and socio-economic conditions exist, points to certain factors. These probably apply to the Nepali context and include:

- religious beliefs and social sanction;
- the anxiety of parents to transfer the responsibility of protecting the girl's sexual purity to the affinal kin;
- the avoidance of high dowry payment;
- the sale of girls to older or otherwise unsuitable grooms for a mutually negotiated brideprice.

*Marital
postponement is
associated with
education*

On the whole, marital postponement seems to be associated with education, urbanization, the higher status of women and the nature of women's work. In some groups, as indicated earlier, marital postponement is clearly associated with the need for a daughter's labour for as long as possible

HOW CAN EARLY MARRIAGE BE DISCOURAGED ?

*Information
needs*

To be able to identify ways to postpone marriage it is critical that the reasons that motivate and perpetuate existing patterns of nuptiality are understood. For this it is important that adequate quantitative and qualitative data are gathered and analysed systematically.

In the meantime, it is necessary to create widespread awareness among communities of:

- the law forbidding child marriage;
- the harmful effects of child marriage on the individual girl—personal, social, psychological and physical;
- the relationship between early pregnancy and infant, child, and maternal mortality and morbidity;
- the value and importance of educating girls.

NGOs, youth groups, formal rural leadership and caste leaders among others should be enabled to mobilize public opinion against early marriage. The potential of the mass media in informing and supporting public opinion should be explored. Efforts to raise women's status through a combination of education, health care and employment opportunities will have a positive effect on marital postponement.

Public opinion should be changed before any policy or law can be implemented. An attempt to raise the legal age at marriage can only be successful if there is a favourable public environment (Tulahdar, 1989).

*Various avenues
of community
education
should be
explored*

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7

The Early Prison of Prostitution

Every year large numbers of young Nepali girls are sold for profit. Thousands end up in Indian brothels where they are "broken in", groomed as prostitutes and imprisoned in an existence of terror and degradation. While there is little in the way of systematic research on the subject, there is adequate evidence that the trafficking of young girls to India provides a lucrative trade for many and continues unabated. This contemptible practice violates every principle of the child's right to protection and mars permanently the lives of individual girls.

HOW MANY

HMG Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare maintains that the number of Nepali prostitutes in India may be as high as 200,000. The Indian Health Organisation (a non-government agency) estimated that there were 100,000 Nepali girls and women working as prostitutes in India (*The Times of India*, January 2, 1989). Of these about 20 per cent were under 20 years of age and 35 per cent had been abducted by traffickers.

There is no conclusive estimate of the numbers

ORIGINS AND DESTINATION

The trafficking of poor, rural girls is prevalent all over Nepal. In particular, Kavre, Sindhupalchok and Nuwakot have been identified as "high risk" districts by HMG Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. While Gurungs and Tamangs were given as concubines to Rana harems, communities engaged in trafficking today include Thakalis, Daraii, Chepangs, Tharus, Brahmins, Chhetris, Newars and others (Thapa, 1989)

Trafficking in girls is prevalent all over Nepal

According to Indian police figures 12,000 of the 15,000 prostitutes working in Uttar Pradesh were Nepali; and, of the 424 prostitutes arrested in Kanpur, Agra, Varanasi, Lucknow and Allahabad 342 were Nepali women. The commonest destinations for Nepali prostitutes are Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta (Thapa, 1989).

Abducted girls end up in the big cities of India

"RECRUITMENT" AND DISPOSAL

Girls in the 10-14 year age group are at the highest risk of being picked up by traffickers. Professional *didis* (literally: elder sisters) scout for suitable candidates and buy young girls for as little as NRs. 135 (US\$ 4) a child. Often the sellers are fathers and brothers. Frequently other local agents collude in the transactions. In some areas of the country e.g. the Sindhupalchok-Kavre region the identities of families and facilitators are common knowledge.

A girl may be sold for Rs. 135

Not all girls are sold knowingly. Families are often deceived by young men who offer marriage and the good life to their daughters. After a local marriage ceremony (in which money is accepted as traditional "bride price"), the girl is dispatched to a predetermined destination in India and the young man disappears, never to be seen again. These young men may be accompanied by their "mothers" or *didis* to provide greater credibility to the fraud being perpetrated. The young man posing as the "son" may marry five or six times in a single season. At other times a *didi* may gain the trust of poverty stricken families and offer employment to their young daughters.

Families are often deceived

Across the border the girls are sold to "trainers" for upto 50 times the original price. During the training the girl is dehumanized through repeated

*Girls are
dehumanized
into compliance*

physical, sexual and psychological violence. The process of making her compliant and obedient can take upto a month or more. Once she is thoroughly broken in a girl can be sold for as much as 300 times her original price to a big city brothel (Thapa, 1989).

REASONS

There are some major historical and socio-economic causes for trafficking in girls.

The tradition of buying and offering virgins to temples as puja (prayer) girls (known as *Devakis*; see Box 7.1) has existed in the country for centuries. Having lost its spiritual content, this tradition mutated to prostitution somewhere along the way but continued to receive tacit social acceptance.

*The end of
concubinage
created a
vacuum*

Historically, Gurung and Tamang girls and women were recruited as concubines in Rana harems. Both the procurers and the families of the concubines possessed prestige and power on account of their links with the Ranas. The end of the 104 year Rana rule brought with it the end of concubinage and created a vacuum in place of the benefits derived from this practice by a number of people. It was to fill this vacuum that the Indian market was approached.

BOX 7.1

THE DEVAKI SYSTEM: A CASE FROM THE FAR WEST

Devaki women are those who are endowed to temples by people who wish to offer them by the way of "Bhakal" i.e. a religious gift or dedication. The Devaki system is a deep rooted social practice which is mostly in Baltadi, in Dadeldhura and also in some of the parts of Doti District. Nowadays, many Devaki women are migrating to Mahendranagar.

Women become "Devaki" if people who can afford it buy them to offer to the gods [sic] in lieu of precious gifts such as gold or silver. Those who are economically better off buy a girl of Bhandari and Naiyar family [sic]. Money is paid to the mother or parents of the girls.

After she has been a Devaki, a girl can never marry but she can have affairs or become a 'mistress'. If a Devaki bears a female child, the child will be dedicated to the deity. Sometimes the Devaki sells her female child for the same purpose (making a Devaki).

- Reproduced from *Children and Women in Nepal—A Situational Analysis*, UNICEF, Kathmandu, 1991, (draft mimeo.).

Absolute poverty, combined with illiteracy, is often the main reason for selling girls. Harsh economic conditions make it difficult for many families to eat even two square meals a day. Ethical and moral concerns are probably distant and unrealistic ideals when deprivation can be relieved temporarily by the sale of one's "property"—a daughter or sister or wife. Sometimes a girl may even "agree" to be sold in the hope of being rescued from poverty.

Prostitution, far from being ostracized, is viewed as a means of a better material existence among several groups. In fact "...it seems caste is no barrier" and that "...the money is so good that anybody can be a pimp—Brahmins, Chhetris, Matwalis, landowners, the enterprising squatter or the pancha" (Thapa, 1989).

The recruitment of Gurkhas in the

Indian and British armies has apparently led to uneven socio-economic development in many hill villages. Trafficking in girls is employed as a means of balancing out material disparities among households.

There is a suggestion that trafficking is seen as a mere extension of the

BOX 7.2

TRAFFICKING IN GIRLS: SOME OBSERVATIONS

"Extreme poverty and illiteracy are at the root of trafficking in girls. This pernicious phenomenon cannot be ignored any longer and we need to have powerful policy and planning support to control it. Every year 4000-5000 Nepali girls—there is no reliable documentation, so the figure may even be double!—in the 14-20 years age group are sold to brothels all over India. Sometimes girls are even as young as 11 or 12. While Sindhupalchok, Nuwakot and some other districts have been identified as "high risk" areas, girls from all over the country are traded. Brothers, fathers, husbands are all involved in this business...it earns them a lot of money. Sometimes a father may even lament the fact that he has no daughter by whose sale he could make some money! If a daughter happens to "disappear", not much concern is expressed as most often this means that there is one less mouth to feed.

"At the other end, girls go through untold suffering - they may be beaten into submission with iron rods, confined for days in small, unventilated, pitch dark rooms, and raped repeatedly...several times in a single day...Often the child is not strong enough to withstand this abuse - it is estimated that 5 per cent succumb to the physical and mental torture of the "training" period.

"Most girls want to return home. Some, especially those who are literate, manage to find their way back, but all they find at home is social ostracism and inestimable poverty. Sadly, but understandably, large numbers are forced to return to the brothels in order to meet their survival needs. It has been estimated that upto 1500 victims could be brought back every year with the cooperation of Nepali and Indian agencies, but often returning can prove to be equally or more traumatic. This tragedy need not have occurred if along with preventive actions, certain measures for the reception and rehabilitation of returning girls could be taken. So far, the government has chosen to turn a blind eye. We are told that prostitution is an age old practice, that it is difficult to control; is this any justification for inaction?! A commonly aired fear is that returning girls will bring back AIDS with them. Rather than shying away from the problem urgent action has to be undertaken. There must be AIDS testing facilities and rehabilitation of AIDS victims.

"Returning girls must not be ghettoized, they should be integrated into a variety of existing institutions where they could be trained to earn a living and rehabilitated socially. So far the government's response has been to run a Nari Kalyan Griha (Women's Welfare Home). Preventive action is taken by enrolling 22 "potential victims" from high risk areas every year and giving them 9 months training in vocational skills. These girls are then sent back home.

"The situation is getting worse and it has to be tackled. Of course in the NGO sector deep concern has been expressed. Following a seminar organized by ABC-Nepal, a network has been set up; this operates as a pressure group. Members represent a variety of NGOs, multi-lateral agencies, political parties, as well as legal and academic institutions. The publicity given to the problem has been reflected in the press and other media, and it was gratifying to note that the main political parties had included the control of trafficking in their respective election manifestos. We look forward to the new government's commitment to this issue. A great deal of change can be achieved with sincere effort. We find already that our awareness building initiatives, although limited by resource constraints, are having an impact in the field - people are becoming more conscious and the grassroots organizations of political parties have joined hands with us to spread the message. But this is not enough. Governmental agencies have to get involved to effect widespread and long lasting change."

- Extracts from an interview with Durga Ghimire, President, ABC-Nepal, May 1991.

*Flesh trade
reflects the low
social value of
girls and women*

*Widespread
awareness is
necessary*

"promiscuous" way of life of the lower castes and therefore does not get much attention from high caste officials.

All in all, flesh trafficking reflects the low social value accorded to the girl child and her eminent dispensability. She is viewed as a liability rather than as a productive asset and therefore there are few qualms in exchanging her for cash. Feeding and clothing her throughout her childhood only to send her to a husband's home with a dowry is an expensive proposition. Of course the girl's inputs into the household economy are not at all acknowledged.

An important reason why trafficking in girls continues or is on the increase, is that efforts to create widespread awareness about the nature and magnitude of the problem have been limited and because interventions by law enforcing agencies have been sporadic and weak.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Once sold in India, girls' connections with their homes and country are almost always severed permanently. Among those who do manage to return, venereal diseases, skin infections, drug addiction and mental disorders are

common afflictions. The possible importation of AIDS into Nepal through those who return poses an extremely serious and growing threat. It is estimated that in the developing world 1.5 million women are infected with the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV); it is likely that in Bombay, where AIDS is proliferating uncontrollably (see Box 7.3) several Nepali prostitutes, who are minors, are either carriers or victims of the disease. Appropriate measures need to be taken to restore the health of girls who return and to rehabilitate them socially. At present HMG has not developed a systematic approach in this regard.

PROTECTION

The sixth amendment of the Civil Code of Nepal i.e. the Mulki Ain 2020, in the chapter on trafficking in persons, provides for severe punishment of procurers. Traffickers caught at the time of attempting to sell a person,

AIDS—ON THE INCREASE

BOX 7.3

According to a recent report in *Time* there is an alarmingly high incidence of AIDS among the prostitutes of Bombay. Given the high concentration of Nepali girls and women in the red light areas of the city it can be surmised that a large number have contracted the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV). Edward W. Desmond reports:

- ...AIDS... is rapidly spreading across India. The epicenter of the epidemic is Bombay, a city of more than 11 million, which is home to one-fourth of the 4,305 people so far who are HIV positive, a number that most officials agree must be well below the real figure, given the limited testing done to date. Significant numbers contracted the illness through infected blood, but more than half were exposed in places like Bombay's infamous red light district, Falkland Road. Health experts estimate that 25 percent to 30 percent of the city's 100,000 prostitutes are HIV positive [emphasis mine]. Compounding the problem, many of their clients are migrant workers who regularly carry their pay packet and, unwittingly, the AIDS virus home to villages...
- Excerpted from "Warning! AIDS has arrived", *Time*, No.9, March 4, 1991, p. 57.

especially a girl, outside of the country are liable to 10 years imprisonment; those caught after the sale are liable to 20 years imprisonment. If found within Nepal, the buyer is liable to similar punishment.

*There is provision
for severe
punishment of
procurers*

The Traffic in Person (Control) Act, 2043, also prohibits the induction of a female into prostitution by fraudulent or violent means. A person involved in such activities can be imprisoned for 10 to 15 years.

Although laws prohibiting flesh trade exist, these obviously have scant effect on controlling the phenomenon. Based on the figures of police arrests of traffickers, the Nepal Elders Organization found that more than 90 per cent of 303 convictions in 1986 went unpunished because of loopholes in the law.

EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM

Governmental Agencies

1. The Women's Development Division of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has been running a skill development training centre, Nari Kalyan Griha in Kathmandu for the last 8 years. This is intended as a preventive and rehabilitative measure. Girls from "high risk" areas such as Sindhupalchok, Dhading and Kavre are selected and trained to be self-sufficient. Reportedly, trainees have expressed satisfaction with the course; some have felt that the duration should be increased from 9 months to 2 years (Dikshit, 1991).

Non-Governmental Agencies

1. CWIN (Child Workers in Nepal) is conducting an *in-depth research study* in Sindhupalchok to investigate the problem of trafficking.
2. ABC-Nepal organized a *landmark workshop* in 1990 entitled "Trafficking of Women—A Social Cancer, Our Responsibility". Forty two organizations from the governmental and non-governmental sector attended. Among the main objectives of the workshop were creating recognition of trafficking as a serious social disease, generating informed discussion on the issue, articulating recommendations and forming a network of interested agencies and a pressure group.
3. Primary school teachers are periodically given *sensitization training* with regard to the nature of the problem and the role of teachers in spreading awareness and contributing to its con-

BOX 7.4

EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM EXPLOITATION

Article 34 unambiguously directs the State to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including the exploitative use of children in prostitution. In Article 11 provision is made to take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad. To this end governments are directed to promote the conclusion of multi-lateral agreements or accession to existing agreements.

trol.

4. Awareness building radio programmes are broadcast by Radio Nepal with the support of ABC-Nepal. Fifteen minute *broadcasts on various aspects of trafficking* are made fortnightly.
5. Under the coordination of ABC-Nepal an *ad-hoc pressure group* of 11 members has been set up. The group plans to develop a one year plan of action. The group hopes to work closely with related ministries and will monitor the implementation of any programmes that are initiated.
6. ABC-Nepal has produced some important *information, education and communication materials* on the subject. The report of the workshop on trafficking contains several informative background papers. An audio-cassette and an accompanying booklet of songs has been produced. Additionally, a succinct inventory of recommendations for governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, donor agencies and political parties has also been developed and published.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

Some of the essential short- and long-term measures to control the trafficking of girls would include:

- increasing general public awareness of the methods and consequences of trafficking;
- mobilizing public opinion against trafficking and involving the community in its control;
- tightening and strengthening the law, monitoring its enforcement and banning retrograde institutions, such as the Devaki tradition;
- sensitizing and orienting members of law enforcement agencies;
- increasing women and girls' education and employment opportunities;
- providing assistance, protection as well as reception and rehabilitation facilities to victims of trafficking;
- prioritizing the issue at the national level and developing systems of cooperation and border controls between the Nepali and Indian governments;

Together with the above it is necessary that information is gathered on the subject and that systematic and reliable evidence is collated in order to provide a firm basis for preventive intervention and legislative safeguards.

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8

Statistics at a Glance

	TOTAL	GIRLS	Sex Ratio
POPULATION*			
0-4 years	2,314,505	1,123,924 (37.65%)	944
5-9 years	2,190,446	1,073,305 (35.96%)	961
10-14 years	1,707,021	787,731 (26.39%)	857

VITAL STATISTICS

Crude Birth Rate (births/1000 population)	40.7 ^b
Life Expectancy at Birth (for females)	53.52 years ^c
Infant Mortality Rate (deaths/1000 live births)	107 ^e
Under-5 Mortality Rate (child deaths/1000 live births)	165 ^c
Crude Death Rate (deaths/1000 population)	16.57 ^d
Maternal Mortality Rate (deaths/100,000 live births)	853 ^d
Natural Increase Rate (per 1000)	25 ^d
Age at Marriage (in years)	18.9 years ^e
Total Fertility Rate (per woman)	5.8 ^f

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Immunization Coverage^c

BCG	> 80%
DPT3	> 80%
OPV3	> 80%
Measles	70%
TT2	21%

Incidence of LBW babies 29%^c

Pourbaix-Gomez Classification

Nutritional Level ^g (per cent)	Normal	1st Degree	2nd Degree	3rd Degree
	30	29	25.4	15.6
PEM in Children ^h (6-72 months) (N = 6567)	Normal	Stunting (S)	Wasting (W)	S+W
	45.3	48.1	2.8	3.1

EDUCATION

Literacy Rate	35%
Female Literacy Rate	18%

STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

	Primary Education	Lower Secondary	Secondary
No. of Schools	7,684	3,864	1,619
Total Enrollees	2,092,038	301,775	306,108
Girls Enrolled	674,047 (32.2%)	82,516 (27.3%)	80,054 (26.2%)
No. of Teachers	56,758	11,971	9,178
No. Trained	19,882	4,264	4,408
Female Gross Enrolment Ratio at Primary Level	62%		
Female Net Enrolment Ratio at Primary Level	31%		
No. of Children completing Primary Level (% of 1st grade)	27%		

WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

	Water Supply	Sanitation
% of Total Population Served ^d		
Urban (1985)	70.4	17.2
Rural (1985)	24.7	0.2
Total	28.3	1.7

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TOWARDS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR GIRL CHILDREN IN NEPAL

THE CORRELATES OF SON PREFERENCE	SUBSTANTIVE MANIFESTATIONS	OUTCOMES	AREAS OF INTERVENTION - INFORMATION NEEDS, ADVOCACY AND PROGRAMME ACTIONS
<i>An exaggerated desire for sons and social and cultural negation of girls</i>	Indifference/disappointment at the birth of daughters Attribution of positive value to sons and negative value to daughters and social discrimination Gender stereotypical socialization with emphasis on submissiveness and passivity	Low self-esteem in girls Low social value of girls Preferential investment of scarce resources in boys Indifference to the situation of girls	Documentation and analysis of gender disparities through qualitative investigative/diagnostic research and quantitative studies Education of parents and community about the value of the girl and her rights as a child. Promotion of the image of girls through the media, including the challenging of narrow stereotypes, exposure to "new" role models and the placing of curbs on the disparaging portrayals of women and girls. Sensitizing and mobilizing parliamentarians, policy makers, legislators, planners and programme implementors with respect to the "whole" girl and need for inter-sectoral coordination. Mainstreaming girl child concerns into policy, planning and programming on a regular basis. Review/analysis of laws.
<i>Physical neglect of girls</i>	Witting or unwitting discrimination in— Feeding Health care practices	Wasting Stunting Micro-nutrient deficiencies Morbidity Mortality	Analysis of data on a gender disaggregated basis, including those on morbidity, mortality, access to and utilization of health care services. Anthropometric studies Parent education on child feeding, health care and children's developmental needs. Sensitization of health and community development personnel to gender concerns. Identification of indicators for programme action and monitoring and strengthening of field level monitoring capacity, including gender sensitive health monitoring systems.

