

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK AT NEPAL SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK: STRUGGLES & STRATEGIES

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### Abstract

*This paper comes out of the personal interviews & work experiences of the authors with Nepal School of Social Work between 2012-2013. The history of social work education and training in Nepal is rather nascent. NSSW is a joint initiative of Kadambari Memorial College of Science and Management (affiliated to Purbanchal University) and Nepal College of Development Studies (affiliated to Tribhuvan University). NSSW is aiming to carve out a niche for its training and advocacy as an open learning institution of social work with its double strategy to achieve international social work standards while practicing indigenous social work and praxis. Social work education and teaching has been a challenging task in Nepal due to various economic and political reasons. At the same time Nepalese society needs professionally qualified Social Workers as it is restricting its society and declared as a republic in 2008.*

*This paper taking Nepal as a context and Nepal School of Social Work as a case study tries to explore how a school of social work can act as a catalyst for change through developing professionally qualified Social workers. It is divided into different sections such as 1. historical roots & formation of NSSW, 2. major struggles and strategies, 3. efforts to develop Indigenous model of Social work practice and 4 a conclusion and relevance for Indian social work schools.*

**Key words:** Nepal, Social Work, Nepal School of Social Work, Indigenous social work, International social work

### Introduction

Social work as a profession began in Europe and later spread to the United States and to other parts of the globe that includes Asia. By 1920s, social work found its way to other places in the world including South America, the Caribbean, India, and South Africa (Kendall, 2000). Increasingly, as the social work profession continues to develop worldwide, an effort has been made to address social work from a global perspective - as one profession practicing in many different countries (Popple & Leighninger, 2002 cf Estes, 2010).

International social work is a discrete field of practice within social work that seeks to improve the social and material well-being of people everywhere. It is practiced across geopolitical borders and at all levels of social and economic organization. International social work also is development-focused and, as such, much of international social work practice occurs at the local, state, and provincial levels within individual countries (Estes, 2010:5).

International Social work is defined as (Cox and Pawar, 2006) the promotion of social work education and practice globally and locally, with the purpose of building a truly integrated international profession that reflects social work's capacity to respond appropriately and effectively, in education and practice terms, to the various global challenges that are having a significant impact on the well-being of large sections of the world's population. (p. 20)

This paper taking Nepal as a context and Nepal School of Social Work (NSSW) as a case study tries to explore how a school of social work can act as a catalyst for change through developing professionally qualified social workers. NSSW is aiming to carve out a niche for its training and advocacy as an open learning institution of social work with its double strategy to achieve international social work standards while practicing indigenous social work & praxis. This paper is divided into different sections such as

1. Historical roots & formation of NSSW
2. Major struggles & strategies and
3. Efforts to develop indigenous social work practice.

#### **Historical Roots & formation of NSSW**

Nepal, with a population of more than 29 million people, is a multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-linguistic and multi-ethnic country. Broadly speaking, there are four distinct cultural groups in Nepal, geographically represented by the people in the high Himalayas, the mid-hills, the Kathmandu Valley and the southern plains or the Terai region. These ethno-cultural groups maintain their unique life style, language, customs and rituals, food habits (cuisine), dresses, jewellery or ornaments

Nepal's population represents more than a hundred ethnic groups. Each Nepalese ethnic group carries its own identity and cultural heritage. Most of the ethnic groups have their own spoken language and script. Their food, dress, ornaments, beliefs, customs, habits and manners differ from one another. Their festivals, myths and legends, music and songs are also different. Out of 75 districts in Nepal, certain ethnic groups have a relative majority in 14 districts, whereas no particular group has a majority in the remaining 61 districts (Shrestha, 2009). They practice different faiths. Though Hindus are in the majority, Buddhism is practiced by an equal number of people. The other faiths are Islam and Christianity.

This landlocked country is currently going through the various political, social and cultural transitions. A decade long Maoist conflict (1996-2006) ended and the country is rewriting its constitution and declared as a federal republic in 2008 by abolishing the centuries old monarchy.

The country has gone through a series of transitions and is currently rewriting its constitution. The hope is that the new federal state will address the issues of inclusion, decentralization, balanced and sustainable regional development and a sense of national

unity. This context provides ample opportunities and challenges for a young profession like social work to take root in Nepal.

