



CWIN-Nepal
For Children, With Children

Strategic Directions

2018-2020



Background

As Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN-Nepal) completes 30 years of working in partnership with children, it is an appropriate time to examine the organisation's vision, priorities and strategies for the next three years. CWIN was established in 1987 by a group of enthusiastic university students, who initially responded to the immediate needs of the street children they saw about them. From a small "Common Room" intervention where street children could be safe, rest and get some functional education, CWIN's pioneering status as a child rights organisation has steadily strengthened to help the whole country to learn to think about the needs of vulnerable children more systemically, and to respond to these needs more strategically.

CWIN's original constituency of street and working children has also expanded to include, more broadly, children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with



CWIN does this by serving as a watchdog, on the one hand, and identifying key issues and gaps; and lobbying and campaigning to address these on the other. At the same time, CWIN renders various kinds of support for children and the communities in which they are rooted through various socialisation, social reintegration and support programs. Some notable successes in the past three years include CWIN's successful lobbying for a National Policy on Adolescents and the National Alcohol Policy. CWIN also ventured into uncharted territory by undertaking reconstruction work necessitated by the devastating earthquake of 2015; most notably, the construction of 20 schools. From its initial work in the environs of Tribhuvan University, CWIN now works in 35 districts of Nepal.

Vision

Our vision is to build a just, prosperous and inclusive society where all children enjoy the fundamental human rights and where the state takes full responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill these rights.

Mission

Our mission is to translate the constitutional spirit of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal into rights, dignity, empowerment and protection for the children of Nepal, in partnership with children, and through wider engagement with civil society, private actors and state agencies.

Values

CWIN has built its structures and systems, its policies and procedures, and its training and accountability for staff and partners using a framework of core values. These include *Integrity* in our theory and practice of securing child rights, and *Consistency* in securing the safety and *Best Interests of Children*. Our *Creativity* in seeking out viable solutions is based on our sense of *Responsibility* towards the individual child as well as to society at large, and this may involve *Risk-Taking* and *Innovation* as necessary. *Teamwork* within the organisation and *Partnership* without serve to



strengthen our work. We *Respect* our constituency, our work and our partners, and have earned the reputation of being *Trustworthy* in all quarters. We work with and towards *Non-Discrimination*, *Non-Violence* and *Inclusivity*, and endeavour to practice *Transparency* for *Good Governance*.

How We Champion the Cause: Key Guiding Principles

Keeping the best interests of children at the heart of all its work, CWIN also focuses on making child rights a priority for all development work in the country. Most recently, CWIN worked to ensure that commitments to child rights were included in the election manifestos of all parties contesting in the local government elections held after a 20-year hiatus in the country.

CWIN regularly consults with children from different backgrounds in setting priorities. For instance, it consulted



with children affected by the earthquake to design interventions for child protection during emergencies and delivered letters written by 12000 children to the 601 Constituent Assembly members requesting the inclusion of child rights in the new constitution of Nepal.

We build partnerships, alliances and networks with a wide range of actors. CWIN is taking the lead to establish the first Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department in Nepal at Kanti Hospital, Kathmandu in partnership with the government, FORUT and the Norwegian Psychiatric Association. Another example is our work with the Federation of Kishori Samuhas (Adolescent Girls' Groups) which occurs in partnership with adolescent girls' organisations throughout the country.

We work to strengthen the Child Rights movement within and outside the country. We contribute regularly to all policy documents that affect children's lives, and contribute to national and international networks and alliances such as Children are Zones of Peace (CZOP) National Campaign, National Campaign for Education, Consortium of Organisations Working with Child Clubs; Global March, ECPAT International, Child Helpline International, Girls Not Brides, Aflatoun, etc.

We design our interventions so that communities and rights holders are empowered for sustained child rights work. We acknowledge that enduring change occurs when individuals and communities change, and work collaboratively to achieve this.

Our Goal and Our Strategies

The overall goal of CWIN as an organisation is to ensure that the rights of all children are protected and realised through evidence-based advocacy, research and programme interventions.

The major strategies we employ to achieve this broad goal are clarified here.

- We work towards protection of children from all kinds of abuse and exploitation and seek to improve access to and quality of services for all children by strengthening structures and mechanisms for child protection.
- We promote the participation of children, young people and communities in transforming our society in order to secure, uphold and protect rights, by strengthening their capacities and resources.