<i>Low investment in girls and fewer opportunities for development (1)</i>	Low/no enrolment in school on account of low value attached to girls' education Removal from school and isolation in domestic sphere	Impeded intellectual and social development Low self-esteem Lack of access to information	Research to elicit information on knowledge, attitudes and practices with regard to girls' education Sensitization of community and school teachers to girls' education and enrolment Strengthening and modifying the school infrastructure, including appointment of women teachers Incentives for continued attendance in school Establishment and networking of child-care, non-formal and formal facilities Development of alternative educational models and flexibility in existing ones (eg. multiple entry points, part time attendance, etc.) Improved access to water, fuel and fodder to release girls for education Comprehensive school health services Gender equal education Innovative uses of information, culture, education and programme communication to reach unreached girls and open up new learning and discussion opportunities.
<i>Low investment in girls and fewer opportunities for development (2)</i>	High premium on marriage and maternity	Early marriage Teenage pregnancy associated with malnutrition and high maternal morbidity and mortality, as well as low "maternal competence" skills	Information gathering according to region and ethnicity to highlight patterns of nuptiality and maternity Community education and sensitization to the issue and negative effects of early marriage Broadening scope of existing community development programmes to include and converge on adolescent girls Education for vocations and training for employment Treating teenage maternity as "at risk" and including this as a special concern in MCH services. Health and nutrition education for adolescent girls Mobilization of public opinion against early marriage and enactment and enforcement of appropriate legislation

<i>Exploitation of labour power</i>	• Non-wage Labour Early assumption of adult-type domestic and child-care responsibilities - Fuel, fodder and water collection - Animal tending activities • Wage Labour Labour in underpaid, unhealthy and unprotected working conditions	Denial of education and other opportunities for development	Compilation of qualitative and quantitative data on girls' work Promotion of equitable work sharing between boys and girls Provision of appropriate (labour saving) technology to rural areas Strengthening non-formal educational facilities Mobilization of legislation and public opinion against child labour with a focus on girls Enforcement of law protecting children's work and working conditions
<i>Dispensibility and abuse</i>	Sale of girls Sexual abuse	Personal and moral degradation of young girls Violation of the child's rights to care and protection Exposure to dangerous sexually transmitted diseases.	Gathering of systematic and reliable evidence to provide a firm basis for prevention, rescue and rehabilitation Legislation, public opinion and law enforcement against the sale of girls and severe penalties for those infringing the law Preventive measures against trafficking Reception and rehabilitation measures, including health care, for returning girls

APPENDIX I

TABLE A

Age Distribution of the Child Population in Nepal - 1981

Age	Total		Females		Males	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
<1	403,794	2.7	196,226	2.7	207,568	2.7
1	487,684	3.2	224,310	3.1	263,374	3.4
2	488,532	3.3	241,686	3.3	246,846	3.2
3	472,671	3.1	237,080	3.2	235,591	3.1
4	461,824	3.1	224,622	3.1	237,202	3.1
0-4	2,314,505	15.4	1,123,924	15.34	1,190,581	15.47
5	528,646	3.5	256,863	3.5	271,783	3.5
6	448,047	3.0	222,410	3.0	225,637	2.9
7	420,003	2.8	210,309	2.9	209,694	2.7
8	443,123	2.9	211,539	2.9	231,584	3.0
9	350,627	2.3	172,184	2.3	178,443	2.3
5-9	2,190,446	14.58	1,073,305	14.65	1,117,141	14.51
10	454,669	3.0	208,511	2.8	246,188	3.2
11	264,224	1.8	123,605	1.7	140,619	1.8
12	421,662	2.8	191,154	2.6	230,508	3.0
13	266,308	1.8	124,834	1.7	141,474	1.8
14	300,128	2.0	139,627	1.9	160,501	2.1
10-14	1,707,021	11.36	787,731	10.75	918,840	11.91
NEPAL	6,211,972		3,226,562		2,984,960	

Source: *Nepal District Profile - Population*, National Research Associates, Kathmandu, 1987.

TABLE B

Child Population by Sex - 1971, 1981 & 1988

Year	Total	Female	Male
1971	4,674,578 (100.00)	2,295,156 (49.11)	2,379,422 (50.91)
1981	6,211,972 (100.00)	2,984,960 (48.05)	3,227,012 (51.95)
1988*	7,962,450 (100.00)	3,803,091 (47.76)	4,159,359 (52.24)

* Estimate; refers to 0-15 age group.

Figures in parentheses refer to row percentages.

Source: *Population Census*, Central Bureau of Statistics.

TABLE C

Projected Population by Age and Sex, 1990

Age Group	Female	Male	Total	% of total population	Sex Ratio
0-4	1,444,780	1,569,341	3,024,121	16.0	921
5-9	1,277,225	1,406,998	2,684,223	14.2	908
10-14	1,065,074	1,165,071	2,230,145	11.8	914
Total	3,787,079	4,141,410	7,928,489	42.0	914

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 1986.

Population Projection of Nepal - Medium Variant, 1980-2000.

TABLE D

Age Structure of the Girl Child Population - 1981

Age Group	Total Children	Female
0-4	2,314,505 (37.26)	1,123,924 (37.65)
5-9	2,190,446 (35.26)	1,073,305 (35.96)
10-14	1,707,021 (27.48)	787,731 (26.39)
0-14	6,211,972 (100.00)	2,984,960 (100.00)

Figures in parentheses refer to column percentages.

Source: *National District Profile - Population*, National Research Associates, Kathmandu, 1987.

TABLE E

Proportion of Girls in Total Child Population
at 3 Age Levels 1981

Age Group	Total Children	Females	Sex Ratio
0 - 4	2,314,505 (100.00)	1,123,924 (48.56)	914
5 - 9	2,190,446 (100.00)	1,073,305 (48.99)	961
10 - 14	1,707,021 (100.00)	787,731 (46.15)	857
0 - 14	6,211,972 (100.00)	2,984,960 (48.05)	925

Figures in parentheses refer to row percentages.

Source: Nepal Research Associates, 1987.

TABLE F

Declining Sex Ratio in the Child Population 1971, 1981 & 1990*

Year	Sex Ratio
1971	965
1981	925
1990*	917

* Projected figure

Sources: Nepal Research Associates, 1987

Central Bureau of Statistics, 1986.

TABLE G

Rural-Urban Distribution of Girl Child Population

Region	Total Children	Females
Rural	5,837,769 (93.98)	2,809,009 (94.10)
Urban	374,203 (6.02)	175,951 (5.90)
Total	6,211,972 (100.00)	2,984,960 (100.00)

Figures in parentheses refer to column percentages.

Source: Population Census, 1981.

TABLE H

Regional Distribution of Child Population - 1981

Region	Total Children	Females
Mountains	506,416 (8.15)	244,053 (8.18)
Hills	2,921,447 (47.03)	1,411,247 (47.28)
Tarai	2,784,109 (44.82)	1,329,666 (44.54)
NEPAL	6,211,972 (100.00)	2,984,966 (100.00)

Figures in parentheses refer to column percentages.

Source: Population Census, 1981.

APPENDIX II

TABLE A

Number of Schools and Pupils/Girls at the Primary Level 1971-1988

	1971	1976	1981	1986	1988
No. of Schools	7634	8768	10628	12186	13290
No. of Pupils					
Total	410505	643835	1388001	1857658	2092038
Girls	64107 (15.62)	129276 (20.08)	373736 (26.93)	559481 (30.12)	674047 (32.22)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Source: *Meeting Basic Educational Needs in Nepal*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1990, p. 5.

TABLE B

Number of Schools and Pupils/Girls at the Lower Secondary Level 1971-1988

	1971	1976	1981	1986	1988
No. of Schools	677	2289	2786	3729	3864
No. of Pupils					
Total	52776	188688	169564	271224	301775
Girls	8521 (16.14)	33396 (17.69)	34361 (20.26)	69089 (25.47)	82516 (27.34)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Source: *Meeting Basic Educational Needs in Nepal*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1990, p. 11.

TABLE C

Number of Schools and Pupils/Girls at the Secondary Level 1971-1988

	1971	1976	1981	1986	1988
No. of Schools	494	520	918	1411	1619
No. of Pupils					
Total	66841	74060	144331	268805	306108
Girls	10229	12536	27266	61773	80054
	(15.30)	(16.92)	(18.89)	(22.98)	(26.15)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Source: *Meeting Basic Educational Needs in Nepal*, Ministry of Education and Culture, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1990, p. 11.

TABLE D

Male/Female Differentials in Enrolment in School Grades in 1985
(As Percentage of Total Grade Enrolment)

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Male	68.8	70.1	70.7	72.1	71.7	73.9	74.6	74.2	76.5	77.5
Female	32.2	29.9	29.3	27.9	28.3	26.1	25.4	25.8	23.5	22.5

Source: Report of the *National Seminar on the Girl Child*, WSCC/UNICEF, 1988, p. 45.



SAARC DECADE OF THE GIRL CHILD, 1991-2000

Recessional: I NEVER FAIL TO REMEMBER YOU

We never fail to remember you in prayer, giving thanks to our God for you
Ever since the time we heard of your faith, in Jesus Christ, our Lord - 3

1. We ask that God will give to you the fullest knowledge of his will
So you will lead the kind of life which the Lord expects of you.
2. May you have within your heart the strength,
To bear your circumstance with joy,
To thank the Father for his gift and to live within High light.

THE WHITE HOUSE

May 24, 1995

The Honorable Bob Filner
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0550

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your letter and for the Op-Ed by Dennis Wasson on fighting poverty in Bangladesh. Wasson's experience learning about Grameen Bank's success is one I have shared. Microcredit is certainly a vital tool for empowerment and one that merits appreciation around the globe.

I so appreciate your thoughtfulness in sending the article and for your cogent comments.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Hillary

Hillary Rodham Clinton

*One of the reasons to protect the
Community Development Bank program*

13 to use "11" to encourage similar
programs in America.

BOB FILNER
11TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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PUBLIC WORKS AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 4, 1995

R

Hillary Rodham Clinton
c/o Margaret Williams
Old Executive Office Bldg Room 100
Office Of The First Lady
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Clinton:

I followed your recent visit to the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh with a personal interest. Sharon Schultze, my Senior Legislative Assistant, recently returned from an Educational Trip to Bangladesh, organized jointly by the Grameen Bank and RESULTS Educational Fund. The main purpose of this trip was to visit and learn about the work of the Grameen Bank. She spent two weeks in Bangladesh and five days in its villages, talking to the Bank workers and the borrowers. She was at the Grameen Bank in Dhaka approximately two weeks before your visit.

As a result of her trip and reports of several microenterprise poverty lending programs in this country, including the one in Arkansas with which you have been involved, we are becoming very interested in microenterprise lending. I hope to be able to take a leadership role in promoting this innovative approach to fighting poverty in the United States--and would like to work with you if you decide to become even more involved in promoting microenterprise lending.

I thought you might be interested in seeing the enclosed article, written by Dennis Wasson, a San Diegan and a member of RESULTS--the exemplary grassroots organization whose mission is to "create the political will to end poverty in this century". RESULTS has been working closely with the Grameen Bank for the past several years.

You may have heard that RESULTS is embarking on a new project called "Where Credit Is Due 2005". Microcredit lenders around the globe are endorsing the goal of reaching 100 million of the world's poorest families with microcredit loans for self-employment by 2005. 100 million families include 500 million people, almost half of the world's 1.2 billion people currently living in poverty! As the success of the Grameen Bank proves, reaching this goal is one that can be pursued for profit, as well as to help the economically disenfranchised.

We will keep in touch as we move forward.

Sincerely,

BOB FILNER
Member of Congress

BF/ss
169789

OPINION

A war against poverty in Bangladesh

By DENNIS WASSON

During Hillary Clinton's visit to Bangladesh yesterday, she probably heard predictions that world poverty will be halved by the year 2005. And she learned that this will occur as a result of action taken by ordinary citizens, and that the mechanism for the elimination of poverty will be capitalism.

Hillary experienced poverty in Bangladesh on a very personal level. She visited and heard the stories of people like Joy-nub, of the village of Jagatpur, a woman I met last month, who lived with her six children in abject poverty. Joy-nub was so committed to getting out of poverty that she sold the milk from her cow to others while her children went hungry. She did this for four years while she paid off her bank loans. She did this because she knew these loans were her family's only path out of poverty.

Now her children are well fed and clothed. All are in school and her oldest, a daughter, is about to complete the 11th grade.

Yesterday, the first lady spoke to women after women who have brought their families out of hunger, upgraded their health, provided a house and helped their kids stay in school.

These are some of the same remarkable experiences that unfolded to me over my 10-day visit last month to the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. As an ordinary citizen and member of RESULTS, an international grass-roots lobbying organization committed to ending hunger, I was attending the "Eleventh International Dialogue Program" jointly organized by the Grameen Bank and RESULTS Educational Fund. The Grameen Bank provides loans to the poorest of the poor in Bangladesh and promotes self-sufficiency among women.

Bangladesh is a relatively new country formed through the fight for liberation from the West Pakistanis in 1971. Over a million people were killed during the war. The intellectuals in particular were purged. Lack of an educated middle class, combined with various floods and famines, destroyed the country's finances.

By 1974 the economy was in a very bad condition and, in reference to foreign aid, Henry Kissinger referred to Bangladesh as "a bottomless bucket."

It was in 1976 that Muhammad Yunus, an economics professor, walked out from the campus of Chittagong University to the adjacent village and met Sophia, a maker of bamboo footstools. Although she produced good quality footstools, Sophia made only 2 cents a day.

Professor Yunus discovered that Sophia was obliged to sell her stools to her material supplier at a price he determined. This was because she did not have sufficient working capital (20 cents per stool) to

purchase the bamboo she needed to produce her product.

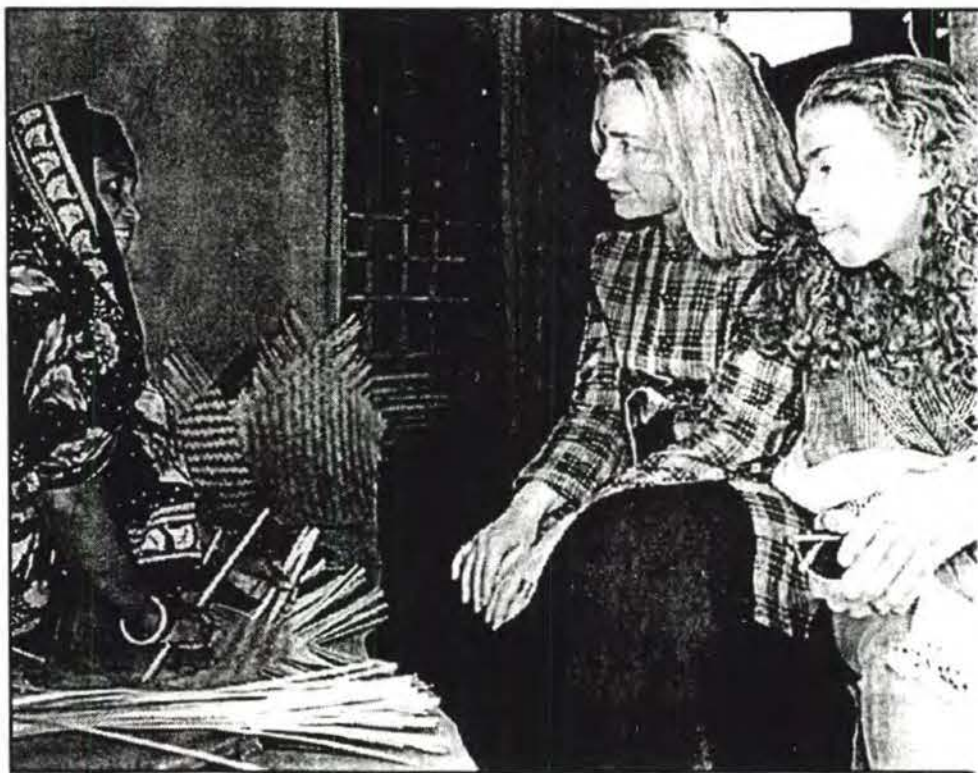
Yunus made her a small personal loan at the market interest rate, and she was able to increase her profit from 2 cents to \$1.25. As Professor Yunus later wrote, "I was shocked by the simplicity of the solution which the situation required and the fact that nobody bothered to pay any attention to her problem."

This experience eventually led Yunus to establish the Grameen (or village) Bank. The first lady visited this bank. Grameen works exclusively with the poorest of the poor and is self-sustaining. Ninety-four percent of its borrowers are women. Although these borrowers are illiterate and lack good numerical skills, they are able to design and conduct micro-business

borrowers. I met their spouses and children, and saw the circumstances of their lives. I saw starving people who had raised themselves up above the poverty line simply by having access to credit.

After my visit to the villages, there was a dialogue with Professor Yunus. He is a brilliant, humble and honest man. I was taken by his straightforward nature and basic common sense. He emphasized that what was most critical to poverty eradication was not funding but the elimination of the mind-set that poor people are lazy, ignorant by choice, or somehow different.

He stressed that poverty elimination must be done by business people. Micro-enterprise programs, loans and trust organization must run like a business. He spoke about replicating the Grameen



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Visitors: Hillary and Chelsea Clinton with a woman who lives in Grameen Bank Village.

endeavors that generate sufficient income to repay their loans, and to sustain themselves and their families.

Today the bank has more than 2 million borrowers and loans out around a half-billion dollars. The average loan size is \$100, the interest rate is 20 percent, and the repayment rate is 98 percent. One third of Grameen borrowers already have crossed over the poverty line, and Grameen Bank vows to have all borrowers over the poverty line by the year 2000.

My visit included interviewing borrowers in their villages. Hillary Clinton did the same. I was followed by hordes of people who had never seen a white-skinned person before. I was invited into the homes of the bank staff and into the homes of the

Bank model and about a Grameen/RESULTS plan to bring micro-enterprise lending to 100 million of the world's poorest families by 2005.

In my wildest dreams, I never thought I would go to Bangladesh to become part of a solution to global poverty. Yet, there I was observing the working of a bank for the poorest of the poor and learning that this model could be applied worldwide to tackle poverty in the next 10 years. I was actually visualizing an end to poverty.

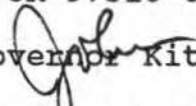
Poverty is not what I thought and not what it seems. An end to poverty is in our grasp, and individual citizens can be part of the solution. These insights are the souvenirs I brought back from Bangladesh. Hillary's will be similar.

WASSON is a San Diego architect.

THE WHITE HOUSE

May 24, 1995

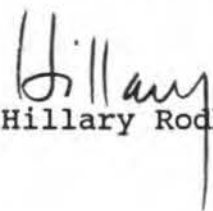
Gov. John A. Kitzhaber
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
Salem, OR 97310-0370

Dear Governor  Kitzhaber:

Thank you for writing and for recommending Dr. Weiss for the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women. Please be assured she will receive full consideration.

