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## Search for Common Ground - Nepal Key Findings from 2008 External Evaluation Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups Program

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) has completed one and a half year project, entitled "*Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups Program*" with support of UNICEF.

Under this project, radio program produced by children '*Sunau Bolau*', media sensitization, community peacebuilding and outreach related activities were carried out. One of the major activities, *Sunau Bolau* radio program was broadcasted from 52 local FM radio stations through out the nation as well as through local radio productions in Jhapa and Surkhet districts, focusing specifically on rural communities.

### EVALUATION SCOPE

#### Objectives of the evaluation

- To assess the extent to which the project outcomes and results have been achieved
- To analyze the extent to which the radio programs have brought changes in people in terms of their sensitiveness towards the issues of child rights
- To assess the outcomes of dissemination and utilization of broadcasting materials
- To assess the perception of the listeners of *Sunau Bolau*, especially in terms of branding.

### KEY FINDINGS

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Respondents of Surkhet ranked the *Sunau Bolau* program to be very effective as it covered the local issues and involved the local children for the production and presentation of the programs.

- The participation of children, especially the child journalists, in developing the content of the radio programs tremendously contributed in enriching the program. However, there were some complaints of the radio program being less entertaining due to more focus on discussion and interviews.
- It was found that adults listened to *Nepal Chautari*<sup>2</sup> and children preferred to listen to *Sunau Bolau*. Hence considering the nature of the program, *Sunau Bolau* brand name was found more relevant to the children listeners..
- The Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials distributed by the project, especially the *Aba Ghar Farkaun* poster, have been highly appreciated by the children, community members and other concerned agencies. The content of the particular poster has been published by other organizations. Such materials together with other outreach program activities such as intergenerational *Dohari*<sup>3</sup> have complemented the role played by the radio program.

- It was found that there had been media sensitization workshops at district level, but no functional mechanism/networks with media and CAAFAG working groups and NGOs were developed.
- It was found that in the project areas the community people had been taking initiatives for the formation and mobilization of the child clubs including CAAFAG at the community level. Moreover, the families and CAAFAG themselves had played a vital role in their return. The community members have gradually started to give space to listen to children's voices in public forums and positive changes have been observed in school teachers and parents towards CAAFAG reintegration in the project areas.
- It was found that the project activities to some extent helped to address the issues of CAAFAG and their reintegration. There is increased feeling of responsibility among all stakeholders and they started internalizing the provisions made in different political and peace agreements in favor of the children and gradually started taking initiatives towards it. As a result, there is growing tendency towards recognizing and accepting the issues of CAAFAG.
- Concerning the implementation procedures, it was found that the execution of the program activities was done in a participatory way. However, effectiveness of the activities conducted in the local level and their results was not assessed adequately.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### ***Sunau Bolau Radio Program***

- *Sunau Bolau* radio program should give priority to incorporate local initiatives for accepting CAAFAG return and reintegration. And at the same time revised and modified version of the program should be broadcasted with wider coverage including the issues of vulnerable children.
- The radio program should have independent identity rather than being a segment under another brand name.
- There is a need to identify the regular listeners and encourage them to disseminate message in their clubs, families and communities.

### ***Media Sensitization***

- In order to establish common understanding and joint effort towards the issues, there should be initiation for establishing and strengthening the networks between media and child protection organizations.

### ***Community peace building***

- SFCG should give priority for designing other cultural activities such as street drama, folk song competitions in various subjects besides *Dohori* for promoting peace in the community.
- Considering the effectiveness of the cultural activities, their coverage should be extended to the community level and not limited to the district headquarters.

### ***Community outreach***

- There is a need for timely revision of exiting IEC materials. Consideration should also be given for developing and disseminating other relevant materials (i.e. pamphlets, leaflets, stickers etc.) by incorporating the issues of a changed context. These kinds of materials may contribute to promoting the radio program as well.

### ***Project Management and Implementation***

- SFCG should give consideration for selecting long term partnership to organize district level project activities instead of event based partnership. Consideration should also be given to clear PNGOs role while implementing project in respective districts.
- Consideration should be given for mobilizing child networks to promote *Sunau Bolau* program.

- Develop child centered common forum for *Sunau Bolau* program, which helps to increase wider participation from different geographical areas.
- Consideration should be given for the development and effective implementation of the mechanisms to assess the progress of the activities carried out in the local level.

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### EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

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In order to assess the overall results of the project intervention in terms of social change, information was collected through several data collection methods such as document review, focused group discussions, observation, key informant interviews, case studies, and consultation and reflection meetings.

The study was conducted in three districts namely Surkhet, Dang and Chitwan and the study covered a total of 17 Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), 26 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and four content analysis.

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*Source: The majority of this document was taken verbatim from the Evaluation of Search for Common Ground Activities in Nepal in 2008. For the full evaluation o, please refer to:  
[www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/evaluations.html](http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/evaluations.html)*