- We try to enrich the understanding of children's issues and their rights through research and the generation of appropriate data and evidence.
- We support the monitoring of local and national policies and plans, and the increase of the influence of children in development issues that affect their lives, to ensure that children's best interests are served, by providing access to information, strengthening their skills to analyse and debate relevant matters that affect their well-being, and creating fora for children's participation.
- We promote inclusion of children's rights within broader social movements and development processes in the country through strengthened networking and expressions of solidarity as appropriate.



- We encourage commitment towards children's rights among duty bearers, communities and the state through various forms of awareness generation, including mass media.

Specific Objectives over the three-year period

As the country experiences a major political and administrative restructuring, CWIN will have to undergo a corresponding internal reorganisation in order to retain its level of influence and efficacy at different tiers of the new structure. As more decisions get made at provincial rather than national levels, CWIN's current role as a national NGO must be supplemented by a presence and capacity to advocate at the provincial capitals. Consequently, this period will be one in which CWIN has to have two sets of specific objectives, one internal and organisational, and the second, external and programmatic.



Specific objectives for internal reorganisation and learning:

- a. By 2020, CWIN will have serviceable offices with necessary devolutions of funds, functions and functionaries in seven provinces, preferably in the provincial capitals, in addition to the national office at Kathmandu.
- b. At appropriate times over the 2018-2020 period, CWIN will undertake the necessary internal and external procedures necessary for compliance specified by the country's licensing and regulatory authorities to reflect this change in structure.
- c. By 2019, CWIN will have evolved a set of working procedural guidelines, laying down the nature of the relationship between the national and provincial offices, and their mutual responsibilities and commitments to one another.
- d. By 2019, CWIN will have a working draft communication plan and appropriate mechanisms, laying down the nature and frequency of communications that will occur to ensure that all provincial offices and the national offices are adequately aware of key information and decisions at both tiers, and can carry

forward the organisation's mission in a committed and collaborative manner.

- e. By 2020, CWIN will carry out a review of its existing 12 major policies, undertaking any revisions that are necessary and renewing our commitment to these policies. These include:
 - i. Child Protection Policy
 - ii. Gender and Social Inclusion Policy
 - iii. Alcohol, Drugs and Development Policy
 - iv. Anti-Sexual Harassment at Workplace Policy
 - v. Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Policy
 - vi. Environment Policy
 - vii. Internal Management Regulations
 - viii. Human Resource Development Policy



- ix. Information and Communication Policy
 - x. Fund Raising Strategy
 - xi. Organisational Development and Sustainability Strategy
 - xii. Child Participation Policy
- f. By 2020, CWIN will increase organisational capacity in disaster preparedness, and codify and formalise the Disaster Management guidelines currently in use within the organisation into a more formal protocol/policy.
- g. By 2020, CWIN will develop a safety policy for its offices and employees, or incorporate the necessary guidelines into the internal management and HRD policies as appropriate.
- h. As new staff are hired or redeployed, CWIN will hold a series of internal workshops to ensure that all offices are fully cognizant of, committed to, and compliant with all organisational policies, philosophies and strategies, and the constituent parts of the new CWIN system are working as a harmonious whole by 2020.
- i. CWIN will strengthen its existing fundraising strategies and mechanisms by 2020, by deploying personnel and submitting

at least five proposals annually, so that its restructuring plans are adequately supported.

Specific programmatic objectives:

1. In this programme period, CWIN will carry out Advocacy through Action to bring progressive policies and laws related to children, matching the spirit of the new Constitution of Nepal, and encourage commitment towards children's rights among duty bearers, communities and the state, and in particular, by 2020:
 - a. lobby for the endorsement of child friendly local governance and establishment of Child Protection Committees in all provinces at the earliest, providing capacity building support to the provincial governments as required.



- b. lobby so that the necessary amendments to the existing Children's Act, to ensure Child Rights and Protection, are introduced for discussion at the earliest in the new federal lawmaking body (equivalent to the Parliament), and passed, to ensure alignment with the protections in the new Constitution.
 - c. lobby for endorsement of the National Alcohol Policy by the new federal lawmaking body (equivalent to the Parliament) by converting it into a National Act at the earliest.
 - d. promote the National School Child Protection Policy for increased acceptance and compliance in all provinces. CWIN will work towards ensuring that 10 percent of the schools in 10 districts where CWIN is working endorse and implement the policy by 2020.
 - e. advocate for inclusion of children's issues in the policies and development plans including in the national and provincial planning documents.
2. CWIN will strengthen Child Helpline Nepal 1098 in the six provinces where it currently functions as implementing



organisation, and establish a new Child Helpline unit in the seventh province [province no. 2] to directly support 9000 children in need of care and protection over a three year period, and educate and create 350,000 adult advocates and allies among the general public during this period..