### **Birth of Social Work Education in Nepal**

Social services and reforms in Nepal can be traced back through many forms of voluntary work by religious and cultural institutions such as *guthi* (clan based association), *dharmashala* (free residences for the poor) and *patipauwa* (public resting place) in Nepal. Alms giving to the poor and disabled are widely practiced even today. This practice is rooted in the concept of Dan (charity) in order to please the gods and to seek a better life both at present and in the next life (*Nikku, 2010: 821*).

In addition to cultural and religious practices, social reforms initiated during the 1950s have had a profound impact on current social work practice in Nepal. The Nepal Gandhi Charka Pracharak Trust was founded by *Tulsi Meher*, known as Gandhi of Nepal, in the 1950s. Its importance for social organizations and voluntary institutions was felt with the launching of National Development Plans beginning in 1956. The initiation of the Social Service Act in 1978 and the establishment of the Social Service National Co-ordination Council (SSNCC), now known as the Social Welfare Council, were important milestones in Nepal. After the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990 many non-governmental organizations were begun by different individuals. They were known as social workers though they did not have degrees in social work. However, since the start of social work education in 1996 there is now a distinction made between professionally trained social workers (known as professional social workers or trained social workers) and those who do not possess degrees in social work, who are known as social service practitioners. This distinction is yet to be recognized by the state.

The history of social work education and training in Nepal is rather nascent. The social work education in bachelors level started by St. Xavier's College, in 1996 affiliated to Kathmandu University with the help of Nirmal Niketan school of social work Mumbai, India. Until 2005 it was the only department offering a social work degree. Through this collaboration itself, the internationalization of social work education initiated. Kadambari Memorial College of Science and Management (affiliated to Purbanchal University in 2005) have started to offer Bachelors in Social Work (BSW) degree. In both these colleges the social work course is offered in semester system and credits are awarded

In addition to these two colleges, there about 15 affiliated colleges of Tribhuvan University (TU) have started to offer social work as one of the two major courses at the bachelor's level with a less focus on fieldwork practicum and annual examination system. The social work curriculum developed over a period of time (1996-2005) under three different Universities in Nepal shows the evidence of indigenous and international influences in developing social work curricula suitable to train social workers who are relevant for Nepal and its growing needs.

Since 2005 the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from Purbanchal University has been offered at St. Xavier's college and is affiliated to Purbanchal University. This college has also offered a BA in Social Work degree since 1996 and a one year Post Graduate Degree in Social Work initiated in 2010, both recognized by the Kathmandu University.

#### **Nepal School of Social Work**

Nepal School of Social Work is a unique program of *SUTRA Centre for Development and Research* is a non profit organization registered with Social Welfare Council of Nepal. In 2005, the organization collaborated with St. Xavier's college to initiate Master and Bachelor Programme of Social Work with Purbanchal University in semester system. Kadambari Memorial College was established in 2005 in affiliation with Purbanchal University to run Bachelor of Social Work. In 2007, Nepal College of Development Studies was established in affiliation with Tribhuvan University to run Bachelor program on Social Work and Rural Development. NSSW is a joint initiative of these two colleges has been involved in nurturing trained professional social workers since 2005.

#### **Vision of NSSW**

NSSW is a leading centre for Professional Social Work Education and Centre for excellence for social work training and research and partners with national regional and International social work organisations to strengthen social work in Nepal and South Asia.

#### **Mission of NSSW**

The College aspires to create a supportive and students' centred learning environment that promotes equity, respect, responsibility, curiosity, collaboration, flexibility, risk-taking and creativity. By translating these values in to action, the College prepares generalist social work practitioners skilled in critical self-reflection, innovation, create collective knowledge and understanding on social issues and to work with individuals, families, groups and communities aiming to prepare indigenous professional social workers.

#### **Major Struggles & Strategies**

Nepal is a landlocked, post-conflict country in transition with its ancient culture and the Himalayas as a backdrop, landlocked Nepal with 29 million people carries a romantic image for many outsiders. In reality, the country went through a series of transitions and is still struggling to establish its credentials as a young republic. Nepal's transition in the last 250 years from a land of many principalities to the youngest federal republic can be classified as: Nepal's Unification, Shah Regime and Instability (1769-1846); Rana regime (1846-1950); The Democracy Project (1955-1980); Movement to Restore Democracy (1980-1990), Maoist insurgency (1996-2006); declaring Nepal as a republic in 2008; and the exercise of rewriting the constitution.