Thank you again for writing and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

JOHN A. KITZHABER
GOVERNOR



R

May 10, 1995

Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

I am writing to endorse the appointment of Dr. Anita Weiss, Associate Professor, University of Oregon, as a United States delegate to the 1995 U.N. Fourth World Forum for Women in Beijing this fall. It would be an honor to have a delegate selected from Oregon. Dr. Weiss is extremely qualified and would be an excellent selection for the delegation.

Dr. Weiss has an incredible background both scholastically and politically related to women's issues. She has particular expertise studying women in Muslim societies and women in Asia. Dr. Weiss spent one and one-half years in Pakistan on a Senior Fulbright grant studying ways to integrate issues about women into bachelors and masters educational programs and also monitored elections in Pakistan as a member of an international team of experts. She has published several books and articles related to her studies.

I am excited about the opportunity for Oregon if Dr. Anita Weiss is selected as a delegate to the U.N. conference. Not only would Dr. Weiss bring her experience and expertise to the delegate group but in addition, she would return valuable knowledge to her graduate and undergraduate classrooms at the University of Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration of Dr. Anita Weiss as a delegate to the 1995 U.N. Fourth World Forum for Women.

Sincerely,

John A. Kitzhaber

cc: Antonella Pianalto

THE WHITE HOUSE

June 5, 1995

Mr. Steven C.F. Anderson
Chief Executive Officer
Globalvision, Inc.
1600 Broadway
Suite 700
New York, New York 10019

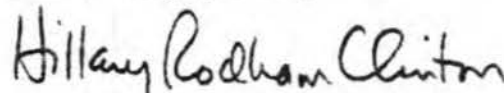
PERSONAL

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Thank you very much for your production of "The Promise" which was shown at the children's symposium I hosted at the Summit of the Americas. It sent a very powerful message and added to the ultimate success of our program.

With appreciation and kind regards, I
am

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

THE WHITE HOUSE

May 22, 1995

Mr. Eckhard Pfeiffer
President and CEO
Compaq Computer Corporation
20555 S.H. 249
Houston, TX 77070

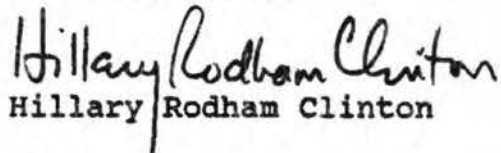
Dear Mr. Pfeiffer:

Thank you for your generous contribution of the twenty-five Compaq computers and monitors, which were distributed with great pride during my trip to South Asia.

I was pleased to announce the donations of the computers to the recipient organizations, which ranged from rural health clinics to small village credit associations. Each of these institutions will profit greatly from your thoughtful contribution. Please know Compaq's contribution will benefit countless individuals.

With best wishes and gratitude for Compaq's generosity, I remain

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

THE WHITE HOUSE

May 22, 1995

Mr. C. Raymond Larkin, Jr.
President and CEO
Nelcor Incorporated
4280 Hacienda Drive
Pleasanton, CA 94588

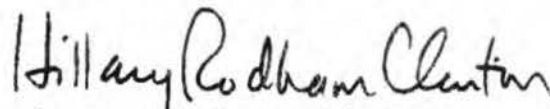
Dear Mr. Larkin:

Thank you for your generous contribution of ten pulse oximeters, which were distributed with great pride during my trip to South Asia.

The recipient organizations, such as rural health clinics, will profit greatly from your thoughtful contribution. In most cases, the organizations had virtually no medical technology. Please know that Nelcor's contribution will benefit countless individuals.

With best wishes and gratitude for Nelcor's generosity, I remain

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton



AMBASSADOR OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NEW DELHI

SEP - 5 1995

Margaret
Dear Minister Alva:

During your July meetings in Washington, D.C. with Under Secretary Tim Wirth and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, you mentioned that girls' enrollment and retention in primary schools would best be improved by hiring more female teachers and building schools closer to potential students. We agree completely and would encourage the government and larger donors to support such programs.

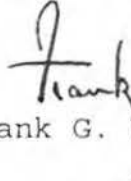
Unfortunately, the global USAID Girls' and Women's Education Initiative only has limited funds to support the Indian Government's education program. We are unable to provide sufficient funding to be able to make a real difference in the numbers of female teachers or schools. Thus, the USAID proposal targets its initial activity on a niche that the government and other donors have identified but not yet addressed. The activity will complement the government's teacher training curriculum by developing teaching practices with male and female teachers to encourage girls' participation in school. Other countries are finding that where girls are more active participants in learning, they are more likely to stay in school. By extension, this encourages their parents to enroll their other daughters.

Given our limited resources in such a large country, we can best support a "spread effect" by using the experience in one District Teacher Training Institute for dissemination of a teacher training module in Uttar Pradesh and beyond as desirable.

Her Excellency
Margaret Alva,
Minister of State for Personnel,
Public Grievances & Pensions,
New Delhi.

I appreciate your interest in the universal education of girls in India and hope that we can work together to make a difference in this vitally important area.

Sincerely,



Frank G. Wisner

P.S. If you have a moment free, I could bring by the project organizers for a chat.

cc: Ms. Melanne Verveer, Deputy Chief of Staff for the First Lady, The White House, Washington, D.C.

Ms. Sally Shelton, Asst. Administrator, Global Programs
USAID, NS 4942

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"Sarvodaya" The Sarvodaya
Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka



" SARVODAYA "
The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement.
of Sri Lanka.

DOE NEWS

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Penny Adams, 202/586-5806

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 1, 1994

ENERGY SECRETARY TO LEAD U.S. DELEGATION TO INDIA ON ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND TRADE MISSION

U.S. Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary leaves July 7 for India on a mission to promote "sustainable development" in energy, environment and trade. Representatives from government, non-government and business groups will accompany her.

"President Clinton asked me to undertake this mission," she said. "India is expanding and liberalizing its energy market. The U.S. wishes to help India sustain momentum in open and market-based financing, and to meet its growing energy needs in a sustainable manner through broader use of renewable resources and better efficiency of energy use and production."

One of the major events of the trip will be the "Indo-U.S. Energy Summit: Cooperation for Sustainable Development," that she will co-chair with the Indian Minister of Power, N.K.P. Salve. That will take place in New Delhi on Tuesday, July 12. Mrs. O'Leary will depart New Delhi July 15 to return to Washington.

"This visit," she said, "is part of the administration's efforts to promote U.S. exports and international competitiveness while achieving the goals of sustainable development. We expect to sign agreements with the government of India. We also expect business agreements to be achieved among the Indian and visiting U.S. business interests."

-DOE-

R-94-119

DOE**NEWS****NEWS MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Barbara Semedo, 202/586-5806

Penny Adams, 202/5686-5806

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**July 8, 1994****U.S. ENERGY SECRETARY HAZEL O'LEARY LEADS HIGH-LEVEL
BUSINESS DELEGATION TO INDIA**

NEW DELHI -- U.S. Secretary of Energy Hazel O'Leary arrived here today on a week-long official visit. The visit is a follow-up to an agreement between President Clinton and Prime Minister Rao to further dialogue on issues of mutual interest and concern.

Secretary O'Leary is the first U.S. Cabinet officer in the Clinton administration to visit India. She is accompanied by the largest delegation of U.S. energy sector business leaders ever assembled for a U.S. trade mission.

The Secretary, who will also visit Bombay, will meet with senior Government of India officials, representatives of the private energy and power sectors and non-government organizations concerned with energy policy.

A highlight of Secretary O'Leary's visit will be her July 12 keynote address to an important energy policy seminar. The seminar, entitled "Indo-U.S. Energy Summit: Cooperation for Sustainable Development," is being jointly organized by CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM.

Secretary O'Leary's visit acknowledges that effective energy policy is vital to overall economic development and marks the beginning of a series of visits by senior U.S. officials designed to underscore U.S. support for India's economic liberalization program.

President Clinton's personal request that Secretary O'Leary make this visit reflects the success of Prime Minister Rao's visit to Washington and the importance the Clinton administration attaches to strengthening already improving Indo-U.S. ties.

- DOE -

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DOE**NEWS**

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Penny Adams, 202/586-5806

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 16, 1994

**U.S. ENERGY SECRETARY O'LEARY TO VISIT PAKISTAN SEPTEMBER 21 - 25
ON PRESIDENTIAL MISSION ON ENERGY INVESTMENT**

On a Presidential mission to Islamabad and Lahore, Pakistan, September 21 through 25, U.S. Energy Secretary Hazel R. O'Leary will promote U.S. partnerships in Pakistan's intensified efforts to implement new energy policies to support economic growth and industrial development.

Secretary O'Leary will be accompanied on the trip by over 50 U.S. energy business executives as well as several U.S. Government and environmental representatives. The delegation will include experts in natural gas, oil, coal, renewables, electricity generation, transmission and distribution, energy efficiency and environmental protection.

Mrs. O'Leary said she hopes to encourage sustainable economic and energy development in Pakistan. She wants to support Prime Minister Bhutto's plans to close the gap in Pakistan's electricity supply gap by opening the sector to foreign private investment.

The members of the U.S. delegation will share their experiences in reforming energy regulation to give greater scope to competition as well as offering their expertise in the various energy fields.

A tentative itinerary of Secretary O'Leary's visit is attached. A more detailed schedule will be released at a later date.

- DOE -

R-94-177



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DOE NEWS

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Penny Adams. 202/586-5806

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 1995

ENERGY SECRETARY MAKES RETURN VISIT TO INDIA TO SOLIDIFY RELATIONSHIPS ALREADY BEGUN

Secretary Hazel R. O'Leary will return to India February 11-14, 1995, to open the U.S. exhibition of cutting-edge energy technologies at India's largest trade fair. Over 200,000 business executives from around the globe are expected to attend. Secretary O'Leary committed strong U.S. participation in "ENCON '95" during her visit to India last July as the head of the Presidential Mission on Sustainable Energy and Trade. This July trade mission was the first official visit by a U.S. Cabinet official to India in nearly a decade.

"I feel a return visit to India is extremely important at this time, in order to sustain the momentum generated on my previous visit. We need to continue to promote increased energy trade and investment between our two nations. We had great successes when we were there, signing several important government-to-government agreements and energy business deals worth over \$400 million - - which grew to nearly \$3 billion in the months following our mission."

(MORE)

R-95-014



- 2 -

The objective of ENCON '95 is to bring the world's manufacturers, brokers and consulting firms of Energy Conserving Technologies, equipment and service and the buyers in the industry together in one big market so that buying and selling can take place efficiently and quickly.

After O'Leary's mission, she hosted visits by India's Power Minister Salve, Non-Conventional Energy Minister Kumar and a trade mission led by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Energy deals totalling \$5 billion were signed on these missions. Progress on these visits helped create a positive climate for Commerce Secretary Ron Brown's outstanding Presidential Mission on Business Development, that closed over \$7 billion in deals.

"We want to build on those partnerships that have already been established in sustainable energy and trade," O'Leary continued. "In particular, we hope to facilitate further progress with government approvals for 'fast-track' independent power projects, as well as other projects. We see a particularly exciting role for energy efficiency and renewable technologies that meet energy needs while saving money and cutting pollution. What Indian and U.S. firms do now will impact the economy and the environment of the region as well as the entire world for decades to come."

In addition to trade promotion, the department and the Indian Ministries of Power, Coal, Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Oil and Natural Gas, Environment and Forests, and External Affairs met recently in New Delhi to plan improvements in government policies that will open more private business opportunities. These consultations were established by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed last July by Secretary O'Leary and India's Power Minister Salve.

While in New Delhi, Secretary O'Leary will meet with Power Minister Salve, Finance Minister Singh and other ministers from other energy-related departments. She will participate in several events at the inauguration of ENCON '95 at the 11th Indian Engineering Trade Fair. She will address officials of U.S. industry based in India, and speak to the guests attending the Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI) Founder's Day celebration. She also will return to the village of Dhanawas to launch an initiative to demonstrate U.S. solar energy technologies for rural electrification. She will continue her effort to learn from villagers about their role in the sustainable development process.

The Secretary's public schedule is attached.

- DOE -

R-95-014

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*T*HE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROJECT DIRECTOR



Much of **Laura A. Liswood's** career focuses on assisting the women's community. She is the past publisher of *Seattle Woman* magazine, and a founder of May's List, a Washington State organization that raises money for women political candidates. She conceived, and currently directs, the Women's Leadership Project. Liswood traveled to fifteen countries to personally interview women prime ministers and presidents. These interviews are chronicled on video and in her book *Women Leading at the Top*. Liswood is forming a leadership foundation which will use this information for leadership training. Liswood holds an M.B.A. from Harvard University and a law degree from the University of California at Davis.

*T*HANKS

The Women's Leadership Project would especially like to thank the Seattle Chapter of The Links, Incorporated for funding the first publication of this brochure. The Links is an international, predominantly African-American women's service organization established in 1946 (Philadelphia, PA). The organization has a membership of over 9,000 women leaders in more than 250 chapters throughout the United States, The Bahamas and Germany.

Emerald Productions Inc., Urban Press, KING Broadcasting, and the Northwest International Women's Conference have also generously donated their expertise and time. Thank you to all of the individual women, and men, who have supported this project.

The Women's Leadership Project Video will be available for purchase through the Women's Leadership Foundation (501(c)3) beginning October 1995. Laura A. Liswood's book, *Women Leading at the Top*, will be available through Pandora, a sub-division of Harper Collins, in August 1995. This book chronicles her journey and her interviews with the women prime ministers and presidents of the world.

No part of the text or photographs contained herein may be used or reproduced in any manner without written permission. For information address The Women's Leadership Project, 1202 East Pike Street, #979, Seattle, WA 98122, T 206/322-7117, F 206/322-7308.



* OCU 749-M

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NORTHWEST
INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
CONFERENCE
1995



*M*ISSION STATEMENT

"To foster and promote images of women as leaders around the world, to encourage women, young women, and girls to envision themselves as leaders, to expand the practical understanding of how leadership is exercised and to acquaint women globally with the women who lead countries and to manifest and encourage the vision of a woman as President of the United States."



General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church

100 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002 • (202) 488-5600

March 14, 1995

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Office of the First Lady
Old Executive Office Building
Room 100
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

Thank you for your continued leadership in addressing the plight of children in our nation and around the world. We rely on your strong and clear voice even more now that there is such confused thinking going on in the United States Congress.

I understand that you are heading soon to several countries of South Asia. I would like to send you the enclosed resource material on the problem of child servitude in that region, especially in the carpet industries of India, Pakistan, and Nepal.

The United Methodist Church's General Board of Church and Society and The General Board of Global Ministry's United Methodist Women are both part of a bold and innovative program called RUGMARK, which originated in India and spread to other countries as a means to certify that oriental carpets sold in the U.S. and Europe were made without child labor. We believe it holds the promise of bringing about historic improvement in the lives of almost one million child carpet weavers, many of whom are trapped in virtual slavery.

You will, I am sure, be made more aware of this problem and this program during your visit. I hope this small packet will be helpful to you in preparing for it.

We will pray for you as you travel and for the children whose lives you will touch.

Sincerely,

Jane Hull Harvey
Assistant General Secretary
General Board of Church and Society
United Methodist Church

ewm/JHH

**CHILD LABOR COALITION
RUGMARK CONSUMER EDUCATION
CAMPAIGN**



ORGANIZER'S KIT

1994 - 1995

The Child Labor Coalition

c/o the National Consumers League, 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928-N
Washington, DC 20005 (202)639-8140, fax (202)737-2164

Dear Community Activist:

Welcome to the RUGMARK Consumer Education Campaign. Your role -- along with other activists in communities throughout the nation -- is an important one. Your efforts and outreach to your community are the cornerstone of this campaign.

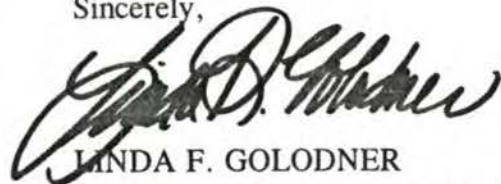
This Organizer's Kit is designed to provide you with information to help you start RUGMARK campaign activities in your community. **You are joining a growing group of activists throughout the world who are working to end the exploitation of children in the carpet industry.**

Enclosed you will find information which has been prepared with you in mind. You are provided with a succinct review of RUGMARK and this campaign's objectives, as well as suggestions for creating a local campaign, which you may tailor to reflect the dynamics of your own community. Highlighted below are a few of the things you will find in the Organizer's Kit:

- ☐ **Background Information:** Questions and answers about the RUGMARK and the Consumer Education Campaign; statistics and other facts on child labor exploitation in the production of hand-knotted carpets; first-hand accounts from children enslaved in the carpet industry; and highlights of the bill, Child Labor Deterrence Act.
- ☐ **Suggestions for local RUGMARK Campaign activities.**
- ☐ **Sample letters, petition, and press advisory.**
- ☐ **A press conference check list.**
- ☐ **A RUGMARK Campaign Registration Form**

We look forward to working with you on the RUGMARK Consumer Education Campaign. If we can be of any assistance, please call our campaign coordinator, Darlene Adkins, at (202) 639-8140 or write to the Child Labor Coalition at: 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928, Washington, DC 20005.

Sincerely,



LINDA F. GOLODNER
Co-Chair, Child Labor Coalition
President, National Consumers League

MEMBERS
Integrated Clothing &
Textile Workers Union
American Academy of
Pediatrics
American
Medical Union
American
Federation of Teachers
American Public Health Asso-
ciation
American Youth
Work Center
Americans
for Democratic Action
Association of Farmworker
Organizing Programs
Inner Birth Women
Children's Defense Fund
Coalition of Labor Union
Women
Consumer Federa-
tion of America
for Children International/
U.S. Department of
Economic Research, AFL-CIO
Essential Information
Fire and Allied Service
Department, AFL-CIO
General Federa-
tion of Women's Clubs
International Brotherhood
of Teamsters
International Labor Rights
Education and Research Fund
International Ladies'
Garment Workers' Union
Jewish Labor Committee
Labor Council for Latin
American Advancement
League for Industrial
Democracy
Mt. Sinai School
of Medicine
National Asso-
ciation of Social Workers
National Child Labor
Committee
National
Consumers League
National
Council of Senior Citizens
National Education Asso-
ciation
National Jewish
Community Relations
Advisory Council
National
Parent-Teacher Association
National Safe Workplace
Institute
People Against
Dangerous Delivery
Public
Employee Department, AFL-
CIO
Religious Committee
for Workplace Fairness
Service Employees Inter-
national Union
Social
Democrats, USA
Trans-
portation Communications
International Union
Union
Label & Service Trades
Department, AFL-CIO
United Food and
Commercial Workers Inter-
national Union
Women's
Division, United Methodist
Church
Women's Research
and Education Institute
Work Experience Co-
ordinating Association
Coordinator: Darlene Adkins.
In house printing by NCL.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH RUGMARK CAMPAIGN REGISTRATION FORM

Your activities are important to us and your success means success for the campaign. In order to maintain contact, the National Consumers League is creating a database, identifying individuals, local groups, and communities, which are committed to RUGMARK Consumer Education Campaign activities. Our purpose is three-fold:

1. Maintain contact as the Campaign progresses and provide new materials as they are developed.
2. Refer individuals, groups, and media to local campaigns.
3. Share activities and successes from local campaigns.

Before you undertake the Campaign, please complete and return this Registration Form. We, in turn, will send to you updates on what other individuals/groups are doing and other pertinent information on the progress of the campaign.