3. CWIN will strengthen capacities and partnerships with our constituencies - children, adolescent girls and young people - for increasing their influence at policy and programmatic levels for protection of children from all forms of violence including commercial sexual exploitation, child marriage,

trafficking and child labour exploitation. Ministries, government departments, local governments and/or Child Protection Committees will invite child representatives for consultations at least 5 times a year or 15 times over the three-year period.

4. CWIN will generate public awareness and enrich understanding of children's issues and their rights through media and communications (Bal Sarokar TV and Bal Chautari Radio and BalSarokar Online Magazine by developing 10 new programmes, tracking TRPs and site visit data to understand reach. CWIN will ensure that its Digital Resource Centre expands its reach so that content is available for use to the general public by 2020.
5. CWIN will carry out seven baseline studies and three action-research studies by 2020, including a new situation analysis of children at risk in the urban areas of the Kathmandu valley, and a qualitative study of the coping strategies of street children and youth in the context of the new guidelines for working with street children introduced by the Central Child Welfare Board to understand the impact of these guidelines on the relevant constituencies.

6. CWIN will promote inclusion of children's rights within broader social movements and development processes at national and international levels through strengthened networking and expressions of solidarity, in particular, through actions such as increasing opportunities for interaction between the Kishori Samuhas and the Women's movement, providing capacity building support to the travel and tourism industry, minimising child marriage in working districts and reach inputs from ECPAT International to children's organisations on new threats in trafficking and online commercial sexual exploitation.
7. CWIN will strengthen CWIN Balika programme and establish a residential Self-Reliance Centre for girls and young women to provide opportunities for them to learn vocational training for self-reliance by 2020.
8. CWIN will work towards strengthening capacities of the government schools in the Kathmandu Valley and provide educational support to at least 20,000 children in need in the urban poor areas and in rural areas by 2020.
9. CWIN will continue its presence in the community through the Women and Children Empowerment and Livelihood

Programme (WOCELIP) in partnership with Rural Development Tuki Association for community concientisation and empowerment of the women and the community for dignified livelihoods in Dolakha district by reaching out to 7400 households in 8 VDCs in the northern belt.

10. CWIN will strengthen child mental health services in Nepal through completing the building for the first Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Unit in Kanti Children's Hospital by 2018 and facilitating support services to ensure a full-fledged in-patient service by 2020.



Strengths and Opportunities

- Over its 30 year history, CWIN has developed several strengths is NOT.

- CWIN has a clear vision, mission, and goal, and as the situation warrants, either employs tried and tested strategies which have stood the test of time, or is flexible, resourceful and undertakes innovative initiatives in order to realise our priorities.
- CWIN undertakes its work in partnership with children to ensure their empowerment and agency. There is a child-friendly environment within the organisation and sustainable child protection mechanisms have been evolved. A zero-tolerance policy towards child rights violations is in force in the organisation.
- CWIN has conceptual clarity on issues related to child rights and is recognised for not compromising on principles related to child rights, even under very challenging conditions.
- CWIN is innovative, and adapts and evolves when faced with new challenges. We theorize, based on observation, data and experience to drive change, and apply these theories in practice, adjusting interventions as appropriate for maximum efficacy.
- CWIN employs a bottom-up approach, and grassroots community access and experience enhances CWIN's subject expertise for impact-oriented development work.

- CWIN has built up the basic physical resources necessary to carry out its work, and key organisational policies and instruments for governance are in place. Major skills and capacities have been developed; for instance, there is an in-house media department.
- Experienced professional and committed human resources support the mission of CWIN. CWIN recruits extensively from its constituencies and enjoys high staff retention.
- CWIN is well-managed and is committed to good governance and transparency, and a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption is applied.
- CWIN has built public trust and credibility, and there is wide acceptance and recognition of its pioneering status, and its innovative and steadfast qualities as a champion of child rights, at all levels from the local to the national, and in communities, governments and civil society organisations. CWIN's willingness to work in partnerships, alliances and networks has also been acknowledged.
- Consequently, CWIN has achieved “brand recognition”, so to

speak, in the area of child rights and is perceived as a resource organisation throughout the country, as well as regionally and internationally. CWIN's staff have trained tens of thousands of activists and community members on child rights over thirty years.

- CWIN undertakes evidence-based advocacy and hence has been successful in many of its lobbying initiatives.
- CWIN contributes actively to the development of institutional capacity for government structures, mechanisms and institutions related to child rights. For example, CWIN piloted the Child Helpline in Nepal and continues to anchor it in several districts.
- CWIN is prepared for proactive engagement with emerging and complex issues. The Children as Zones of Peace



initiative at the height of the armed conflict within the country, and the recognition that Nepal needed to attract and develop professional expertise in the area of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and steps taken to realise this, are examples of such pioneering work.