### **Reviving Democracy: Feudalistic to Constitutional Monarchy**

Until 1990, Nepal was a feudalistic monarchy. In 1990, the political parties again pressed King Birendra and the government for change. This “Movement to Restore Democracy” was initially dealt with severely, with more than 50 people killed by police gunfire and hundreds arrested. In April, the King capitulated. Consequently, he dissolved the *Panchayat* system, lifted the ban on political parties, and released all political prisoners. Popular protests forced King Birendra to introduce democratic politics in 1991 but this was marked by frequent changes of government. The 1990 people’s movement saw the replacement of the absolute monarchy with a constitutional monarchy. The next 5 years saw five successive unstable coalition governments and the beginning of a Maoist insurgency.

### **Maoist People’s Movement and Armed Conflict (February 13, 1996 to November 21, 2006)**

In February 1996, the leaders of the Maoist United People’s Front began a violent insurgency with the aim to reform and restructure society and governance. The Maoists identified the weakness and fault lines of Nepali society and used them to their advantage. They exploited the feelings of discrimination and exclusion among the Dalits, the indigenous, and Tarai Madhesis. After 4 years, i.e. by February 2000, the Maoists claimed that there were only 9 (out of a total of 75) districts that had not come “under their direct influence” (Mulprabaha, February 14, 2000). To address the influence of the Maoists, the last king of Nepal, Gyanendra, twice assumed executive powers in 2002 and 2005. Citing a steady deterioration of conditions in the country, King Gyanendra dismissed the Cabinet and constituted a Council of Ministers under his own leadership on February 1, 2005. The 10-year Maoist insurgency was punctuated by cease-fires in 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2006 (Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, 2010).

### **Crafting the Republic of Nepal**

In April 2006, the major political parties, in cooperation with the Maoists, organized massive countrywide demonstrations for the restoration of democracy (Jana Andolan 2) forcing King Gyanendra to relinquish power. Since November 21, 2006, Nepal has entered into new era when the then government and the Communist Party of Nepal - Maoists (CPN-M) signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The historic peace agreement not only ended more than a decade of armed insurgency but also opened windows of opportunity to transform the feudal, centralized and exclusionary state into a republic. Parliament agreed to the peace deal in December 2007.

Countrywide general elections took place in April 2008 and the Maoist Party emerged as the largest parliamentary party. The monarchy was abolished a month later, a Maoist led government took office in August 2008, and Nepal was declared a federal republic.

Unfortunately, the 601 member Constituted Assembly (CA) and not constituted that was elected by the Nepalese voters in 2008 has not yet been able to deliver the new constitution to the country as the law makers of the different parties are not able to come to a consensus. The CA was dissolved on 27 May 2012 by the Prime Minister.

These issues are still continuing and sometimes getting worse. It affects nationwide; in all aspects.. Such a country like Nepal, there will be loads of struggles may come forward and they are facing enough in socially, economically and politically. Even though NSSW is still taking steps for moulding generations through the social work education & training

### **Diversity in Social Work Curriculum**

The social work curricula developed over a period of time under three different universities in Nepal show evidence of indigenous efforts to train social workers who are relevant for Nepal and its growing needs. Past reports suggest that Nirmala Niketan School of Social Work in India helped St Xavier's college in Nepal to prepare a three year Bachelor of Social Work program, which was subsequently approved by Kathmandu University in 1996. Similarly Tribhuvan University Curriculum Development Centre renamed their major course, which originally had the title 'social service' as 'social work' and added supervised field-work hours as a requirement. In 2005, Purbanchal University created a subject committee to prepare the social work curricula for both bachelors and masters programs. The subject committee was aware of the discourses on indigenous and Western models of social work and utilized the opportunity to reflect on such models. After many discussions and debates, a curriculum that is suitable for the country's current needs was prepared and approved by the university

Analysis of the three social work curricula shows that Purbanchal University adopted a social development model based on rights-based social work, Kathmandu University focused on clinical social work and Tribhuvan University concentrated more on social service. The social work curriculum of Purbanchal University shifted from a clinical social work focus to a rights-based model. This social work curriculum would serve as the first comprehensive resource available in the country for other colleges, training centers, government and non-government organizations for the planning and programming of rights-based training in Nepal and beyond.

The above process suggests that social work institutions in Nepal (all three universities) lack coherence in curriculum. Though they were trying to keep the core values of social work, these incoherence leads to different quality standards among social work institutions. It is sure that these efforts will further leads to develop an indigenous model for practice.