Name: _____

Organization (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

Other Groups involved in Local Campaign (if applicable, please list): _____

**Please return this Registration Form by fax (202) 737-2164
or mail to:**

**Ms. Darlene Adkins
Child Labor Coalition
c/o National Consumers League
815 15th Street, NW #928
Washington, DC 20005**

SUGGESTIONS ON CREATING YOUR LOCAL RUGMARK CAMPAIGN

What You or Your Group Can Do Now, Before RUGMARK Carpets Are Available in the U.S.:

- ☐ **Develop a local coalition of community activists who will pledge their support to the RUGMARK Campaign.**

Religious, women's, child advocacy, human rights, labor, senior citizen, parent, professional, and consumer groups would be excellent to approach.

Meet with community leaders and/or host meetings for local groups to raise support for the RUGMARK Campaign in your community. Show the Child Labor Coalition's video which graphically presents the abuse of children in this industry and introduces the RUGMARK Campaign.¹ You may wish to contact the Child Labor Coalition to arrange for a speaker who has expertise in international child labor.

- ☐ **Organize a Letter Writing Campaign to Retailers**

Compile a list of retailers in your community who sell Oriental hand-knotted carpets. Don't forget places like large department stores and furniture stores. Identify owner or store manager, address, and telephone number.

Start a letter writing campaign directed at all (or select) retailers on your list to educate them about the exploitation of children in the carpet industry; the RUGMARK label and what it means; the upcoming availability of carpets with the RUGMARK label; and that consumers want the choice of carpets with the RUGMARK label. Urge them to commit to selling only carpets with the RUGMARK label. **Your goal is to get a commitment in writing.**

- ☐ **Meet with Local Retail Store Managers**

Plan a strategy to get one or more of the large local retailers to publicly support the RUGMARK. Your best bet may be a large department store or a home furnishing store. Select one or more representatives from your local campaign to meet with the retailer. Encourage the retailer to respond to the problem immediately by publicly announcing their intention of only carrying Oriental hand-knotted carpets with the RUGMARK label. Play up the fact that if they make this commitment, you will want to publicize their decision (and perhaps have them participate) in your press conference when the first RUGMARK carpets are available in the U.S.

When talking to retailers -- keep the message simple. Focus on the RUGMARK label exclusively. Do not complicate your objective for the meeting by expanding the discussion to the Child Labor Deterrence Act.

¹ The Child Labor Coalition (CLC) has copies of a video on children enslaved in South Asia in the carpet industry. The CLC will operate a lending library for the tape. Contact: The National Consumers League, Stepheyné Walker at (202) 639-8140; 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928, Washington, D.C. 20005.

☐ **Initiate a Letter Writing Campaign to Congress**

Write letters to your Representative and Senators in Washington and urge them to support the Harkin-Brown Child Labor Deterrence Act. This bill will prohibit the import of any product into the U.S. that is made by children under the age of fifteen. (For more information on this bill, see the enclosed fact sheet on the Child Labor Deterrence Act). Consider a meeting with your elected officials to share with them about local interest in the RUGMARK Campaign and your concern about the multitude of other items imported into the U.S. which are made by exploited children.

What You or Your Group Can Do when RUGMARK Carpets Are Available in the U.S.:

☐ **Initiate a Petition Drive**

ORIENTAL RUG IMPORTERS ASSOCIATION: Reproduce the enclosed petition and send the signatures you collect to Dan Hodges, the president of the Oriental Rug Importers of America: 200 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

☐ **Distribute flyers on the RUGMARK**

Leaflet consumers at various retail stores in your community that sell Oriental hand-knotted imported carpets. Urge consumers to only purchase imported carpets with the official RUGMARK label. Let them know in the flyer what stores they can go to locally which carry the RUGMARK label.

NOTE: Prior to the RUGMARK carpets being made available in the U.S., the Child Labor Coalition will send to you a reproducible flyer for your use.

☐ **Publicize through the Press**

Send out a Press Advisory to local newspapers, television & radio stations when the first carpets are available in the U.S. Acknowledge any stores which have committed to only carry carpets with the RUGMARK. A Press Advisory alerts the press about an upcoming event. It gives them adequate notice and details, while trying to capture their interest in the issue.

NOTE: This Organizer's Kit contains information on planning a press conference.

☐ **Write articles for local press and others**

Consider writing letters to the Editor and articles to submit for publication in a local newspaper or magazine.

Prepare an article to submit for organizational newsletters for groups in your community (i.e., churches, community groups, senior citizen groups, etc.).

SAMPLE LETTER TO RETAILER

NOTE: Please send us copies of any replies from the stores: **ATTN: Darlene Adkins, Child Labor Coalition, c/o National Consumers League, 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928-N, Washington, DC 20005.**

Dear _____:

I frequently shop at your store for a variety of goods. I am writing to you today regarding the imported Oriental hand-made rugs that you carry.

I recently learned that over one million children, many as young as seven years old, are enslaved in the carpet industry in South Asia and other regions. Young children are often taken far from home for years, abused and mistreated, their childhood stripped from them. Conditions are abysmal: they are malnourished, forced to work inhumane hours, and suffer from work-related diseases and injuries. Many die before they reach adolescence.

As a consumer, I do not want to be a party to such abuse and exploitation. Moreover, as one of your customers, I ask you to make a commitment to do likewise. The RUGMARK initiative will help both the consumer and the retailer to avoid carpets made by exploited children.

The RUGMARK initiative is managed by the RUGMARK Foundation, a group of over 150 non-governmental organizations in South Asia, industry representatives, and neutral international organizations such as UNICEF-India. Manufacturers who wish to join RUGMARK must sign a legal agreement with the Foundation to not use child labor in the production of carpets and to allow unannounced inspections of looms by representatives of the RUGMARK Foundation. The Foundation licenses manufacturers who join the initiative to affix the RUGMARK label to each carpet they produce. For more information on rug manufacturers who have joined the RUGMARK, you may wish to contact:

Rugmark Foundation
2, Nyaya Marg
Chanakyapuri
New Delhi - 110 021
INDIA
Phone: 011-91-11-301-5462

Child Labor Coalition
c/o National Consumers League
815 15th Street, NW
Suite 928-N
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-639-8140

No other labels, pledges, or assurances provide the same level of integrity and accountability, upon which consumers and retailers may have confidence that the product is indeed made free of child labor. The first carpets with the RUGMARK label are expected from India and Nepal by the end of 1994. Other countries are expected to follow.

I have made a commitment to not buy an Oriental hand-made rug from any country unless it has the official RUGMARK label. I urge you to consider supporting this initiative to free child slaves through **purchasing only carpets with the RUGMARK label for your store.** I would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Name
Address

SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR U.S. REPRESENTATIVE AND/OR SENATORS REGARDING THE CHILD LABOR DETERRENCE ACT

Addressing Mail to Senators and Representatives:

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1103

The Honorable _____
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1101

Dear Senator _____ or Representative _____:

I am deeply concerned about the escalating worldwide problem of child labor exploitation. As many as 200 million children are prematurely leading adult lives, working in abysmal conditions for little or no pay. Children are mistreated, denied a childhood, and deprived of education. Hundreds of thousands of children are enslaved, producing goods such as hand-knotted carpets for export to the United States.

As a consumer, I am very frustrated when I shop for goods. So many essential items -- like garments and shoes -- are the work of children. However, much as I want to avoid buying products made by children, I know that I unknowingly purchase these very products.

It upsets me a great deal to know that our government allows products into the U.S. which are made by exploited children. Such goods should not be allowed into the U.S. I am writing you to urge you to support the **Child Labor Deterrence Act**, which will prohibit the import of goods into the U.S. which are produced by children under the age of 15. I urge you to co-sponsor this bill and actively push for a vote on this legislation.

Sincerely,

NAME
ADDRESS

CONSUMERS DEMAND CARPETS WITH THE RUGMARK LABEL

We, as consumers, refuse to perpetuate this exploitation. Therefore, we refuse to buy hand-knotted carpets unless they have the official RUGMARK label. This label assures consumers that the hand-knotted carpet is made free of child labor. **We urge you to make these carpets available to consumers. We will not buy an Oriental hand-knotted carpet from any country unless it has the RUGMARK label.**

Moreover, we urge you to work with the RUGMARK Foundation to voluntarily impose a two percent surcharge on carpets imported into the United States earmarked for the rehabilitation and education of former child workers in this industry. Such action is obligatory, as retailers and importers have helped perpetuate this exploitative situation through buying carpets made by children.

ADDRESS

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

PRESS CONFERENCE CHECK LIST

- I. **Make a list of press to contact:** radio stations, television stations, and large newspapers. Also, include community papers and small newspapers.

- II. **Pick a location, date, and time for the Press Conference**
 - ☐ Location - easily accessible to the press.
 - ☐ Date - Plan for a slow press day (normally Tuesdays and Thursdays) which increases your chance of coverage. Be sensitive to what else is going on in the community (i.e., big events which may overshadow your event).
 - ☐ Time - schedule for morning - after 10 a.m. is best. Limit the presentations to around 30 minutes total. Leave time for questions and answers.

- III. **Choose Your Speakers:** If you can, have representatives from a variety of organizations. Limit speakers to short presentations or select a few (with others standing by for a show of support) to be available to answer questions.

- IV. **Prepare a Press Advisory -- an alert for the press, providing details about an upcoming event.**
 - ☐ Make sure you list a name and telephone number for the press to contact for more information and for quotes. *It is extremely important that you have a spokesperson for your local campaign.*
 - ☐ Don't forget to list the date, time, and location for your event.
 - ☐ Write a lead sentence which will capture the editor/reporter's interest. Tell why you are holding this press conference and why it is important.
 - ☐ Keep the press advisory interesting and short. Be sure to include quotes from your spokesperson(s) which are short and to the point. *Be sure to identify any stores in your community that have joined the RUGMARK, agreeing to sell only carpets with the RUGMARK label (and perhaps have a spokesperson from the company at the press conference).*
 - ☐ Conclude with a brief, general description of your group.

V. Notify the Press

Send a press advisory to local and community newspapers, television, and radio stations. Make sure they will receive it at least three days in advance. Follow up with a call to be sure they are coming.

VI. Plan an Event

You may wish to consider tying the press conference with an event that day (i.e., leafleting, etc.). Press like events. Make sure you tell them where and when (date and time) and make sure the event is well-planned for optimum coverage. You will want the press to be at the event when the most people are there. So, if you are planning an event which will go on for several hours -- invite the press during a one or two-hour block of time when you believe the most activity will be occurring.

SAMPLE PRESS ADVISORY

For Release: Date
Time
Location

Contact: Name
Telephone Number

RUGMARK LABEL HELPS CONSUMERS AVOID RUGS MADE BY ENSLAVED CHILDREN

CITY NAME...Today, for the first time ever, consumers may purchase an imported hand-knotted Oriental rug, confident that it not made by enslaved children.

Hand-knotted rugs, renowned for their beauty, have harbored a secret. Hundreds of thousands of children are enslaved to produce expensive Oriental rugs which are exported to the U.S. In South Asia alone, well over one million children are enslaved in the carpet industry, victims of physical and sexual abuse, malnourishment, disease and often death.

Efforts among non-governmental groups in South Asia to end child exploitation in the carpet industry have resulted in a RUGMARK label -- affixed at point of production on carpets produced without child labor. The RUGMARK label assures consumers that the Oriental hand-made rugs they are buying were made with adult labor. Manufacturers who join the RUGMARK agree to unannounced inspections of their looms by that country's human rights and child advocacy groups.

The U.S. is one of the leading markets for Oriental imported hand-knotted rugs. "We are confident that American consumers and retailers will support ending child enslavement in the carpet industry," said (name, title, & organization). "Our demand for carpets with the RUGMARK label will encourage more carpet manufacturers to stop exploiting children." [MENTION RETAILERS IN THE COMMUNITY WHICH SELL THESE CARPETS AND CALL ON OTHERS TO JOIN THIS CAMPAIGN BY ONLY SELLING RUGMARK CARPETS...OR, MENTION THAT OUTREACH HAS BEEN MADE TO RETAILERS (SPECIFY) AND THEY HAVE NOT COMMITTED TO THIS EFFORT.]

Groups involved in the _____(city) RUGMARK Campaign include: (names of groups).

The national campaign is coordinated by the Child Labor Coalition (CLC) which is committed to ending child labor exploitation in the U.S. and abroad. CLC members come from national and international sectors concerned about child labor: public interest, consumer, organized labor, academia, health organizations, women's advocates, child advocates, and religious groups.

ARTICLE FOR NEWSPAPER OR EDITORIAL

SUGGESTED POINTS

- ☐ For the first time ever, consumers may be confident that an imported product is not made by enslaved children.
- ☐ Describe the South Asian initiative to end child slavery in the carpet industry through the development of a RUGMARK label which manufacturers may affix to carpets made free of child labor. (You should include a copy of the RUGMARK label with your article). Emphasize that the initiative includes frequent unannounced inspections of looms by representatives of the RUGMARK Foundation as well as human rights and child advocacy organizations within the participating countries.
- ☐ The RUGMARK Foundation includes the Indo-German Export Promotion Council, representatives of the carpet industry, 150 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which comprise the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), and neutral international organizations, such as UNICEF-India. The initiative will be financed in part through a licensing fee paid by participating carpet manufacturers.
- ☐ Educate about child slavery in the carpet industry. Discuss briefly the working conditions that children endure daily: little or no pay, inhumane hours, separated from their families, malnourished, work-related disease and injuries, etc. These children are denied a childhood and education.
- ☐ Mention that the campaign also works with participating importers to self-impose a two-percent surcharge on the rugs to be used for rehabilitation and education of former child weavers.
- ☐ Explain that consumers and retailers will play an important role in the success of the RUGMARK. A demand in the U.S. for RUGMARK-labelled carpets will spur more manufacturers to agree to not use child labor.
- ☐ Describe the carpets in question: They are Oriental rugs identified as hand-knotted, hand-woven, or hand-crafted. Countries of origin include: Egypt, India, Iran, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, and Turkey. This campaign does not target machine-made rugs, as there is no indication child labor is involved.
- ☐ Mention that hand-knotted carpets are just one product made by children that are imported to the United States. Millions of dollars of imports come into the country every year that are produced by exploited children. Point out that our government must act **NOW** on this issue. Urge the passage of the Child Labor Deterrence Act which would prohibit the importation of goods to the United States made by children under the age of fifteen.

**A SERIES OF FACT SHEETS
ON CHILD EXPLOITATION IN THE CARPET INDUSTRY AND
THE RUGMARK CAMPAIGN**

☐ **On The National RUGMARK Education Campaign**

☐ **On Bonded Child Labor In The Carpet Industry**

☐ **On The RUGMARK Label**

☐ **On Frequently Asked Questions And Their Answers**

☐ **Highlights Of The Child Labor Deterrence Act**

NATIONAL RUGMARK EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Why launch a campaign?

The Child Labor Coalition's (CLC) national RUGMARK campaign will raise awareness regarding the exploitation of children in the carpet industry. Its purpose is to mobilize U.S. consumers to support -- using their purchasing power -- a South Asian campaign to free children from bondage and exploitation.

What are the goals of the RUGMARK campaign?

- ☐ to educate consumers about the exploitation of children in the production of carpets;
- ☐ to urge consumers to only purchase Oriental hand-made rugs that have the official RUGMARK label, indicating that they are produced free of child labor;
- ☐ to gain commitments from U.S. retailers to carry hand-knotted Oriental carpets with the RUGMARK label;
- ☐ to encourage importers to self-impose a two percent surcharge on imported Oriental carpets to be used for the rehabilitation and education of former child weavers; and
- ☐ to build support for the Harkin-Brown bill, "Child Labor Deterrence Act," which will prohibit the import of products into the U.S. which are made in whole or in part by children under the age of fifteen.

Why does the campaign focus on children working in the carpet industry?

- ☐ Bonded child labor is prevalent in the carpet industry. It is one of the most insidious forms of child labor exploitation and is considered slavery.
- ☐ The U.S. is the world's second largest market for hand-knotted Oriental carpets. In 1993, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported imports of \$172 million from India alone.
- ☐ A coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in South Asia have asked U.S. and European consumers to support their efforts to eliminate child labor exploitation in the carpet industry. A similar campaign is underway in Europe.

Will the Campaign expand to other industries?

In its 1994 report on imports made by children, the U.S. Department of Labor identified a variety of industries -- such as shoes, clothing, rugs, small-scale mining, gem-polishing, and leather tanning -- which involve child labor exploitation. The RUGMARK Campaign -- initially focused on carpets -- is expected to expand consumer pressure for similar guarantees from other industries which are known to exploit children.

The Child Labor Coalition (CLC) is committed to strengthening child labor laws, increasing enforcement, and ending child labor exploitation in the U.S. and abroad. CLC members come from national and international sectors concerned about child labor: public interest, consumer, organized labor, academia, health organizations, women's advocates, child advocates, and religious groups.

The Child Labor Coalition is administered by the National Consumers League (NCL). Founded in 1899, NCL is the nation's pioneer consumer group which works to bring consumer power to bear on marketplace and workplace issues. For nearly 100 years, NCL has advocated for the health, education, and safety of working children and teens.

For more information, write to the Child Labor Coalition, c/o NCL, 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928-N, Washington DC, 20005.



AN INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO END CHILD SLAVERY

The RUGMARK initiative is international in scope. It is the culmination of efforts which span continents:

- ☐ Over 150 dedicated groups within South Asia which are committed to ending child servitude in their countries.
- ☐ Industry leaders who are committed to improving the reputation of the carpet industry through eliminating child labor abuses.
- ☐ Highly-respected international organizations -- such as UNICEF-India, the International Labor Organization, and the Indo-German Export Promotion Project -- which support innovative efforts to end child servitude.
- ☐ Groups in western countries -- such as the Child Labor Coalition in the U.S., Anti-Slavery International in the United Kingdom, and Defense for Children International -- which monitor and speak out on child labor abuses.
- ☐ Individual consumers in countries -- such as Germany and the United States -- demanding rugs produced free of child labor.

The RUGMARK Foundation

The legal owner of the RUGMARK and holder of the inspection/certification infrastructure is the RUGMARK Foundation. The Foundation includes over 150 non-governmental organizations in South Asia such as the Bonded Liberation Front and the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), carpet industry representatives, and respected neutral international organizations such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and UNICEF-India.

RUGMARK was established as a neutral, voluntary, private, and marketing-oriented monitoring and certification system. Its mandatory criteria and rules and regulations become legally binding once an enterprise has voluntarily committed itself to the initiative.

For more information on the guidelines and information about the application and monitoring process for the RUGMARK initiative, contact the RUGMARK Foundation:

RUGMARK Foundation
Administrative Office
2, Nyaya Marg
Chanakyapuri
New Delhi - 110 021
INDIA
Phone: 011-91-11-301-54-62
Fax: 011-91-11-301-54-61

BONDED CHILD LABOR IN THE CARPET INDUSTRY

Cheap labor

Child labor is always cheap labor. That is the attraction. Children are pliable and vulnerable workers and employers have no fear of children demanding rights or organizing. Average *monthly wages* for child carpet weavers are as follows:

India -- Adult weavers average Rs. 349 (\$33.77) per month. Children's wages range from zero (for bonded or kidnapped children) to about 1/2 the adult wage.

Pakistan -- Children under 9 years of age average Rs. 100 (\$3.28) per month; between the ages 9 and 11, Rs. 265 (\$8.70); and between the years 12 and 14, Rs. 425 (\$13.94).

Nepal -- After 3 to 6 months of unpaid "training," children begin earning less than \$1 a day. In some factories, they only receive \$10 to \$15 a month.