- CWIN has demonstrated its capacity for professional crisis management, both in individual case management as well as in dealing with conflict and humanitarian crises.
- CWIN has successfully developed second generation leaders who have become experts in various child rights issues and lead national and regional networks.
- The founding members to CWIN have been called on to undertake roles of national importance in the area of child rights. The Founder President has been a member of the National Human Rights Commission and the Constituent Assembly, and another member is currently Executive Director of the Central Child Welfare Board.
- CWIN is known for the range of child rights issues it is willing to engage with and its wide geographical reach within Nepal.

- Above all, CWIN enjoys the trust of the children it works with.

The changing political context has also created new opportunities to influence government and policies. As the country moves to a new three-tier hierarchy of local, provincial and federal governments, and seeks to establish elected local governments and provincial governments, a convenient opening to highlight child rights issues, and ensure that they are mainstreamed within the broader development framework has arisen. The new child-friendly constitution, which acknowledges child rights as fundamental rights, provides the schema for creating institutions, mechanisms and spaces within which to seek out more resources and protections for children. The opportunity to contribute to the training of hundreds of new elected representatives, nearly 40 percent of whom are women, and many of whom are first-timers in government, on child rights issues, in order to raise the numbers of duty bearers who are committed to child rights to a critical mass, is exciting.

In addition to laying the groundwork for developing procedural guidelines that will help to realise child-friendly local governance, integrating children's issues with Nepal's commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 provide systemic opportunities to advance the cause of child rights. CWIN also needs

to explore occasions for more meaningful partnerships with the private sector and relevant INGOs.

Challenges and Risks

Like any other entity, CWIN also faces some challenges.

- A perpetual challenge for an organisation such as CWIN is its reliance on (increasingly scarce) external funding for its work. At the same time, CWIN has yet to develop a thriving fundraising strategy.
- A related challenge is that very rarely are funders willing to provide untied funds for issue-based activism. The project-oriented approach requires commitment of funds to certain pre-determined goals to be achieved in a set period of time, which does not always accommodate the flexibility and innovation that are required for responding to crises created by child rights violations or vulnerable situations in the aftermath of disasters.
- CWIN needs to develop an internal monitoring and evaluation department as it moves into its third decade of operation, and

as it seeks to establish dispersed offices in all the seven provinces of a restructured Nepal.

- Although CWIN has good systems for crisis response and management, these need to be codified into a formal policy. It is also time for CWIN's other internal policies, of which there are 12, to be reviewed and adjusted as necessary.
- The demands of responding to the immediate aftermath of the earthquake and assisting with reconstruction, in addition to ongoing project implementation, has reduced the focus on research in recent years. This focus needs to be re-established and strengthened.
- The rich range of experience residing within CWIN's board (which includes a renowned academic with significant research experience, a lawyer and a medical anthropologist) has not been adequately tapped by CWIN to support its work.
- As CWIN's founding members are called upon to play other roles, or move on to other interests, efforts must be made to ensure that institutional memory is preserved well. CWIN's archives need to be reviewed and gaps filled. Efforts to make materials more easily accessible for organisational learning will be necessary.

- CWIN's staff are capable, trained and committed. However, their capacities are sometimes stretched when they have to juggle multiple roles. Also, as a national NGO dependent on project-based funding to pay staff members, CWIN is unable to match the compensation packages and other perquisites such as insurance, compared to INGOs and multilateral development agencies.
- The most committed staff are typically recruited from within the constituencies and primary stakeholders with whom CWIN works. At the same time, these staff require handholding and capacity building support to develop their potential and become useful assets in development work. However, funders are increasingly reluctant to assist with staff capacity development, although this is an investment with the certainty for long-term returns.
- As CWIN grows to establish a presence in 7 provinces, communication and management plans and operating budgets will have to be adjusted to take into account these new realities. Also, many administrative and structural decisions have yet to be taken (for example, the provincial capitals and the nature of the federal lawmaking body), which in turn reduces the time

available for CWIN to meet the specific objectives it has detailed for itself over this three year period.

- Nepal operates in a politically charged atmosphere, and while CWIN is careful to work with all political parties to promote the best interests of the country's children, some sections tend to perceive the organisation as having particular political leanings. This perception has to be challenged and negotiated in certain contexts.