**To recognize Social work as a profession**

At times, big conflicts used to happen about the role & recognition of Social workers. At times, social service providers or politicians may recognize as social workers. The major question is *How do you differentiate Social service providers and professionally qualified social workers*. The society should understand the role of social workers like doctors, engineers, civil servants etc. In Nepal, Graduate Social workers are not even compete with other professionals for many government jobs as the training not yet recognized by the service commission of Nepal. There is an urgent need for forming a National Association for social workers for negotiating with the government for recognition & protecting the rights of social workers. However, due to years of lobbying by child welfare organizations, the Children Act states that, in cases dealing with children in conflict with the law, a social worker has to be present along with a psychologist and a judge. The act is, however, silent in its definition of who is a social worker.

**Council for Social work Education**

A transition country like a Nepal lacks an agreed upon curriculum& its enforcement through out the country. There are three universities offering a social work course in their affiliated colleges which each have their own focus and quality standards. A cross sectional analysis of the curricula shows a huge variation in terms of composition and approaches to social work education and field practicum. To achieve basic standards and to ensure the quality of social work training, the formation of a Council of Social Work Education in Nepal is urgently needed.

**Efforts to Develop Indigenous Practice Model of Social Work in Nepal**

When we discuss about International Social work, it is must to think about Indigenous practices of Social Work. When we practice social work in different countries across the globe, it is important to understand the various cultural, political & social structure of that society for the effective practice of social work principles & skills. That means it is necessary to develop indigenous models for social work practice. The first mention of indigenization in the field of social work was in 1971, when the Fifth United Nations international survey of social work training used it with reference to the inappropriateness of American social work theories to other societies (United Nations, 1971).

Indigenization is also referred to as 'adapting imported ideas to fit local needs' (Shawky, 1972: 3). A recent definition of indigenization is given by Midgley (1983: 170):

Indigenization means appropriateness, which means professional social work roles must be appropriate to the needs of different countries and social work education must be appropriate to the demands of social work practice.

### **Recognition of Social Work Profession**

Nepal School of Social work (NSSW) is anchoring as a catalyst for developing professionally qualified social workers through developing of indigenous model of social work practices by keeping the international standards. To hold the international standard, it is necessary that the nation should recognize social work as a profession & what it mean by professionally qualified social workers. The establishment of professional body is important for the upliftment of Social workers in Nepal. To full fill this, NSSW has been processing to register National Association of Social Workers naming SWAN (Social Worker Association of Nepal). The Ad-hoc committee has been formed constituting seven members under the presidency of Dr. Dilli Ram Adhikari, (Principal of Nepal School of Social work) at present. Required all the documents have been prepared, hopefully by the end of December 2013 the registration process will be completed and SWAN will be looking forward to the call for assembly and elected governing body. It is to be noted that NSSW taking initiatives to establish the association & get recognition for the social workers

### **Nepal Council of Social Work Education (NCSWE)**

Indeed, Social Work Education council is important at this point to administer the educational quality and cross-sectional analysis of the social work curriculum to update with contemporary practices. “In order to be relevant in 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond, social work education have to advance itself by recognizing the historical context, local and global changes, present-day and emerging needs of a particular society” (Nikku, 2012). The social work colleges are supposed to have the uniformity and required standard. It is evident that there is a huge variation in terms of composition and approaches in imparting social work education and field practicum in social work colleges of Nepal.

In its recent three years strategic planning meeting, NSSW has taking steps to bring the uniformity and gradient standard in social work education and practicum among social work colleges. It has envisaged a set of activities like organizing counselling training, advanced research training, proposal writing and field work reporting training and training on thematic social work camps to social work faculties from social work colleges, developing specialization course in MSW (Masters of social work), reviewing the course BASW (Bachelor of Art and Social Work) of TU (Tribhuwan University) etc. To this, NSSW has already started the process to accomplish these activities under the guidance of its senior management committee Ms. Pradipta Kadambari, Dr. Dilli Ram Adhikari, and Keshav Nepal and off-course, indubitable Dr. Bala Raju Nikku (Founder of Nepal School of Social work & author of so many publications on Social work education in Nepal). To instigate specialization courses in Master degree program, NSSW has proposed three specialization courses on Mental Health specialization, Geriatric social work specialization and specialization in Child, Youth and Family. Admirably, NSSW has been offered by TU to develop the specialization courses for Master’s level.