The pay is little. Many children working in the carpet industry receive no pay at all, for the industry is rife with one of the most insidious forms of child labor exploitation -- child bonded labor.

What is bonded labor?

Child bonded labor may be inherent bondage or children subjected to bondage. Inherent bondage is when a child, as well as the rest of the family, works for another to pay off a family debt without any compensation for their labor. This is prevalent in agriculture. The second type of bonded labor involves children who are engaged in industry, such as in the production of carpets. Such children are often taken far from their homes to pay off money given to their families for their services or the children are often sold outright. Parents are told they will be able to see their children periodically. The reality is that children sometimes never see their families again or are returned only when they become too ill to be of use. Sometimes, the children are tricked or stolen from their families. Children who are subjected to bondage are victims of torture, abuse, imprisonment, and often the system works so that the debt takes years to pay off, if ever.

Groups in South Asia estimate the incidence of child bonded labor in South Asia at 20 million, and half of this is in India alone. Bonded child labor is prevalent in the making of carpets. Reports have indicated that as many as 90 percent of the children in the carpet industry in Mirzapur, India are bonded. According to a UNICEF study, 90 percent of the one million child workers in the carpet industry are working as bonded laborers.

FACTS

Number of children working and their ages in the carpet industry:

- ☐ Approximately 300,000 children are working in the carpet industry in India.
- ☐ Approximately 900,000 children below the age of 14 are working in the carpet industry in Pakistan. Over 80 percent of the carpet weavers in Punjab, Pakistan are children under 15 years of age. Thirty percent of them are under 10 years old.
- ☐ Approximately 200,000 children are working in the carpet industry in Nepal. Almost 65 percent of the children are 11-14 years old.

Working conditions of children working in carpet industry

- ☐ The majority of children work more than 8 hours a day. In Nepal, children work from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m., 7 days a week.
- ☐ Food is woefully inadequate and potable water is often unavailable. A common practice is to keep child workers hungry so they will stay awake and work longer hours.
- ☐ Children often sleep on the floor beside their looms.
- ☐ Children have been sexually and physically abused by their employers.
- ☐ Children are removed from their homes and transported hundreds of miles into other regions of the country. Parents are promised that their children will be well-cared for and learn a trade. The reality is they become slaves and many never see their families again.

Health problems of children that work in carpet industry

- ☐ Many working children will die before they reach the age of 12.
- ☐ Children often become victims of disease, including boils, skin irritations, tuberculosis, and eye injuries.
- ☐ Children sit in a bent position the entire day which results in severe musculoskeletal disorders, chronic back and ankle pains, and shortness of height.
- ☐ The common treatment for deep cut on hands -- loom owners will fill the cut with matchstick powder and set light to it. The wound closes as the skin and blood burn together.

WHAT IS THE RUGMARK?

For the first time ever, an internationally recognized trademark has been established for hand-knotted Oriental rugs produced without child labor. The trademark is a label which is affixed to import carpets.



What is the objective of the trademark?

The main objective of the trademark is to initiate effective steps toward the abolition of child labor in the carpet industry in South Asia. The initiative is expected to expand to other regions of the world where children are exploited in the production of carpets.

Who owns the trademark and how is it financed?

The owner of the trademark and holder of the inspection/certification system will be a foundation in India. The RUGMARK Foundation includes the Indo-German Export Promotion Council, representatives of the carpet industry, 150 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which comprise the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), and neutral international organizations, such as UNICEF-India. The initiative will be financed in part through a licensing fee paid by participating carpet manufacturers.

What is involved in the licensing process?

Carpet manufacturers who want to join the trademark initiative and become certified must:

- ☐ produce carpets without any child labor involved;
- ☐ pay at least the minimum wages fixed by the government to their employees; and
- ☐ agree to allow access to their looms for unannounced inspections.

The mandatory criteria mentioned above will become legally binding once an enterprise has committed itself to using the trademark and becomes licensed. Illegal use of the trademark carries criminal penalties.

Is there a monitoring system in place?

The carpet factories will be monitored on a regular basis through regular inspections. Inspectors will be employed by the RUGMARK Foundation and will be trained and supervised by them. In the first two years of initial licensing, the factory will have unannounced inspections more frequently -- once every three to four months.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Is child labor a necessary stage for a country's economic development?

It is commonly contended that child servitude is a harsh reality born out of four depressing factors -- poverty, unemployment, population, and illiteracy. Removal of these factors is a pre-requisite for wiping out child servitude. Many experts argue, however, that child servitude is equally responsible for causing and perpetuating poverty, unemployment, population growth, and illiteracy. Without eliminating child servitude, these other problems cannot be ended.

The enslavement of children cripples countries. More adults are unemployed and the children, who are the promise of every society, often die before reaching adulthood or are illiterate and too ravaged by the effects of disease, malnutrition, and abuse to become productive adult workers. **India alone is estimated to have 55 million working children and the same number of unemployed adults.**

What will happen to the former child workers? Will they starve?

An important part of this campaign is to obtain the commitment from importers to self-impose a two percent surcharge on carpets earmarked for the **rehabilitation and education** of former child workers. International programs are currently working with the RUGMARK Foundation on similar initiatives.

In many countries, the export of carpets is a major economic factor. The campaign seeks to preserve this economically important industry, while replacing child workers with adult workers. As adults move into the jobs vacated by children, the adults -- parents -- will be able to provide for their children, lessening the need for child employment.

What is unique about the RUGMARK?

For the first time ever, consumers can have confidence that a product is made without child labor. This has been an area of frustration for consumers -- when questioned, few consumers want to purchase such products, but know they do so from a lack of options. The RUGMARK label provides consumers with a guarantee that a hand-knotted rug is made free of child labor.

A RUGMARK label is available to manufacturers who agree to use only adult labor in the production of hand-knotted carpets. In order for a manufacturer to use the label, the manufacturer must comply with strict guidelines and allow unannounced inspections by human rights and child advocacy groups. **No other labels, pledges, or assurances provide the same level of integrity and accountability, upon which consumers may have confidence that the product is indeed made free of child labor.**

Is it all carpets? How can a consumer know which carpets should have a RUGMARK?

Not every carpet is a candidate for a RUGMARK label. This campaign focuses exclusively on carpets (rugs) which are hand-knotted (may be described as hand-woven or hand-crafted). There is no evidence that child labor is used in machine-made carpets. Machine-made rugs are not targeted in this campaign.

Countries of origin include: Egypt, India, Iran, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, and Turkey.

More than likely, a consumer will not need to distinguish between a hand-knotted or machine made rug. Hand-knotted Oriental carpets, emphasize its hand-made quality as it increases the value of the rug as well as the cost to the consumer.

There are several ways to distinguish a hand-knotted rug from a machine-made rug. Hand-knotted rugs are thicker than machine-made rugs. Hand-knotted rugs are also much more expensive than machine-made rugs. They generally retail for hundreds or thousands of dollars.

When will the first carpets with the RUGMARK label be available in the U.S.?

The first carpets with the RUGMARK label are expected from India and Nepal by the end of 1994. Other countries are expected to follow as the demand for RUGMARK-labeled carpets increases among consumers and retailers.

Is the campaign a boycott?

This is not a campaign to boycott hand-knotted Oriental carpets. It is a campaign to educate U.S. consumers. Various groups in South Asia have launched this initiative to eradicate the exploitation of children in the production of carpets. It is important to augment this indigenous effort. Consumers are not asked to stop buying hand-knotted Oriental rugs, but we ask consumers to purchase rugs with the official "RUGMARK" label.

What about child labor exploitation in other industries?

Child labor exploitation exists in a variety of export industries. In particular, children are found throughout the world in the garment and footwear industries. The RUGMARK Campaign -- focused currently on carpets -- is expected to expand the consumer pressure for similar guarantees from other industries with a history of child labor exploitation.

Will the RUGMARK mean higher-priced goods for consumers?

Labor costs account for a very small percentage of the cost of a carpet. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions stated recently that a study of earnings indicates that if adults are employed in Nepalese carpet factories, they would still be profitable. Total production costs would increase only by eight percent. Eliminating child labor from the production of carpets does not automatically mean that consumers will see an increase in the price.

THE CHILD LABOR DETERRENCE ACT S.613 AND H.R. 4693

The Child Labor Deterrence Act is intended to strengthen existing trade law. The following are key provisions:

Directs the U.S. Secretary of Labor to compile and maintain a list of foreign industries and their respective host countries that use children under fifteen in the fabrication, assembly, processing, or extraction of products for export;

Prescribes three tests for determining which foreign industry in which foreign country goes on the list --

- (a) whether they comply with the applicable national laws prohibiting child labor in the workplace
- (b) whether they utilize child labor in the export of products;
- (c) whether they have on a continuing basis exported products of child labor to the U.S.

Prohibits importing into the U.S. (subject to civil and criminal penalties) any product made, whole or in part, by children under fifteen;

Does not apply the import ban if the exporter of the article and the importer of the article into the customs territory of the U.S., have undertaken reasonable steps to ensure, to the extent practicable, that the article is not a product of child labor. Reasonable steps include the exporter of an article in a host country having entered into a contract with an independent, internationally credible organization for the purpose of conduction inspections, certifying, and labelling that manufactured articles to be exported from that country are not products of child labor. In the case of the importer of an article into the customs territory of the U.S., having required the certification and label described above; and

Urges the President of the United States to seek an international agreement with other trading nations to invoke an international ban on trade in products make by children under fifteen.

Supports through a \$10,000,000 appropriation for each fiscal years 1994 through 1998 for a U.S. contribution to the International Labor Organization for the activities of the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor and \$100,000 for fiscal year 1995 for a U.S. contribution to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for those activities relating to bonded child labor that are carried out by the Subcommittee and Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

SACCS is one of many groups in several countries which have applauded the Harkin-Brown bill to end the importation of products made through the exploitation of their children. In fact, the Harkin-Brown bill has played a key role in spurring participation in RUGMARK by the carpet manufacturers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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CHILD LABOR COALITION

What is the mission of CLC?

The Child Labor Coalition exists to serve as a national network for the exchange of information about child labor; provide a forum and a unified voice on protecting working minors and ending child labor exploitation; and develop informational and educational outreach to the public and private sectors to combat child labor abuses and promote progressive initiatives and legislation.

The Child Labor Coalition believes that no child, regardless of race, sex, nationality, religion, economic status, place or residence, or occupation, should be exploited. Exploitative child labor is defined as employment (whether in the formal or informal sector; whether paid or unpaid) that is coerced, forced, bonded, slave, or otherwise known to be unfair in wages, injurious to the health and safety of children, and/or obstructs a child's access to education or impairs educational attainment.

What are the objectives of CLC?

- ☐ To influence public policy on child labor issues through an increased understanding of the impact of work on children's health, the quality of their lives, and their ability to produce effectively in jobs as adults, as well as increase recognition of how child labor exploitation reinforces and promotes poverty, adult unemployment, poor living standards, low literacy rates, and lax enforcement of labor regulations;
- ☐ To work for strengthened protections, safeguarding youth from excessive, inappropriate, and hazardous child labor;
- ☐ To advocate for better enforcement of child labor laws and regulations, including devising and encouraging innovative ways to ensure employer compliance;
- ☐ To educate the public, business, and governments to broaden awareness and understanding about the nature of child labor exploitation in the United States and other countries, and how it differs from legitimate and positive youth employment; and
- ☐ To urge the Congress of the United States to act quickly to secure the rights and provisions of all the International Labor Organization and United Nations Conventions that affect child labor.

What organizations participate in the Coalition?

Membership is open to individuals, organizations, or groups which ascribe to and publicly endorse the coalition's mission and objectives.

Co-chairs:

American Youth Work Center
International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund
National Consumers League

Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Federation of Teachers
American Public Health Association
Americans for Democratic Action
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
B'nai B'rith Women
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Consumer Federation of America
Defense for Children International - U.S.A.
Department of Economic Research, AFL-CIO
Food and Allied Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Frontlash
General Federation of Women's Clubs
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union
Jewish Labor Committee
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
League for Industrial Democracy
Mt. Sinai School of Medicine
National Child Labor Committee
National Council of Senior Citizens
National Education Association
National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council
National Parent-Teacher Association
National Safe Workplace Institute
People Against Dangerous Delivery
Public Employee Department, AFL-CIO
Service Employees International Union
Social Democrats, USA
Transportation Communications International Union
Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO
United Food and Commercial Workers International Union
The Women's Research and Education Institute
Work Experience Coordinating Association

Child Labor Coalition, c/o National Consumers League, 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928-N,
Washington, DC 20005. Phone (202) 639-8140; Fax (202) 737-2164.

Press Clippings



Child Labor MONITOR

A NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE PUBLICATION FOR THE CHILD LABOR COALITION

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September 1994

CLC Launches RUGMARK Consumer Campaign

This fall, manufacturers will be challenged and consumers will apply pressure to stop the exploitation of children in the production of hand-knotted carpets. On September 18, International Children in Servitude Day, the Child Labor Coalition (CLC) will launch the U.S. Consumer Education Campaign for the "RUGMARK." The RUGMARK is a label affixed to carpets from India, Pakistan, and Nepal assuring consumers the product is made free of child labor.

Consumers are further asked to delay their purchase of hand-knotted carpets until carpets with the official "RUGMARK" label are available in U.S. stores.

Central to the campaign is raising consumer awareness of the over one million South Asian children who are working in the carpet industry. Extreme abuses have been documented: malnourishment, illnesses, beatings, separation from families, inadequate or no pay, and abysmal living and working conditions. This industry, one among many that exploit children, is targeted because of its reliance on one of the most insidious forms of child labor -- bonded labor. Children work in virtual slavery.

What's New? What's Original?

It's no secret that there are certain countries and industries which turn a blind eye to child labor abuses in the production of goods for both domestic consumption and export. As a major consumer of the world's goods, the U.S. often is the destination for products made by exploited children.

In fact, U.S. consumers find it difficult, if not impossible, to avoid buying these products. Until now, that is. For the first time ever, consumers are provided with a choice. An imported item -- in this case, a hand-knotted carpet from South Asia -- will be labeled if it was

produced free of child labor. No other such label and monitoring system exists for any other product.

Consumers who do not want to contribute to the exploitation of children need not boycott carpets, but instead choose a hand-knotted carpet with the RUGMARK label. Linda Golodner, co-chair of the Child Labor Coalition and president of the National Consumers League, explains, "The RUGMARK campaign is about providing options. The label gives consumers confidence when they buy a carpet that it was made free of child labor."

The first carpets with the label will be available by the end of the year. The campaign encourages consumers to ask local retailers to carry carpets with the RUGMARK label. Some retailers are already responding to media reports on child labor exploitation in the carpet industry. The Swedish retailer, IKEA, recently decided to not carry carpets, unless they can be certified as made free of child labor (see box on page 2).

Consumers are further asked to delay their purchase of hand-knotted carpets until carpets with the official "RUGMARK" label are available in U.S. stores.

The Rugmark Foundation

The RUGMARK label evolved out of a working group, comprised of Indian carpet industry representatives,

Continued on page 2 ...



continued from page 1...

the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), and the Indo-German Promotion Council. The initiative was formalized in the RUGMARK Foundation, which has released the official, internationally-recognized label.

Carpet manufacturers in South Asia who wish to participate and use the label must agree to produce carpets without any child labor involved; pay at least the minimum wages fixed by the government to their employees; and agree to allow access for unannounced inspections of their

the introduction of the RUGMARK. We're confident that when consumers have a choice, they will not buy products made with child labor. Consumers that do not buy these

"We're confident that when consumers have a choice, they will not buy products made with child labor," said Betty Mercer, UFCW Women's Network.

looms. Inspectors will be employed by the RUGMARK Foundation and will be trained and supervised by them to ensure manufacturers comply with label standards. SACCS, a leader in this effort, has appealed to European and North American consumers to support the RUGMARK through their purchasing power, thus encouraging more manufacturers to stop using child labor.

Campaign Shakers And Movers

The crux of the campaign is grass-roots effort -- outreach to local consumers, retailers, and media. The CLC is appealing to religious, women's and other groups to participate, mobilizing community action throughout the country.

The Women's Network within the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) is the first group to embrace the RUGMARK. Reflecting upon their past education initiatives in child labor, the Women's Network will bring a wealth of experience to the campaign. Betty Mercer, education chair of the Women's Network, said, "We welcome

products send a strong message to retailers, and we are committed to help send that message."

Also pledging their support is the General Federation of Women's Clubs International. Jeannine Faubion, GFWC President, says, "Our members have anxiously awaited RUGMARK Campaign and are poised to educate

IKEA SAYS "NO" TO CARPETS MADE BY CHILDREN

The Swedish retailer IKEA, with stores in 18 countries including the U.S., announced they will only sell handmade carpets that are produced without the use of child labor. They will hire an independent Swiss firm to monitor IKEA contracts with carpet manufacturers to ensure they use only adult workers.

IKEA retail outlets in the U.S. are in Los Angeles, CA; Baltimore, MD; Elizabeth, NJ; Long Island, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Houston, TX; and Woodbridge, VA.

consumers and merchants in their communities in every state and around the world. This is a most important step in curbing child labor abuses which will lead to even broader efforts."

In preparation for the RUGMARK Campaign, the CLC has developed both a press packet and an organizer's kit. The latter contains background information on child labor and the campaign, as well as ideas for local initiatives to include sample flyers, letters, and petitions. The organizer's kit is available to groups who are interested in participating in the campaign (see page 8).

Is the RUGMARK Campaign worthwhile? Can consumers impact

continued on page 4...

ICFTU Announces Campaign

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), representing 120 million people in 124 countries, in June announced it is launching a global campaign to eradicate child labor, including a boycott of exports made by exploited, under-age workers.

Citing long hours, low pay, and appalling conditions among working children, ICFTU's report, *Child Labour: The World's Best Kept Secret*, identifies abuses in Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, India, Mexico, Nepal, Peru and the Philippines.

The campaign will call upon trade unionists worldwide to push for national legislation to outlaw the employment of children and ensure compulsory primary education. Other campaign actions will include: lobbying for the inclusion of a Social Clause within international trading agreements; replacing child workers by adult members of the same family; and an international boycott of carpets made in Nepal, India, and Pakistan (unless it is labeled as not made by children). For information on the ICFTU Campaign, contact Bjorne Grimsrud, ICFTU campaign organizer, telephone 32-2-2240211; fax 32-2-2188415 or write Boulevard Emile Jacqmain 155, B-1210 Brussels, Belgium.



September 19, 1994

BUY 'RUGMARK,' STAMP OUT CHILD LABOR

Generations of American workers have "looked for the union label" as a sign of decent working conditions.

Now the Child Labor Coalition (CLC) has launched a national campaign to persuade consumers to help abolish child labor in South Asia by buying carpets with an official "RUGMARK" label. The label is affixed to carpets made without child labor.

The CLC reports that more than one million South Asian children work in the carpet industry. It says conditions are abysmal, with children often physically and sexually abused. They are "malnourished, forced to work inhumane hours, cheated or denied pay, and suffer from work-related diseases."

Linda Golodner, president of the National Consumers League and co-chair of the Child Labor Coalition, said, "They are victims of unscrupulous individuals who take advantage of desperate family situations and debts, lax enforcement of laws, and the inattention of the public. Many of these children are enslaved, trapped in bonded labor to make carpets."

The CLC said it is working hand-in-hand with South Asian initiatives to eradicate the exploitation of children in the carpet industry. This is not a campaign to boycott carpets, but rather a campaign to educate U.S. consumers, CLC made clear. The CLC said it is important to augment the indigenous efforts.

(continued)

CLC will be allied with the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), founded in 1989 by Kailash Satyarthi.

