

Community Management Rekindles Schooling



Links:

- [What is IDA?](#)
- [Our Work in Nepal](#)

More on Nepal:

- [Borrowing History](#)
- [Data & Statistics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

CHALLENGE

Nepal is a small, landlocked but relatively populous country in South Asia, with about 28 million people. Its mountainous topography— includes Mt. Everest and eight of the world's ten highest peaks—gave rise to a rich diversity of geography, religions and culture. By the early 1950s the country had only 22 high schools, of which 20 were community built, financed and managed. Successive governments continued this model for many years, treating education as a partnership with local communities. In 1972, however, the government took over more than 8,000 schools. Because of the country's remoteness and diversity—and weak governmental capacity—results were disastrous. Notwithstanding the lofty goals of the “New Education System,” teachers regularly abandoned classrooms, textbooks vanished, and quality plummeted. Finally, in 2001, Parliament passed new laws to transfer schools back to community management. But 30 years of neglect had taken a heavy toll. Literacy rates were 52 percent, compared to 58 percent in South Asia and 61 percent among low-income countries around the world.

APPROACH

The IDA-financed Community School Support Project was launched in 2003 to help reform the defunct public school system. The first step was to encourage communities to take back the management of schools, aided by a one-time government grant. The second was to transform the government's role from being a provider to a facilitator of education. Both steps were designed to increase the demand for and supply of education in tandem. Efforts to upgrade the quality and relevance of the curriculum were supported by efforts to improve the capacity of government agencies tasked with facilitating the system. Community-based organizations were at the heart of the transition at the local level, while the overall effort was integrated seamlessly into Nepal's Education for All Project (2004–09) and a sectorwide approach (SWAp) that harmonized donor support for education.

RESULTS

Net primary enrollment rose from 84 percent in 2003 to 92 percent in 2008. Gender parity improved from 83 percent to 98 percent during the same period. More than 8,600 schools transferred to community management. At the current rate, the goal is on track for achieving community management of all public schools by 2015.

Highlights:

- **Communities invested in their own schools.** Significant local resources were unlocked, with

every rupee of government grants leveraging 1.5 rupees in community counterpart.

- **Simple, fair financing was established.** Introduction of per capita (child) financing made resource allocation more transparent and equitable.

- **Decentralization of teacher hiring has spurred accountability.** Freezing the number of government-appointed teaching slots and Introduction of salary grants has allowed communities to recruit teachers locally and hold them accountable for classroom performance. The numbers of government and community teachers are now comparable.

- **Learning materials expanded.** Purchasing textbooks through the market rather than directly from a state-owned publisher has proved to be a more efficient supply mechanism.

IDA CONTRIBUTION

In June 2003, IDA provided a US\$5 million Learning and Innovation Credit to support the Community School Support Project. The project was then mainstreamed into the Education for All (EFA) program when it was launched in July 2004. IDA contributed a US\$50 million credit toward the cost of financing EFA. IDA provided an additional US\$60 million grant to Education for All in December 2007.

PARTNERS

Nepal's education sector has highly harmonized donor assistance. Nine donors and government have pooled funds to implement a sectorwide approach that covers both recurrent and capital expenditures. Donor harmonization began with the implementation of the five-year Basic and Primary Education Program II in 1999, when the World Bank Group, Denmark, the European Commission (EC), Finland and Norway pooled resources into a "basket" to help the government implement a primary education subsector development program. Building on that, a sectorwide approach was adopted for the follow-on Education for All Program (2004–10). Initial funding came from a few donors, including Denmark, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID), Finland, Norway and the World Bank Group. Other donors offered parallel financing: the Japan International Cooperation Agency, UNESCO and the World Food Program. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid), the EC and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) later joined. To implement Education for All, donors committed US\$241 million, with IDA providing US\$110 million, DfID US\$35 million, ADB US\$30 million, Denmark US\$28 million, the EC US\$27 million, Norway US\$23 million, Finland US\$14 million and UNICEF US\$1 million.

NEXT STEPS

Support has been requested for the School Sector Reform Program, which is designed to extend reform coverage throughout the educational system, providing universal schooling through Grade 8 while upgrading quality.

LEARN MORE

Community School Support Project (2003–08)

[Project documents](#)

Education for All Program (2004–10)

[Project documents](#)

Last updated: 2009-09-29