CWIN's excellent track record, and the consequent high expectations of the public may also represent a threat in this transition period, as CWIN, too, tries to alter its structure with an increased provincial presence, to match the structural changes in the country. Managing and meeting these expectations by replicating the foundations of excellence, which have been established in CWIN so far, will have to be done with alertness and sensitivity. At the same time, the public, big business interests and the government increasingly tend to view civil society initiatives with more suspicion, and the shrinking of spaces for civil society activism, or demands that work be confined to providing physical assets such as buildings and computers, is an increasing reality.

Complicated government approval and compliance requirements, oftentimes from multiple authorities, require significant application of time and meeting several procedural demands. Rigid donor policies that are increasingly enamoured of the bean-counting, rather than the empowerment, model of development are also a reality to which CWIN has to adapt.

CWIN's staff have also faced threats from perpetrators and intimidation from political party heavyweights to prevent action against child rights violations, with individual cases threatening to become politicised to the detriment of the best interests of children

and physical or reputational danger to CWIN's staff.

In addressing all these challenges, CWIN will have to ultimately ensure that thirty years after it began, it continues learning and renewing itself as a learning organisation.



Measures of Success

By the end of 2020, the following measures will determine whether the actions guided by this Strategic Directions document have been successful.

Internal and Organisational:

1. In addition to the national office, CWIN has 7 provincial offices capable of lobbying and providing services related to child protection at the provincial level, with the appropriate staff and resources.
2. These provincial offices have fulfilled the necessary government compliance requirements.
3. CWIN's procedural guidelines laying down the responsibilities of the national and provincial offices are functional, and followed so that there is excellent collaboration and cohesion in the organisation as a whole.
4. CWIN's communication plan has been tested and adjusted so that there is frequent and adequate communication between the national and provincial offices.

5. Twelve of CWIN's major policies have been reviewed and commitment to these policies renewed across the organisation.
6. CWIN has a new disaster management policy and all staff have been reoriented to work with it.
7. CWIN has a new safety policy and all staff have been oriented to work with it.



8. Difficulties in the new structure and forms of functioning of the new CWIN system have been addressed collaboratively and the whole organisation is working harmoniously towards the common mission.

9. CWIN has raised adequate resources to fund the changes in its structure and its programmatic imperatives.

External and programmatic:

1. Construction of 20 school buildings has been completed as part of earthquake reconstruction efforts.
2. All the provinces have functional Child Protection Committees with members who have received adequate capacity building training.
3. The Children's Act has been amended to include protections provided for children in the new constitution.



4. The National Alcohol Policy is supported by National Alcohol Act.
5. 10% of all schools in 10 districts where CWIN is working are implementing the National School Child Protection Policy.
6. CWIN has 7 functional Child Helpline units, one in each province, providing services to children in need of care and protection. In all, at least 9000 children have been provided services and 350000 adult advocates and allies for child protection have been reached and created over a 3-year period.
7. Child Protection Committees at local, provincial or national level have invited representatives of Child Clubs, Kishori Samuhas and Youth Clubs for consultations and inputs at least 5 times a year or 15 times between 2018 and 2020.
8. CWIN's Media department has produced 10 new programs on sensitisation about relevant child rights issues for television and radio that have reached 100000 people.
9. Information from the CWIN Digital Resource Centre can be accessed by the public at large through the Internet.
- 10 Data from three new action research studies are informing and

shaping programmatic interventions for children at risk in Nepal.

11. The CWIN-facilitated Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Unit is functioning from its new building, and providing services to inpatients.
12. Children's rights are incorporated in the discussions of other appropriate social movements, for instance, Kishori Samuha representatives are invited to women's conferences, the Travel and Hotel Agency Association has adopted Gender and Child Protection policies as part of its code of conduct and children's organizations periodically receive inputs from relevant network organisation such as ECPAT International.



Way ahead

CWIN is committed to taking forward the child rights movement through new possibilities for empowerment and guaranteeing children's participation. Through its advocacy work it will continue to influence mainstream development programmes to be inclusive of children, and to foster democracy with children. It will continue to influence political parties, government, policy makers and other concerned stakeholders to act upon their promises towards ensuring the rights of every child in the country. It will also advocate for the rights of children, as stipulated in the new constitution of Nepal. CWIN will work intensively with the newly elected local governments and the new provincial structures to make child rights an important agenda for national development. CWIN will continue to fight against child abuse and exploitation to protect the rights of children at risk. CWIN will also continue its partnership with the government, civil society, private sector and the children to lead the child rights movement in Nepal towards a day when its work will no longer be necessary ●





CWIN-NEPAL

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