Today, SACCS is made up of more than 50 non-governmental organizations, human rights groups and trade unions that are diverse in religious, gender, and nationalities. SACCS works in the field of child servitude in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

In terms of numbers, 300,000 children work in the carpet industry in India. About 500,000 children below age 14 work in the carpet industry in Pakistan. Over 80 percent of the carpet weavers in Punjab, Pakistan, are under 15. Some 200,000 children work in the carpet industry in Nepal; most are 11-14 years old.

Child labor is always cheap labor, the coalition said. In India, adult weavers average \$33.77 per month; children's wages range from zero for bonded or kidnapped children to about half the adult wage. In Pakistan, children under 9 earn \$3.28 per month; and those between 12 and 14 make \$13.94. In Nepal, after 3 to 6 months of unpaid "training," children begin earning less than \$1 per day; in some factories they earn \$10 to \$15 a month.

On health conditions, the coalition reports that many working children will die before they reach the age of 12. It says children often become victims of disease, including boils, skin irritations, tuberculosis, and eye injuries. In a survey in Nepal, 56 percent of the children reported job-related illnesses.

In a common treatment for deep cuts on hands, loom owners will fill the cut with matchstick powder and light it; the wound closes as the skin and blood burn together. In India, one study

(continued)

showed 50 percent of children surveyed suffered from anemia and worm infestations. In Nepal, children in carpet factories worked in unventilated rooms, inhaling woollen fluff, and tight looms caused their knuckles to swell, causing early arthritis. In some factories, children had to sit in a bent position the entire day, which resulted in severe musculoskeletal disorders, chronic back and ankle pains, and shortness of height.

The coalition noted that many children receive no pay at all, for the carpet industry is rife with one of the most insidious forms of child labor--child bonded labor.

Groups in South Asia estimate the incidence of child bonded labor in the region at 20 million, half of it in India alone. Reports indicate that as many as 90 percent of children in the carpet industry in Mirzapur, India, are bonded.

Child labor may be inherent bondage or children subject to bondage. Inherent bondage is when a child and the rest of the family work to pay off a family debt, which is prevalent in agriculture. In industry, children can be taken far from home to pay off family debts. They also may be kidnapped and sold. These children often become victims of torture, abuse and imprisonment.

On September 18 and 19, the Child Labor Coalition observed International Children in Servitude Day by hosting a child labor conference in the nation's capital. SACCS joined in sharing its experiences in South Asia and welcoming child labor experts and advocates from all over the world.

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WORLD REPORT

World View

Trading With Tiny Hands

■ Nepal and many other poor countries have become dependent on child labor.

By JOHN THOR DAHLBURG
TIMES STAFF WRITER

BHAKTAPUR, Nepal—That chic and sumptuous high-pile carpet that adorns the lawyer's office in Stuttgart, Germany, or the beachfront condo in Redondo Beach may have begun its life here on a high-backed vertical loom worked by Meena, 13.

Six days a week, the village girl and seven friends, who sleep in a single cramped, dark room in a dirty dormitory whose halls smell of urine, get up at 6 a.m. and, after gulping down a meager breakfast of warm tea, begin work.

Meena, a small girl with straight black hair who is timid as a rabbit, sits on a rough plank, facing her loom. Guided by a chart on which each dye color bears a different number code, she begins to tie strands of triple-ply yarn to make that most luxurious of household items, the hand-knotted carpet.

Her small fingers flying, again and again she ties knots—an average of 60 to each square inch.

At 9 p.m., after hourlong breaks for lunch and dinner that she and her friends have to speedily cook for themselves, the 13-year-old's workday is over, 14½ tedious-filled hours after it began.

Tomorrow will be much the same for her, hunched over the loom in a long, dim room where the floor is made of filthy bricks and where the only sounds as dozens of youngsters work in silence are the foreman's cries and the thud of metal mallets swung by the children to pack the knots more densely.

Meena, daughter of peasants from Nepal's impoverished hills, doesn't know it, but she is a valuable cog in her country's economy. Just as the bedrock of the Old South was cotton and tobacco and England's fortune was spun in the "dark satanic mills" of the Midlands, the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal has come to count on carpets.

And, at the same time, like many other developing countries, this nation has rapidly grown dependent on cheap, easily exploitable child labor. An estimated 160,000 Nepalese children work in carpet mills, sometimes alongside their parents at home looms but often in appalling conditions of servitude little better than slavery, according to the Child Workers of Nepal Assn., a social organization.

"Hand-knotted carpets are made out of the sweat and blood of children," charges Suman Srivastva, director of an Indian training institute for children freed from bonded labor.

Nepal is not unusual. According to a study just released by the world's largest

trade union federation, 100 to 200 million children ages 4 to 15 work in streets, factories, mines and rock quarries from Brazil to the Philippines—often under dangerous conditions and for a miserable wage or no compensation at all.

The Brussels-based International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which claims to represent 120 million workers in the United States and 123 other countries, calls such widespread child labor "the best-kept secret" of modern commerce.

All too often, the federation found, minors in developing countries are exploited to make goods that are then shipped for sale to richer lands, including the United States, whose youngest citizens are protected by child labor laws.

In the Philippines, union investigators found, children work up to 24 hours a day in peak season to sew lingerie for a German multinational to sell in Europe at a more than 1,000% markup. In Bangladesh, they reported, 40% of 700,000 garment workers are children, and most of their output is shipped to the United States.

In Pakistan, say activists who oppose child labor, youngsters who work in sporting-goods companies that export field hockey sticks, soccer balls and volleyball to America may never have any free time themselves to play games. In Peshawar and Lahore, children perform the initial manufacturing work on surgical instruments but have poor access to health care themselves.

With its carpets, Nepal, one of the world's poorest countries, has scored a coup in overseas markets. Growing from a fledgling industry with a modest initial load of exports in 1964, Nepal's carpet-makers last year shipped 34.2 million

Please see CHILD, Page 4



JOHN THOR DAHLBURG / Los Angeles Times
A girl works on a colorful carpet at a factory in Bhaktapur, Nepal.



CHRIS BROWN

Young laborers at an upright loom. Children sometimes work 14½ hours a day.

Warning: Children at Work

Here are some examples of developing countries that use child labor, as reported by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.



INDIA

A quarter of the world's child labor force is said to be in India. About one out of four children ages 5 to 15 reportedly is working. The total is thought to be between 17.5 million and 44 million. Legislation in 1986 banned child labor, but some employers openly defy the law.



MEXICO

Children under 14 are banned from working. Children 15 and 16 may work up to six hours a day, provided they don't work overtime or at night. Enforcement seems reasonably adequate for large and medium-sized companies, but less certain for small ones. There are significant numbers of underage street vendors.



NEPAL

The law allows employment of minors at age 16 in industry and 14 in agriculture, but for not more than 36 hours per week. Some government officials and carpet magnates routinely say that since child labor is illegal, it cannot exist. But it is clear that the law is widely flouted.



PHILIPPINES

The constitution forbids employment of children under 15 except under the responsibility of parents or guardians, and then only if the work does not interfere with schooling. But children as young as 4 were found working in factories. Many children work in the garment industry, making women's clothing and lingerie for European multinationals.

CHILD: Young Workers Find Life Hard and Pay Low

Continued from Page 1

square feet—enough carpets to cover nearly 600 football fields, goal post to goal post—and earned \$204 million, or 60% of Nepal's export income.

Foreign consumers, especially Germans, who buy 80% of Nepal's carpets, have fallen in love with their warm, muted colors, thick woolen pile and abstract, non-Oriental motifs. From this boom, Meena and other child workers benefit little more than did the Lancashire millworkers of the Industrial Revolution or the antebellum slaves.

In interviews, the young Nepalese said they are paid just enough to buy food, pay rent (their landlord owns the carpet factory) and purchase cloth to make into clothes. For each square meter (about a square yard) of carpet that she ties, Meena is supposed to be paid the equivalent of \$7.40. In two weeks, she is lucky to finish a square meter. Abroad, that much of her handiwork retails for \$153 to \$184, according to factory owner Nyami Tashi Lama.

Brokers scour the countryside to keep the 1,200 carpet factories in Bhaktapur and other Kathmandu valley locales filled with small hands, social workers report. Some brokers pay ignorant or glib parents for the children; others promise to send home a percentage of their wages. Often, no money is sent.

"The bosses prefer children," said Anju Shrestha, program officer with the Nepal Center for Women and Children Affairs. "Their hands are considered to be defter, and they are more patient."

Country girls, who are commonly submissive and quiet, are believed to make the best carpet workers of all.

Once in the Kathmandu valley, the children often become bonded labor, working long hours for no pay to reimburse a theoretical debt that they or their parents are supposed to owe to the broker or factory owner. "In most cases, they never see the money they are supposed to earn," Shrestha said.

For Meena, the gap between her wage and the value of what she makes is too abstruse to understand. For this girl who has never been inside a schoolhouse, the high point of the week is Saturday night, when she watches Nepalese movies with the other child workers on their factory owner's television.

Her back always hurts, she complains, like those of all the young girls, who took precious time from their lunch break one day last month to sit on tattered mats and learn the Nepali ABCs in a room overlooking tangles of drying yarn dyed aqua, violet and teal.

One of Meena's friends now coughs all night but doesn't know why. Another has hands that hurt, especially in the winter. Social workers say the children often develop eye problems from having to stare for years at their looms in the twilight of the carpet factories, and cases of premature arthritis are common.

Laws in Nepal prohibit the employment of children under 14 and limit 14- to 16-year-olds to 36 hours' work per week. Some government officials or carpet magnates routinely cite such legislation to maintain that, since child labor is illegal, it cannot exist. But it is readily evident that the laws are massively flouted.

N.C. Lamichhane, member secretary of Nepal's Carpet and Wool Development Board, a quasi-governmental body, adopts a franker approach than most. "We never say we don't have child labor," Lamichhane said. "We do. Our study shows it is 11% [of what he said was a 200,000-member work force]. That's due to our poverty."

It's also due, he acknowledged during an interview, to government connivance with factory owners over the years to ignore violations of child-labor laws.

In developing societies, it should be noted, child labor has ardent defenders with plausible arguments. Alka Raghu-

vanshi, arts editor of the Indian newspaper *The Pioneer*, says: "It is important to remember that child labor, as it is understood in the West, is not applicable in the Indian context. . . . If a child is helping his father on the loom or the wheel, is he or she to be considered child labor?"

For those who clamor that all children should be educated, Raghuvanshi cites the sad example of the weavers of Andhra Pradesh, who after a few flush years sent their children to school. Even with diplomas, the students couldn't find jobs, she said. And they hadn't served the long apprenticeships needed to become top-notch silk weavers. This ended up, she said, making cheap towels and lincolns.

Third World countries also have viewed with suspicion Western campaigns such as the Brussels-based labor confederation's to eradicate child labor and improve the lot of their work force, considering them a masked attempt to wipe out one of the few advantages they enjoy in an increasingly global economy: low wages.

Finally, in the poorest of countries, for many children, the possibilities outside of employment are often scant. School exists for the lucky few.

"If a child is not employed, it will beg, or lie in the street, or use drugs," contended Lama, the owner of Meena's factory, as he stood in the middle of a garage where

are indeed made by hand.

American buyers now absorb less than 2% of the Nepali output. Ironically, just as the opportunity dawns for the Nepalese to sell more carpets in the United States, their product may be getting the same politically unsavory reputation that non-union-picked grapes or lettuce once had.

"The Nepalese think this is a problem fomented by their competitors and it will go away," a U.S. diplomat said with a disbelieving shake of the head.

After the German telecast, the Nepalese Ministry of Labor mounted a loudly advertised crackdown on underage workers, with at least 150 factories reportedly visited by government inspectors. "Seventy-five percent of the children employed in the industry have now left," Lamichhane claimed last week.

Meena and her friends have had a different view of the purported crackdown. When the first government inspector they had ever seen showed up at their factory in early June, "he went right to the office," the girls said. "He never looked at us."

As they talked with a visitor to their ABC lesson, one teen-aged mother nursed a baby she would later place in a sling by her loom. Their ramshackle dwelling lay down a dirt road in one of Nepal's most historic towns, temple-rich Bhaktapur, 10 miles east of Kathmandu, where Bernardo Bertolucci filmed some of the scenes for his visually

stunning epic "Little Buddha." Little of that beauty rubs off on the carpet makers' lives. Their workday world is the factory, the squalid dorm, a solitary water pipe in the smelly courtyard and an outdoor privy.

It is possible that the cycle of child labor that Meena is caught in could continue indefinitely because of Nepal's poverty and the lack of many real employment alternatives. But Lamichhane is skeptical. Unlike many government officials and carpet manufacturers, who are portrayed by Kathmandu-based diplomats as consummate ditherers, the carpet board official dreads the possibility of a Western boycott.

"Our major industries are tourism and carpets," he says. "If we are not careful, we'll lose both. We must do something."

His suggestion, similar to a plan already being implemented in India, is a label certifying that a carpet was made with the labor of children (it is, children under 14) and that the dyestuffs used are environmentally friendly. The German-Nepalese Chamber of Commerce has endorsed such a plan, and the Harkin bill also has a "child labor-free" labeling scheme.

In Nepal, however, putting such a project into execution is problematic. Many doubt the government or the factory owners can be trusted.

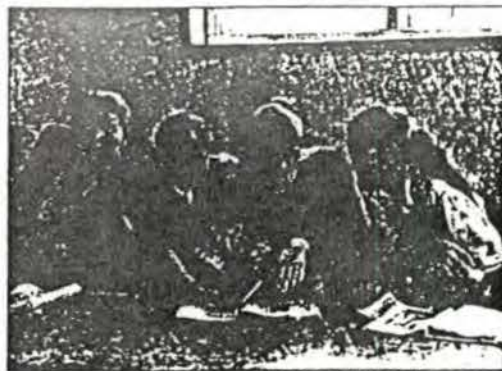
"We have an agreement already with our buyer that we will have no child labor in our products," Lama, Meena's boss, maintains. It's not clear whether he's trying to deceive or doesn't know he has 13-year-olds in his own 150-member labor force. In any event, he was able to ship 80,000 square feet of rugs to Germany last year without any problems.

Meena lives and works with two older sisters, so her life is not as lonely as some children's. The girls have been home only once in the past year, for a religious festival in October. It took them a day on a bus and two days walking through the hills to reach their native village in the Ramechhap district.

Like her friends, Meena would like to go home for good but says she has no other skills besides tying yarn into carpets. At 13, she already seems to be worried about how she will earn her way in the world.

The visitor asks her how she would change life in the factory if she were the owner. The girl is silent a long time.

No, Meena finally says, she can't imagine being the boss.



Bhaktapur factory workers learn the Nepali ABCs on a lunch break.

finished carpets were stacked for export.

Lama thinks the government should supply teachers to instruct children at the factories so that they can learn and earn at the same time. The 2% export tax he has to pay on his carpets could be applied to pay for the program, he suggests.

Nepal's carpet industry was growing at a feverish rate, reaching 30% to 40% per year, but the breakneck pace seems to have ended this year. One reason appears to be a devastating eight-minute expose aired on German television last April that reported that 90% of Nepal's export carpets were woven by children working in conditions akin to slavery.

"It's wreaking havoc," complained B.P. Khanal, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Carpet Board's Lamichhane denies that but concedes that export growth has slowed in the last 10 months to about 8%. And he knows his industry has taken a painful public-relations hit.

"The trade is 100% export-oriented. Unless the foreigners buy, we can't sell," he says. "And who is buying our carpets? The young generation. And they are very serious about such issues."

For two years, U.S. diplomats in Kathmandu say they have warned the Nepalese that unless they adhere to their own ban on child labor, they could have problems in foreign markets. Mounting consumer awareness is one reason. Another is a bill introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), that would ban U.S. imports from industries employing child labor. The bill is awaiting action in the Senate Finance Committee.

Nepalese carpets had been assessed a 5.1% duty in the United States, but since July 1, they have been allowed in tariff-free on the strength of the Nepalese government's certification that the carpets

Exploiters Won't Get This Activist's Mark

■ India's Kailash Satyarthi has devised a label certifying that a carpet was made without child labor.

By JOHN THOR DAHLBURG
TIMES STAFF WRITER

NEW DELHI—It was 14 years ago that Kailash Satyarthi and his followers began staging daring raids on Indian workplaces to free children who were being treated little better than slaves.

To date, the tall, bearded activist from central India estimates, he has helped retrieve 25,000 children, including 7,000 from the carpet industry, and reunited them with their parents.

It's not enough, he says. Often, muses the chairman of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS), he would go to a station to catch the train home after raiding a carpet manufacturing plant in Uttar Pradesh state, where children are forced to work no less than 12 and as many as 20 hours a day.

Feeling pleased with himself for having freed 10 children, Satyarthi would then watch, aghast, as a labor broker arrived in Varanasi or Mirzapur on an inbound train with 50 new youngsters to satisfy the industry's endless hunger for labor.

"We are freeing children at the cost of our lives, but the number of child laborers keeps rising," Satyarthi says. When he speaks of the risks involved, he is not speaking idly. Two of his comrades have been killed—one shot to death, the other beaten so badly he succumbed to his injuries. Employers, or their agents, were to blame, he says.

The solution to India's child labor problems, the coalition's founder has concluded, lies not in India but in the United States and other foreign countries that buy 98% of India's carpets.

In Germany, he noticed during a 1990 visit, tomatoes are labeled to alert the consumer that they are environment-friendly and healthy. "I said, 'If you are so concerned about your health and environment, why not show the same concern for children?'"

By the end of this year, Satyarthi expects the result of his lobbying, negotiating and coalition-building involving Indian and foreign grass-roots organizations and charities to be available to consumers in Europe and North America: a label, called the "rugmark," certifying that a carpet was made without child labor.

All other carpets from India and neighboring Nepal and Pakistan should be boycotted, he says.

"If you put your legs on a beautiful Indian carpet, you are crushing the backbone of a child," he insists.

More than 50 Indian carpet makers have agreed to the rugmark scheme, Satyarthi said in a recent interview at his group's New Delhi headquarters.

The cooperating companies have provided a list of their weaving units so that inspectors from his group can verify that no children are employed on their premises. That's necessary, he says with a wry smile, because the industry can't be trusted to police itself.

"When the All India Carpet Manufacturers Assn. talked about putting on the label, I was 100% sure that not only would it be a fake label but that they would build a new factory to make it where children would be employed," he says.

The rugmark, Satyarthi says, will be awarded by an independent body that includes representatives of carpet manufacturers and exporters, non-governmental social service organizations, U.N. agencies such as UNICEF and the International Labor Organization, and the Indo-German Export

Promotion Project.

"Now it is going to function," Satyarthi said with confidence of his brainchild. "We are sure that the Americans and Europeans will find labeled carpets in their shops by Christmas." Others involved in the program said Satyarthi's timetable might be optimistic, but they agreed it is only a matter of time before the rugmark reaches stores in the West.

SACCS, which comprises about four dozen organizations in South Asia, estimates that 80 million young children are working in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. As children and families have migrated to the cities over the past 15 years or so, they have met the growing employment needs of the region's export industries.

"The governments need dollars at any cost. So they give these industries all possible facilities, legally and sometimes illegally," he says.

Satyarthi has heard the arguments in favor of child labor, including those made by free-market advocates, and thinks they are all moonshine. "The relationship isn't capitalist, one of employee to employer. It's feudal," he says. "The child is like a slave."