Admirably, NSSW has been offered by TU to develop the specialization courses for Master's level. It was a very first initiation of specialized social work course in Nepal. NSSW, under the lead of Dr. Dilli Ram Adhikari, Dr. Bala Raju Nikku and other professionals has developed the Mental Health specialization course at Master's level. Recently, it has been offered by Tribhuvan University. However, other two specialization courses are under progress and NSSW is very much sure that by next three years the other two courses will also be developed and offered very soon. Further, NSSW has been offered by Tribhuvan University to revise the BASW course and we are very much positive in looking forward to it. Moreover, National Council of Social Workers is another important part of this strives but it's a long term vision that NSSW professes in institutionalizing professional social work in Nepal. All together these all initiatives must be leading to a professional body to ensure the quality of social work education and training in Nepal. Its clear that NSSW is taking leadership in achieving the same.

#### **Building Alliances**

To create an International standard in education, its important to collaborate with other social welfare agencies & schools of social work across the globe. In the past 8 years NSSW successfully established contacts with international social work organisations like

International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) in 2009 and through the support of ICSW South Asia it developed its overarching aims to facilitate Civil Society involvement in the social development policies of Nepal.

In 2008 NSSW established links with international Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) the then secretary general David Jones and with John Ang Chair of the IFSW Asia Pacific. The school organized a week long World Social Work Day celebrations in Nepal for the first time in 2008 and honoured social workers, invited political leaders to bring awareness and recognition to professional social work. Since then NSSW continued to organize every year the WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY to reach society at large. This initiative helped to bring social work faculty, practitioners and students to a common platform to discuss the challenges of social work education and role of social workers in the country's reconstruction efforts.

To strengthen social work education and practices in Nepal, NSSW has always stepped a forth to make an alliance with national and international partners, to which it has been processing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with School of Human Services and Social Work, Logan Campus, Griffith University, Australia, at its recent. The MOU includes student exchange program, faculty exchange program based on sabbatical leave, higher study, student club, online classes exchange program, conferences, Training, Education projects and interventional programs, Joint research on issues like socio-economic, human rights, child rights, gender, policy, human services, good governance and psychological problems to add knowledge in social work education for coping and resilience of individual, group and communities. In-addition, NSSW like any other social institutions in

our society, being an educational institution has always hold and will ever embrace its objectives and/or retain with its social responsibilities for social change through educational excellence.

The co-author of this paper has been started to associate with NSSW in his final year field work experience. The trainee got ample opportunities to understand the social, economic and political systems, the cultural background, and living pattern of different communities in Nepal. The trainee visited human service organisations such as Children for Green New Nepal (CGNN), Amnesty International, Parichaya samaj, Society for Women Awareness Nepal (SWAN), Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) etc. The interaction with professionals of various organisations during the organisation visits helped the trainee to learn about advanced and emerging strategies and methodologies in various fields of social work in Nepal. The trainee was giving life skill training to Bachelor level students and prepared a life skill training module for various target groups. The trainee was giving course lessons on Juvenile Justice system & workshops on research proposal & seminar paper writing. These all are the experiences & learning opportunities which the co author of this paper received when he was doing his field work in Nepal. This academic exchange programmes were very important in developing alliances with the other schools of social work. Like this, so many exchange programmes were happening in Nepal School of Social work. To quote, Eva Vani Kaufman, current Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development, Elena Sophie Tibler from Austria were with the trainee when he was doing his field work. This collaborations were clearly shows that how NSSW strives for the social work education at International Standards.

It is to be noted that NSSW is giving opportunities for scholars to share their knowledge in the relevant fields. NSSW believes that only through dissemination knowledge, the development sector will grow. To acquire this, NSSW used to organize various programmes in national as well as International level. Recently, they organized 3<sup>rd</sup> International conference on Child Friendly Cities (CFC) was one of the prominent examples that NSSW feels proud on sharing it. It has played a key role in creating a common platform to bring wide range of stakeholders from giant to community level in a common consensus to share and devise policy and practices to create a Child Friendly Cities in Nepal. It not only succeeded to engage the prominent invitees like Government Organizations; MOFALD (Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development), Ministry of Children, Women and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health and Education, MUAN (Municipality Association Nepal), International/Non-Governmental Organizations; Save the Children Nepal, ENGAGE and Social Work Colleges but also succeeded in passing the declaration on Child Friendly Cities in Nepal in close coordination with CFAP (Child Friendly Asia Pacific) etc. Indubitably, it is a bench mark that NSSW has succeeded in putting in the history of Nepalese social work.