A decade ago, when the Indian carpet industry was exporting \$100 million worth of production, a commissioner of the Supreme Court of India estimated it was employing 75,000 to 100,000 children. Now exports have tripled and so has the number of child weavers, to an estimated 350,000.

The increase has come in spite of a 1986 law, the Child Labor Regulation and Prohibition Act, that bans employment of children in dangerous or health-endangering industries, including carpet manufacturing. Similar legislation to protect children under age 14 exists in the other countries of the region.

"Not a single violator of the 1986 act has been punished," Satyarthi says. "Not a single person has been imprisoned in India or Pakistan under such laws."

One reason for the lack of official and public concern in India, he believes, is that most of the bonded children are from the loathed untouchable caste or from equally low-status tribes.

In 1983, Satyarthi made his first raid on a carpet factory. Thirty-two children ages 6 to 12 from the village of Chichori in Bihar, India's poorest state, had been procured by middlemen who offered a bit of money to their parents, then whisked the youngsters away. When the children rebelled at having to work long hours for little or no pay, they were branded with red-hot irons or hung upside down from trees.

Such raids, he says, may be the only way to guarantee the youngsters a few years of normal childhood. "If a child has become a carpet weaver, the master never lets him go unless he falls sick," Satyarthi says.

Usually, he says, after seven to eight years of intensive weaving work, the children's eyesight becomes impaired, and they have inhaled so much woolen fluff that their lungs are damaged.

Not being able to count on his own group's courageous if piecemeal efforts—and seeing government as too often a crony of the carpet makers—Satyarthi is now banking on Western consumers to help release hundreds of thousands of Indian children from bondage by making child-woven carpets impossible to sell.

"If people can be so concerned about fur," he asks, "why not about children?"



Kailash Satyarthi with a sign calling for a boycott of child-produced goods.

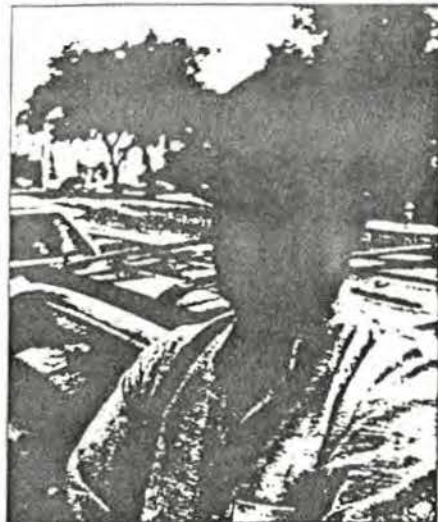


"Rugmark" label certifies carpet was made without child labor.

Kailash Satyarthi

Indian Crusader Seeks To Halt Child Slavery

He conducts raids on factories to rescue workers as young as six years of age who toil up to 16 hours a day making carpets



By Timothy Ryan

The children sit hunched in long rows over looms, knotting the intricate carpet patterns by hand. They range in age from six to 14, and are often compelled to work up to 16 hours a day. Frequently beaten, tortured and malnourished, locked in the factory at night, they miss the love of their families, and ache for the chance to go to school. Deprived of an education, sunshine, their freedom, they are condemned to work off debts that may have been incurred by their helpless families before they were even born.

Suddenly the doors to the dimly lit, decrepit factory are thrown open, and light floods the cramped space where the children sit huddled. Kailash Satyarthi has appeared on the scene to rescue them from their nightmare, and reunite them with their families. Unique among those in India who decry the child labour problem, Satyarthi and his organisation of activists are determined to do something tangible about this exploitation of children.

Satyarthi and those who work with him in the Bonded Liberation Front, and its umbrella group, the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (Saccs), have repeated this scene hundreds of times over the past 13 years, freeing over 24,000 children from servitude, and more than 20,000 additional men and women from the modern form of slavery that is bonded labour.

Estimates put the number of child labourers in India as high as 55 million, with over 300,000 in the carpet industry alone. Although Satyarthi wants to raise society's awareness of this problem, he cannot be content with that. So he and Saccs target carpet factories and raid them, physically freeing children from their slavery.

Satyarthi is a lone figure on an Indian political landscape dominated by the politics of opportunism and riven by communalism and caste warfare. A Brahmin by birth and an engineer by training, Satyarthi

gave up his social status and opportunities for wealth and advancement to lead the fight against the exploitation of child and bonded labour. In a new India in which 100 million people now live in the middle class and hundreds of millions more aspire to climb the ladder of economic success, Satyarthi is saying that these new riches and success cannot be built on the backs of the poorest of the poor, the most defenceless people in society — destitute children.

"We are approached by parents of bonded children to do something," Satyarthi says in his gentle voice. He is a very tall and handsome man in his late thirties, with a rich, dark beard, and intelligent, soft eyes masking a hard core of determination within. "We went to the au-

There are 55 million child labourers and about 55 million unemployed adults

thorities and gave details and put in the proper reports and paperwork urging them to rescue these children. But I found this extremely difficult. Because often the information was leaked by the authorities to the exploiters. Often children were beaten and tortured as a result."

"When we started raiding places where children are kept in bondage, it created a tremendous awareness," he says. "This was the first intervention of its kind. Nobody dared to come to help or rescue these children before." After the children are liberated, Satyarthi and Saccs get them social support, return them to their families, and pressure the local government to respect India's constitutional commitment to free, compulsory primary education.

Saccs, founded by Satyarthi four years ago, comprises some 50 non-governmental organisations from countries all over South

Asia. It cuts across all boundaries of caste, religion, gender and national boundaries.

A practical man as well as a visionary, Satyarthi is also working with carpet manufacturers, government officials, human-rights groups and consumer groups in the countries that import carpets (principally Germany, Britain and the US). Satyarthi has no patience with those who argue that they hire children because they cannot afford adults. "These businesses, they are getting work, that's why they need other people to do the work," said Satyarthi. "In 1947, India had 10 million children in servitude, and 10 million unemployed. Today there are 55 million child labourers, and about 55 million unemployed adults. If he did not hire children, the carpet maker would still have work that needed to get done, and he could hire adults from the same families of the children he released."

By devising a system of certification that can ensure carpet makers do not use children, but can still export their products, Satyarthi hopes to eliminate child labour, increase adult employment and preserve the export industry, which earns badly needed foreign exchange for India. He already has consumer groups in Germany on his side, has conducted workshops for carpet manufacturers to change their way of doing business, and has convened a working group of activists, government officials and manufacturers to put the certification plan into action. Satyarthi also recently returned from the US, where he met with trade-union and human-rights activists, US government officials as well as legislators and congressional staffers.

By combining the direct action tradition of Gandhi and the coalition-building spirit of the American civil-rights movement, Satyarthi is appealing to governments and businessmen throughout South Asia to cease the exploitation of children. ■

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MELANIE STETSON FREEMAN/STAFF/FILE



YOUTH ON LOOM:

A boy at a textile factory in Bhiwandi, India. Many Indian carpetmakers now tag their products as not made with child labor.

Protection of World's Young: Clocking Out on Child Labor

By **Amelia A. Newcomb**

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON

How to keep children out of harm's way has become a more public issue.

■ US moves to bar imports made by child labor have sparked

ON the roadsides of Bombay or down crowded alleys in Manila or in the back rooms of Bogotá, children weave rugs, pound metal, or handle toxic substances, often for 14 hours a day and for little pay.

Their wares often end up in the world's largest importer — the United States — with American consumers unaware of their origin.

The global problem of child labor is often

overlooked by the major powers. Now, however, there are signs of change.

The US, for the first time, has begun efforts to curb child labor overseas. The Senate has taken up a measure that would bar imports of child-made goods. Exporters in such places as India, Honduras, and Bangladesh are scrambling to change their labor practices.

The impact has been felt worldwide:

■ In India, more than 130 carpetmakers are part of a "Rugmark" campaign that tags products as made without child labor.

■ In Bangladesh, the Garment Manufacturers and Export Association formally agreed

See **CHILD LABOR** page 6

CHILD LABOR from page 1

this month to ban hiring children under 14. They also agreed to make provisions for educating children who work full time.

■ In the US, the Liz Claiborne company moved swiftly to inspect its manufacturing facilities after a Senate hearing in September revealed that child workers were involved in making the company's sweaters. Other companies have also been working on "codes of conduct" to address child labor.

"The US is the world's largest importer of manufactured products from developing countries, and that puts a special onus on us to think of what we can do," says Robert Senser, who has written extensively on human rights in employment.

US acts domestically

Congress failed to pass the Child Labor Deterrence Act this year, but advocates are optimistic for passage in the next session. In the meantime, recent events have focused new attention on how US imports are manufactured overseas.

A US Department of Labor report issued in September targeted 19 countries where at least 46 million children allegedly toil, making goods for the US market. A follow-up report is expected next year to identify companies that produce or sell such items.

"This report has more impact because it comes from the US government," says Sonia Rosen, who directed the study for the department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs. "It keeps the issue up on the radar screen."

The Labor Department report reveals an unsavory picture of how children contribute to their nations' exports.

In Colombia, about 800,000 children aged 12 through 17 are exposed to toxic substances while they process and harvest flowers for export. In South and Southeast Asia, where the International Labor Organization estimates at least half of all child workers live, children sew clothing during 14-hour days in crowded garment factories and knot carpets for hours on end in dusty huts.

In Africa, there is growing concern that more and more children

will end up sewing garments or mining minerals as nations build factories and families flock to cities.

While rural child labor has long existed, urban child labor increased in the past two decades. The garment industry in Bangladesh, for example, among the largest suppliers of cotton clothing in the US, sprang to life about 10 years ago.

Enforcement enhanced

"In the past decade, the growth of children working has tracked closely the growth in exports," says Pharis Harvey, executive director of the International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund. A strong political and social tolerance for child labor servitude in many countries, he says, undermines efforts at reform.

Growing awareness of the

'President Clinton just ordered a ban on imports involving rhino horn and tiger bones. What's wrong with putting something in about children?'

- Robert Senser

connection between the push to export and the employment of minors has resulted in renewed pressure to enforce existing child-labor laws in the offending countries. Numerous nongovernmental organizations, such as the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, based in India, have long pressed for improved access to education for poor children, who often end up working as bonded laborers, and have stepped up campaigns to get children out of factories. The ILO launched its first major campaign against child labor in 1992, channeling funds for educational and technical assistance to eight countries.

Reaction to US move

But when the Child Labor Deterrence Act was introduced, also in 1992, a number of countries sat up and took notice. And this, say many child-rights advocates, is proof positive that the US can influence the use of child labor overseas.

Critics of attempts to ban child-made products decry such measures as protectionist and ignorant of the reality that families in many developing countries rely on a child's income. But supporters counter that the many of the industries targeted no longer exist in the US.

Also, Bill Goold, legislative director for Rep. George E. Brown Jr. (D) of California, sponsor of the House version of the bill, argues that, rather than hurting children or families who desperately need the income, a ban could assist countries in breaking long-standing cycles of poverty.

"When kids keep working, adults don't get jobs," says Mr. Goold. In the rug sector, he points out, there is acute adult unemployment. "It's a false premise to say kids have to work or the family starves."

But getting the message across isn't easy. Sen. Tom Harkin (D) of Iowa, who introduced the bill, was pilloried in Bangladesh as well as in India, with those governments and some nongovernmental organizations lambasting the bill as imperialistic.

Nevertheless, in anticipation of foreign visits at the time, some of the larger Bangladeshi garment factories moved to comply with existing but unenforced child-labor regulations. And in addition to agreeing not to hire any more child laborers under the age of 14, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Export Association promised that children aged 12 to 14 will move to part-time work and part-time school, while children under 12 will be sent to school full time.

Ideally, activists say, consumer pressure and legislative action combined will end reliance on child labor in certain export growth industries. They are also counting on many American consumers becoming informed about products made by children.

"I find there are a lot of people who don't know what's going on, and when I do talk with them, the reaction is sympathetic," Mr. Senser says. "President Clinton just ordered a ban on imports involving rhino horn and tiger bones. What's wrong with putting something in about children?"

The Children's Story



Shankar

Shankar, was the youngest child on the march, aged just 6 years, he had been liberated from bonded labour 6 months prior to the march by Bonded Labour Liberation Front, during one of their raids in the carpet industry. He spoke a little about his time working at the looms.

"I was very small and I'm still small. I used to have to handle the heavy instruments to cut the knots in each carpet. Many times my thumbs and fingers were injured when the cutter slipped. Then I would cry for my mother but then the master would beat me.

He never took me to the hospital or gave me any medicine. What he used to do was take the matchstick and fill my cut with the matchstick powder, then he would set fire to it with another match, so that my skin and blood would burn together.

When he burned my skin together I would cry for my mother and then he would beat me again."

Santos

Santos another young boy, who had been released from bondage only days before the march started, again from the carpet weaving industry - spoke a little, with the help of an interpreter, of his time at the loom.

"I was also a slave at a loom owners place in Mirzapur District and I was held in bondage. Whenever I asked to be sent back to my parents, they always beat me and I was not allowed to go back. I had a lot of injuries and they would use matchsticks to burn my cuts together. When I got sick or cried or was slow in my work the master would beat me and say, if I didn't work properly, he would drop me in the River Gangies.

My loom master had a gun and we were always scared that one day he would kill us."



CWIN CHILDREN'S HOME
CASE FILE, JAN.-MAR. 1993

The 'Dead' Son Returns

It had been three years since Indra Bahadur Ranamagar, now 15, came to Kathmandu from his home in Dhading and started weaving carpets. He worked in a number of carpet factories in and around the valley, the last one being a factory in Chapagaon, about 20 kms. from Kathmandu.

For a boy who left home with the fellow villagers to work in the carpet factory and earn a lot of money, the real situation was devastating. He was made to work hard continuously from morning to night and was hardly paid anything. The ever active brokers lured him from one factory to another and made him work for about 18 hours a day for no money. He was cheated, exploited and abused. In fact, in the last factory he worked in, he was made to work from 4 a.m. to 12 p.m., locked in while working and not allowed to eat and sometimes even to go to toilet before he finished weaving his quota. As for wage, he had been promised Rs. 650 a month which turned out to be a hoax. Strenuous work, long working hours, inadequate and poor food and lack of sleep soon took a toll on his health. Indra fell ill with severe diarrhea and got very weak. Forced to work even in that condition, he grew worse and one day collapsed. When he could no longer move or stand, the broker beat him black and blue in a vain attempt to rouse the boy. When he failed, he ordered his henchman to throw away the boy out on the streets.

Indra was lying unconscious when a passerby, an old lady, put him in a taxi and left him on the gate of the Patan Hospital. The Social Service Group of the hospital provided him with treat-



ment and contacted CWIN when he was better - Indra could open his eyes after four days on saline water. After he was discharged, the CWIN staff brought him to the CWIN Children's Home.

Indra was admitted in the Home on February 3, 1994. There he was put on special diet, provided periodical health check ups at CWIN Clinic and looked after. He gradually recuperated his health. In the meantime, the field workers contacted the carpet factory where his three month's wage was pending and succeeded in recovering the money. Indra then expressed his desire to go home which he had not visited once since the last three years.

On March 11, 1994, the field worker accompanied him to his home. His family was surprised to see him and could not believe that he was their Indra whom they had thought dead. They had heard of his illness and had tried to locate him. Failing to do so, they had assumed he was dead. The family were happy to have Indra back. Even the villagers expressed their pleasure.

As for future, Indra said he wanted to till the family land.

VOCW / 37

Suka Maya

A STORY OF MISERY AND EXPLOITATION

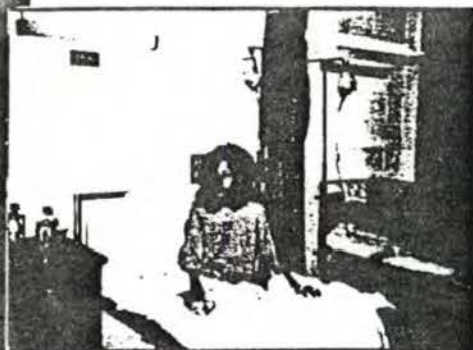
One year ago Suka Maya Magar came to Kathmandu with a relative in order to work in a carpet factory and to earn money for her poverty stricken family in Charikot village of Dolkha district. The 10-year old spent her first three months in training. She had to work morning to night learning to weave carpets but the *naike* fed her only once a day and did not pay her anything. At night she slept on a bare floor scattered with some wool scraps.

Even after her training period, Suka Maya was not paid anything. Tired of working long hours with an empty stomach and the regular nagging and physical abuse of the *naike*, she twice tried to run away. Both times she was brought back and the broker beat her with an iron stick. In the third attempt, she succeeded in running away only to work in another similar factory. A friend who brought her to the new place had told her that it would be better. So tired was Suka Maya of the previous factory that she thought nothing could be worse. It has only been 15 days in her new place where she has been promised Rs. 300 a month. Asked if she thinks she will be duly paid after 15 days, Suka Maya says she is not sure.

For all her one year of work in Kathmandu, she has not earned even a penny, nor has she any contact with her family. She detests the work here, and her health is deteriorating. Still she is apprehensive about going back home. She thinks her step-mother, who has seven children to feed, would not like to have her back.

Dil Maya: A Carpet Victim

It is the workshop in a carpet factory in Jorpati, Kathmandu. A large number of workers, many of them children and young girls, are engrossed in carpet weaving at the looms. Some workers are squatting on the floor while others are working on a raised platform with their legs dangling down, working on the upper side of the loom. A monotonous thud prevails the room as the workers use sharp toothed hammer to bring down the woven line on the loom. Woolen fluff drifts by in the room which is lit only by the yellow, sickly light entering from the greasy and broken window panes. The room is overcrowded and stuffy. But what catches the eyes of some social workers on



their observation visit to the factory is a disturbing sight in a corner. There a girl is lying on some rags and scattered raw wool. Lying in a fetal position, she seems as if trying to gather all the warmth she can get. A closer look reveals her sick pallor - she is very thin, pale, trembling and in delirium.

The carpet workers say that she is 14 year-old Dil Maya Tamang who was brought by a broker to work in that carpet factory about two months back. After a month, Dil Maya began to fall sick but continued to work in the loom. When she was seriously ill and could not even walk, let alone work, the broker fled leaving the sick girl to die. It was her co-workers who took mercy on her and fed her with tidbits, and gave her a drink of water once in a while. Dil Maya progressively got worse day by day.

The social workers immediately pick up the girl and bring her to the CWIN Children's Home where the staff admitted Dil Maya on June 27, 1994. The next day they take her for a check-

up at Kathmandu Model Hospital, a private hospital run by the Public Health Concerned Trust. The doctors diagnose her as a chronic Tuberculosis patient. From Kathmandu Model Hospital, she is referred to the Patan Hospital where the Social Service Charity takes over her case.

Dil Maya suffers from Pleural Effusion or fluid in the lungs. Her case is that of Pyothorax where lungs are filled with pus. This is a complicated form of Tuberculosis, which happens when a thorax infection, like pneumonia, is neglected and the fluid, unable to secrete, gathers under the lung membrane. A case of Pyothorax is extremely dangerous. The doctors need to remove the fluid from her lungs as soon as possible and therefore, she is admitted to the hospital for one week. For the duration of her stay, the CWIN Home staff wait on her day and night. After she is discharged, she is brought back to the CWIN Home where she stays a few days before being transferred to a Tuberculosis recovery centre run by the Missionary of Charity. She will be kept till she is completely cured. The CWIN Home, acting as the local guardian for her, will accept her back. After that, the staff will work on possibilities for her further rehabilitation.