**College with Community (CWC)**

Currently, NSSW has instigated a CWC (College with Community) program in its 9<sup>th</sup> Foundation day celebration in 2013 with a vision to practice indigenous and international model of social practices in its initiation at community level. The program comprises two projects namely Child Friendly Development Center (CFDC) and Senior Citizens Club (SCC). Both of the projects are developed in a locality development model moreover, it envisions offering other practices and extension of services in close coordination with the action system as per the requirement. Moreover, NSSW is also looking way forward to work with plus two colleges and High Secondary Schools in various community as well as social issues.

**Certificate Course on Voluntarism, Civic skills and Social Work**

The promotion of a truly volunteering based society has been the major objective of the first ever course held in Nepal on Volunteerism, Civic Skills and Social Work promoted by Nepal School of Social Work and CCS Italy- Nepal Country Office. With weekly classes held on Sunday, the Course tried to clarify the role that volunteerism can play in a developing country like Nepal with its recent story of internal turmoil and conflict and a stalled peace process causing chronic political instability.

Fifteen young professionals got engaged in the first edition of the Course with passion, commitment and determination to turn Nepal into a “volunteering based society”, a society united and cohesive because more and more common people decide to do something for the others. The Course is a unique experience that brought together local expertise from national and internal actors like UNV, VSO, Restless Development and Global Action Nepal, all institutions involved in the promotion of volunteerism in Nepal

This course is a fine example for developing indigenous models for social work practice. Voluntarism is closely related with Social work. Past report shows that many students, after completing this certificate course, used to join for bachelor level courses in social work

**Learning by Doing**

Social work is a profession which helps the trainee to apply classroom theory into the field. That's why field work is one of the integral part of our curriculum. One of the major objective of this field practicum is the students should be able to take initiatives in their own society for its betterment. The authors have to say that NSSW is playing a key role in shaping the future social workers. It is to be noted that there are many non governmental organizations were established by the students of NSSW. Other than research activities, they have been working on the different target groups for achieving a common goal; betterment of the Nepali society. Some of the organizations are Little world Nepal, United Hands for Social Development (UHSD), KAD Nepal, Yug Activist Group (YAG), We stand to understand etc. They have been working with the areas of Rural development, Children, HIV/AIDS, Social Acton, Human Trafficking etc. They organize different

programmes such as trainings, awareness classes, day observations, rehabilitation facilities etc.

### **Conclusion**

As a concluding note, NSSW has been practicing and advocating social work at Policy level to institutionalize social work in Nepal. It believe students as leading edge of social work, they have been offered-with various field work settings, block placements, rural-urban and neighbourhood camps, workshops, meetings, conferences, trainings, and research programs with the expectation that they will enhance their knowledge, at one hand and in other, the information drawn under professional guidance can be utilized for many purposes like, presenting the issue based papers among the stakeholders, advocating on social issues to source welfare provisions and create a just society, assisting policy makers and planners in designing welfare provisions, assisting executor in implementing policy, programs and provisions in effective and efficient manner, monitoring and evaluation etc.

As is evident, since social work education in Nepal is controlled by a few university affiliated colleges, there are different views regarding ways to strengthen social work education there. Few are of the opinion that social work education in a country like Nepal should be based on the country's priorities and should not import Western models. Some scholars state that social work education is confined to students from elite families and is only available in Kathmandu city, and hence social work education should be offered as a course within higher secondary education to provide access to a wider audience. Interviews with social work graduate students suggest that social work in Nepal should meet international standards and criteria so that they can gain employment even in developed countries. Interviews conducted with different stakeholders and speeches at different occasions suggest that there are diverse views but the common goal is to craft a vibrant social work profession in Nepal by creating opportunities for social work education in different universities

The timeline of social work education in Nepal suggests that indigenous and international social work practices are not isolated perspectives but are complementary to each other as in the case of Nepal in crafting its own model of social work education and practice within the South Asian Region. The Nepalese experience suggests the use of a 'two way street' as mentioned by Professor Midgley. The activities that are being implemented are rooted both in local and international spaces, not as sporadic events but as strategies to strengthen the social work profession in Nepal.

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