Dil Maya recounted her sad story to the CWIN Home staff. The daughter of a poor farmer, she came from Lalgargh, Dhanusha district. Her mother died when she was very young. At home, she has her father, step-mother and three brothers. Due to a very poor economic condition of the family, Dil Maya was sent with a cousin to work as a baby sitter in Kathmandu. Her cousin, however, put her to work in a carpet factory in Sundarijal. She, along with other child workers, worked under a broker who forced the children to labour at an excruciating pace. Dil Maya had to work for 16 hours a day and was given a very poor and inadequate diet. For two and a half years she worked there, she never got to eat anything more than rice and pepper-water once a day. She had to complete weaving one square feet of carpet in a day, otherwise she would be verbally and physically abused. She was promised Rs. 500 per month, but she was never paid a single paisa. After working

there for two and a half years, the broker cheated her and fled with her due wage of Rs. 15,000 as well as the age of some other people. Then Dil Maya was taken by another broker to work in another carpet factory at Lagankhel.

By then she had contracted Tuberculosis. Inadequate food, long working hours and breathing in the heavily particles in the air in unventilated workshop had caused the disease. Luckily, the broker in the second factory took her to the Tuberculosis Hospital for check-up and she came back with numerous medicines. But since there was nobody to care for her and supervise her, she was not supplied with more medicine when the first supply was finished. Consequently, she did not recover and kept working. She expressed the desire to return home, but the broker declined. So she ran away from the place and went to work for another broker in another carpet factory in Jorpati. The second factory had paid her wage for four months in advance which her father took away.

She worked in the third factory for two months and left because she was not paid anything there. She then went to work in a fourth factory in Jorpati again. There the broker gave her a set of clothes and even paid her Rs. 500 at the end of the month. But during this time, she fell dangerously ill. The broker then left for his home leaving Dil Maya to die. From then on, her health deteriorated. Very sick and unable to walk or move, she lied unattended in a corner of the workshop.

"It was the first broker who caused me my disease," Dil Maya says sadly from her sick bed. "He made me work too hard and fed me only rice and pepper-water for two and a half year."

□

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CHILD LABOR AROUND THE WORLD...

Although the exploitation of children in the workplace is a widely condemned abuse of human rights, experts say that it may be on the increase because of expanding world trade. The global community's difficulty in eradicating child labor underscores the uphill climb that officials of the Clinton Administration and others face in effecting even minimal reforms in labor rights around the world.



International Labor Rights Education and Research Fund

The use of child labor worldwide may be on the rise.

Ever since 1837, when Charles Dickens's poignant depiction of street urchins in *Oliver Twist* tweaked Victorian guilt about the plight of children, governments have wrestled with what to do about young people in the work force. While most civilized societies view child labor as morally abhorrent, efforts to abolish it have often taken a backseat to

economic imperatives. Because of strong opposition from southern farm and textile interests, for example, it was not until 1938, with the enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act, that the United States effectively banned children from workplaces involved in interstate commerce. Even today, in much of the Third World, legal prohibitions against the use of child labor go unenforced.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that some 200 million of the world's children under the age of 15 work on farms, in factories and in households—including, by all accounts, a growing number in the United States. (On the statistical front, one of the difficulties is that experts are divided over how to define child labor: Is an African youngster herding the family flock of sheep, for example, in the same moral and economic category as an Indian child who spends long days drawing molten glass from a hot furnace?)

The vast majority of these children work on farms or in manufacturing activities for domestic markets. But as nations attempt to boost their exports to stimulate economic growth, opponents of child labor contend, many companies are trying to break into the world market by hiring more children, who command lower wages.

Nowhere is this more evident than in India. The South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude estimates that 55 million Indian children work, out of a total national population of 884 million. The Indian government puts the number at closer to 18 million, but even this estimate is as large as the entire labor force of Canada.

Since Dickens's time, family poverty

has been blamed for driving children to work at an early age. This linkage is confirmed by estimates that up to a fifth of Indian children in the workplace are in some form of economic bondage, their labor pledged as security for debts that their parents owe landlords or factory owners.

But Neera Burra, one of India's most respected students of child labor, argues that the cause-and-effect relationship between poverty and child labor is often reversed. Her studies have found that adult unemployment is often highest in areas of the greatest use of child labor, suggesting that adult workers are frequently displaced by children.

This phenomenon is part of a vicious cycle in which jobless parents are forced to send their own children to work, displacing even more adults. "Child labor is not simply a consequence of poverty, but one of its causes," said Myron Weiner, the author of *The Child and the State in India* (Princeton University Press, 1991), "and its removal is likely to increase the well-being of the poor."

In addition, said Pharis J. Harvey, the author of *Trading Away the Future*, a recent study of child labor in India's export industries, "India's growing export orientation adds one more pressure to tolerate and foster, rather than alleviate and eliminate, child labor." While the linkage is circumstantial and the data anecdotal, Harvey found evidence of the increased use of child labor in several industries that India has targeted for export promotion, including carpet making, gemstone polishing and the manufacture of brassware.

Harvey's monograph was one of a dozen U.S. government-financed studies that will serve as the basis of a congressionally mandated report by the Labor Department on the use of child labor in the manufacture of products exported to the United States. Opponents of child labor hope to use this report, which is scheduled to be released on July 15, as ammunition to push for the passage of

Public & Private

ANNA QUINDLEN

Out of the Hands of Babes

Would you buy a rug if you knew that it had been woven in India by 10-year-olds beaten if they didn't work fast enough? Would you wear a shirt if it had been sewn by a 9-year-old locked into a factory in Bangladesh until production quotas for the day had been met? Would you eat sardines if the cans had been filled by 12-year-old Filipino children sold into bonded servitude?

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, known as GATT, is the most sweeping free-trade pact in history. But like many agreements among different nations with different agendas, much has been lost in the translation. One of the losses in the GATT negotiations was the right of children not to be exploited, overworked and underpaid as a source of cheap and compliant labor around the world.

From the children who make carpets in India, sometimes 16 hours a day, seven days a week, to those who sew in Bangladesh for as little as five cents an hour, the International Labor Organization estimates that there may be as many as 200 million child laborers worldwide. Some are working in sweatshops that contract to make American goods. In testimony before the Senate earlier this year, a 15-year-old from Honduras told of girls working up to 80 hours a week at a factory manufacturing Liz Claiborne sweaters.

Child labor is the dirty little secret of foreign imports. Senator Tom Harkin, who wants to outlaw U.S. imports of all products made by children under age 15, says the problem is that Americans don't know that some of what they buy, including toys for their own kids, has been manufactured by children working the kind of hours, under the kind of conditions, that many still associate with the darkest days of the Industrial Revolution.

"You give me any cross-section of 100 Americans," says the Senator, "people from any income level, any area of the country, and I think the reaction would be overwhelmingly against buying the products."

Mr. Harkin is a voice crying in the wilderness, and the wilderness is the gilded thicket of free trade, thorny with U.S. concessions. Mr. Harkin's bill to keep products made with child labor out of the United States would probably be a violation of GATT, which provides only for those restrictions spelled out in the trade pact.

During various GATT negotiations, developing countries successfully argued against child labor provisions, insisting that children have always worked in their cultures, that to try to interfere with child labor is protectionist and punitive when a child may be the only wage-earner in a desperately poor family.

But the tradition of children helping on small farms and the innovation of locking them into a hotbox of a factory for 14 hours a day are worlds apart. The reason they may be the only wage-earner in some areas is because adult workers have

been laid off in favor of children, who are infinitely more exploitable and provide bigger profits for prosperous factory owners. And nations that really want to compete in a global economy will educate their kids, not work them half to death before they've even reached puberty.

After the bad publicity of the Senate hearings, Liz Claiborne announced that it was ditching the Honduran contractor, then decided instead it would "work with the facility" to "meet our human rights standards." A few American companies have been ahead of the curve; Levi Strauss and Reebok, for instance, had already demanded that their contractors overseas hire only workers over age 14. In India a consortium of carpet makers has started an industry campaign that tags those products made without child labor. That's the least Americans deserve, some assurance that what they buy has not been manufactured by kids.

Amid attempts to protect elephants from ivory poachers and dolphins from tuna nets, the rights of children go remarkably unremarked. "This is the last vestige of slavery sanctioned in the world today," said Senator Harkin. If GATT passes, an opportunity to end these children's servitude will have been shunted aside for the alleged bonanza of free trade. But consumers can vote with their credit cards only if products are labeled. At the very least the slogan "Not Manufactured with Child Labor" should shame those companies not in a position to affix it to their products. □

Child
labor,
free
trade.

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Front Lines

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



■ DECEMBER 1994



THIS ISSUE

2

Hillary Clinton visits
USAID/Indonesia projects

5

Martha Rees: On call to
help USAID employees

9

Letter from Goma



United States Department of State

Deputy Assistant Secretary
~~for Near Eastern and~~ South Asian Affairs

Oct. 11, 1994

Dear Ms. Verveer -

As Assistant Secretary Raphel promised,
here is a set of copies of:

Tab A Mrs. Kennedy's schedule in India.

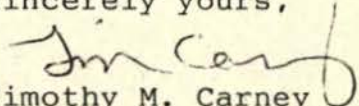
Tab B Press clips on Indian treatment of
Mrs. Clinton, led by a Sept. 30,
1994 comparison of Mrs. Kennedy
and Mrs. Roosevelt as Presidential
spouse visitors.

Tab C Mrs. Kennedy's Schedule in Pakistan.

Tab D Press Clip on Mrs. Clinton from
Pakistan media.

Tab E Bangladesh press clips on Mrs.
Clinton.

Sincerely yours,


Timothy M. Carney

JACQUELINE KENNEDY'S INDIA VISIT

MARCH 12-21, 1962

1. Nehru invited JBK to stay part of the time at his house.
2. Pair of tiger cubs in house she occupied. (rented from Gerry Gerold, Local head of Pan Am) (12 Ratedone Road))
3. Arrived 3/12 - met by Nehru, Krishna Menon, various ministers; 1,000 children; road into town lined with people
4. Call on President (watched him return from opening Parliament)
Walk thru Moghul Gardens
5. Rajghat - lay roses for Gandhi
6. Chancery - greet U.S. & Indian staff

-
- 3/13
7. Lunch at Rashtrapati Bhavan - Pres - "Huge & Glittering"
 8. All India Institute of Medical Sciences
 9. Press briefing (not clear if JBK was there) (possibly not since there were a number of these)
 10. Evening at PM's (party)

-
- 3/14
11. PM's home for Waifs & Strays
 12. Presented a children's art exhibit to Indira - Reception by local artists
 13. Cottage Industries Emporium
 14. Riding at exercise grounds of Pres. Bodyguard
 15. PM Dinner - with singing & dancing in garden

-
- 3/15
16. Train to Fatehpur - Sikri (from VIP Railway Station) - on President's train (once Viceroy's)
 17. Tour Fatehpur - Sikri
 18. Tour Taj Mahal
 19. Jewelry shopping
 20. Train to Benares (original plan had been to fly)

Note: Indian Amb. to U.S., B. K. Nehru, accompanied during in-country travel.

-
- 3/16 21. Launch along Ghats of Benares
22. Visit Silk-weaving establishment (JBK bought some silk)
23. Tour Sarnath
24. Fly to Jaipur - change planes
25. Fly to Udaipur
26. Stay at Maharana's Palace by Pichola Lake
-

- 3/17 27. Rest until noon
28. Family lunch
29. Visit Lake Palace
30. Tour Lake by boat
31. Reception in Durbar Room of Palace with Rajasthani dancing, followed by dinner in State Dining Room
-

- 3/18 32. Fly to Jaipur (after mass) - thousands of children & Rajasthani maidens welcome
33. Governor escort to Raj Bhavan
34. Pre-dinner, merchants set up wares on Guest House lawn
35. Dinner hosted by Governor
-

- 3/19 36. Visit Amber Palace
37. Meet Peace Corps volunteers
38. Stay at Maharajah's Palace
39. Visit City Palace (somewhat controversial)
40. Dinner at Palace
-

- 3/20 41. Rest until noon
42. Return to Delhi by air
43. Gala at Roosevelt House (with shamiana, 2 orchestras - pipers & bass drums on front lawn); 45 attendees including VP & PM, academic, artistic community
-

- 3/21 44. Call on PM
45. Departure - PM present
46. Fly to Pakistan for Horse Show at Lahore in Ayub's plane
-

From Ambassador's Journal by John Kenneth Galbraith

OFFICE OF THE PRESS ATTACHE
AMERICAN EMBASSY, NEW DELHI, INDIA
Fax No. (91-11) 687-2028

October 3, 1994

To: Department of State
Attn: Ron Lorton - SA/INS
Fax #:(202) 736-4463 or (202) 647-3001

From: Steve Seche, *John* Press Attache

Subject: First Ladies' visits

Page 1 of 1

DCM: MPDaley *Amg*

Following is a short piece that appeared on the editorial page of the Times of India on Friday. Knowing your interest in matters relating to the experiences of First Ladies in India, I thought you might find it useful.

9/30

Jackie And Eleanor

By RAVI BATRA

p10

IN America the leader of the country as well as heads of corporations and universities enjoy the title of president. To distinguish the one from all the others, the leader is addressed as Mr President. The spouse in the White House carries the somewhat inelegant title of First Lady.

It can be safely presumed that many of the First Ladies, particularly the earlier ones, had only hazy notions of our country, not much above the level of the average American who thought it to be a land of tigers and snake charmers. But two of them came on private visits to India to see things for themselves. One was Jacqueline Kennedy whose passing away in May this year was mourned not only by Americans but by many around the world. The other was Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of Franklin D Roosevelt, the American president who pressed Churchill during World War II to free India.

Jackie Kennedy first came to India in 1962 as a guest of Jawaharlal Nehru, while John F. Kennedy was president. Her visit unavoidably acquired semi-official overtones, though it was billed as a private one. She charmed Nehru just as she had

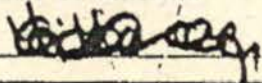
de Gaulle of France, Adenauer of Germany and Khrushchev of the Soviet Union. She was very apolitical; her interest in India lay in its people, the diversity of the country, its culture and its heritage. She was to make three further visits after John Kennedy was assassinated. She came and went quietly and unobtrusively. *Time* magazine in its May '94 cover story described her as "the most private of public persons, a delicate glow in the harsh landscape of American celebrity". It added "She radiated courage and restraint, glamour and conspicuous shyness".

Eleanor Roosevelt was a study in contrast. She visited India in the early fifties, ten years before Jackie. Whereas Jackie retreated into her private shell after the death of John Kennedy in 1963, Eleanor came out of hers with the passing away of Franklin Roosevelt in 1945. While Jackie was young, attractive and exuded ineffable charm, Eleanor belonged to an earlier generation and without putting too fine a gloss on it, was considered homely in both the English and American meanings of the word. That however did not make her any less interesting. She was intelligent, quickwitted and knowledgeable on

world affairs. Jackie would speak at a level barely above that of a whisper; Eleanor could raise her voice to stentorian heights if required. Much of her character was revealed in the following incident.

I was studying at Allahabad University when she came to stay for a day at Anand Bhawan, the ancestral home of the Nehrus. No official function had been organised at the University but a number of students wanted to catch a glimpse of the visiting celebrity and gathered at the closed gates of Anand Bhawan in the evening. Graciously she came to the gate and spoke briefly to the few hundred of us gathered there, among whom was the newly elected president of the students union. For some reason he provoked her into a heated discussion. I forget whether it was capitalism versus socialism or something else. All I can remember is that she stood up on the dais's chair and matched him argument for argument, decibel for decibel.

Despite his debating skills and oratory honed in the recent elections, the president of the Students Union of Allahabad University was worsted on his own turf by the wife of the late president of the United States of America.



 CURRENT TOPICS

India

Memorandum to Liz Bowyer

From: Ruby Shamir

Date: 9/28/94

Subj: Jackie Kennedy's Tour of India and Pakistan

Mrs. Kennedy's March 1962 trip was billed as a 'goodwill' trip, but was actually semi-official as relations were strained between the U.S. and India. President Kennedy named Mrs. Kennedy a valuable diplomatic asset. On her way to India she stopped over at the Vatican and was received by the pope. She also met with the president of Italy.

Included here are several examples of her participation in Indian traditions and reactions to her expedition. Enclosed is Mrs. Kennedy's itinerary and schedule for the trip. The U.S. Information Agency made a film called "Jacqueline Kennedy's Asian Tour." Gene Nigro at the U.S.I.A. is trying to get a copy to send to us.

- When she arrived in India she clasped her hands and slightly bowed (traditional Indian salutation).
- She acquiesced in many if not all customs (highly uncharacteristic for a white woman at the time)
 - *She wore the 'Tilak' paint applied to women's foreheads
 - *She wore traditional cloth on her feet when visiting the temple
- She participated in the ritual of holi, which consists of throwing powdered chalk at one another (against Secret Service wishes).
- She attended a sari fashion show, later wore one.
- She sailed down the Ganges on a ceremonial raft.
- She rode an elephant (bad idea according to JFK).
- In India a royal bamboo arch was made for her to pass under.
- Premier Nehru taught her yoga and was impressed with the fact that she did not discuss politics much with him. It is written that this is the reason he decided not to lobby about internal and external political problems.
- She remained acutely aware of Indian partisanship, and kept all parties happy by accepting an invitation to be the overnight guest at the home of both a liberal and a conservative.
- She spent a lot of money shopping at bazaars.
- In Pakistan she went down to the Khyber Pass on the West Pakistan-Afghanistan Border.

Positive Results:

- Mrs. Kennedy was greatly loved by the Indian people and was referred to as the American Queen.
- She improved diplomatic relations between the U.S. and India.

Criticisms:

- Ben Bradlee of Newsweek editorialized that she avoided poverty-stricken areas.
- The \$45,000 cost of the trip was regarded as too high.
- Critics charged that there are 'too many poor to have a lady parading around in the latest fashions.'
- Some complained that her pleasurable travels were not part of her job.

Mrs. Kennedy's Schedule in Pakistan
March 21-26, 1962

(source: New York Times)

- March 21 Lahore: Mrs. Kennedy arrived from New Delhi in the personal plane of the Pakistani President, Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan. At least 100,000 Pakistanis lined the 6-mile route from the airport to the residence. A colorful evening scheduled at Shalimar gardens had to be postponed until the next day due to rain.
- March 22 Lahore: Mrs. Kennedy spent an hour and a half at Lahore's biggest social event, the National Horse and Cattle Show, and received a horse named Sardar (chief) from the President of Pakistan; she also saw the Shalimar Gardens. Later that day she went riding in a pony cart driven by President Ayub Khan and saw models exhibit costumes of the Punjab. She was the guest of honor at a dinner by the President and saw a torchlight tattoo by the Rangers, before flying to Rawalpindi.
- March 23 Rawalpindi: Mrs. Kennedy attended a dinner in honor of Pakistan Day (March 23). Beforehand, heavy crowds lined the streets of Rawalpindi to see her. She received a child's outfit of Pakistani clothes for her 16-month-old son, John Jr., and met President Ayub Khan's wife who rarely appeared in public. She also rode "Sardar."
- March 24 Peshawar: Mrs. Kennedy and her party arrived in Peshawar from Rawalpindi and visited the Khyber Pass. She was given 12 live sheep, a dagger and a leather saddle blanket by tribal chieftains.
- March 25 Peshawar/Karachi: Mrs. Kennedy attended mass and left for Karachi. As one of her last events in Pakistan, Mrs. Kennedy rode a camel led by Bashir Ahmad, the Pakistani who visited the United States as the guest of Vice President Johnson. She departed Karachi for London.