

National Level Discourse on Youth and Lifelong Learning

As an attempt to aware the youths (especially the political youths) regarding the provisions envisioned by SDG, SSDP and Education 2030 regarding the Youth and Lifelong Learning and also to make them responsible to transfer this knowledge to the youths of their community, a national level discourse on “Youth and Lifelong Learning in SDG” was organized by National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE- Nepal) on 28th October, 2016. The overall discourse ended up with the commitments from all the participants regarding the involvement of youths from the planning to the implementation level. It also provided the future direction for NCE Nepal so as to capitalize the discourse and involve in the further campaigns to ensure the youths participation.

More than 150 participants from the political groups, student unions, youth organizations and youth networks actively participated in the program. Dr. Tanka Nath Sharma, Educationist highlighting the provisions envisioned by Sustainable Development Goal, presented the facts regarding the importance of youth involvement in the success of the development goals with the findings of the evidence based research. He highlighted the fact that formal education has been given more priority by the society as well as by the government. Nepal’s constitution (2016) has provided supreme policy guideline for the lifelong learning and several other national policies also support for the enhancement of lifelong learning. However, National Qualification Framework (NQF) has not yet been developed in Nepal to guide overall lifelong learning process and also the financing in lifelong learning program has been very low as compared to other subsectors of education. This clarifies the gap between policies and their implementation and is the challenge for the education sector. Dr. Sharma urged for the need of the effective coordination between the networks, youth alliances, government, leaders and all the stakeholders for the success of the development goals as envisioned by SDG and SSDP.

Furthermore, Mr. Ram Gaire, Program Manager, NCE Nepal pictorized the journey of education development goals from EFA I to Education 2030. He presented that although the development goal and SSDP now has envisioned the need for the youth participation in the development process, there remains the larger extent of risk of attainment of the development goals until and unless these goals, indicators and target are owned by the youths. Citing one of the reason of failure of MDG as the lack of youth active participation, Mr. Gaire urged the need of the youth intervention in the development process from the planning to the implementation level owing their shared responsibility. He also highlighted that “Youths should be the partners in the development process rather than only the beneficiaries one.” Moreover, he highlighted that there’s a need to create a prosperous and responsive world where all people, regardless of their age, realize their rights and live with dignity and hope as envisioned by SDG.

Mr. Gaire opened up the floor for discussion with the two major questions:

- How can we ensure youth participation in the development agenda?
- What shall be our roles to ensure effective youth mobilization for the attainment of SDG and SSDP?

Mr. Narayan Kandel from AYON, expressed the commitment on behalf of the organization to work collaborately and in coordinated way for the success of the SDG and SSDP. Similarly, Mr. Naren Khatiwada from Youth Action Nepal expressed that such discourse programs are an example of lifelong learning and also suggested that youths should move ahead with the scientific and logical psychology rather than following some derived psychology of the leaders.

Mr Bimal Paudel from All Nepal National Free Students Union Sixth, expressed that the student leaders should intervene from the level of policy level and also carry on the responsibility to share such programs and goals in the grassroot level with the collective efforts. Mr. Purna Singh from Akhil Krantikaari expressed the need to move

collectively with the massive campaigning and lobby with the government so as to ensure the participation of the youths in the development goals.

Furthermore, Dr. Saugendra Mandal from Madheshi Students Forum Loktantrik highlighted the need to think of reducing the gap between the haves and have not and think of inclusiveness in all the sectors of education. Dr. Mandal also urged all the political student leaders to join hands of NCE Nepal in this campaign. Moreover, Mr. Ram Chandra Adhikari from Akhil Krantikaari highlighting the great question of access in the education, emphasized that the major responsibility of the development of nation relies with its youth and hence the youths should focus on providing education to the deprived ones and ensuring the right implementation of the obtained knowledge in the livelihood of that student. He also urged to move together in this campaign of NCE Nepal.

Similarly, Mr. Rashmi Acharya from All Nepal National Free Students Union highlighted the need of capitalization of such discourse so as to ensure that the efforts being made today are for the bright future of our upcoming generation. The political youths should focus on the future of their next generations too. Urging all the political leaders to reinforce their working scope to the education of the out of school children, he expressed his great commitment towards the campaign of NCE Nepal to make the youths responsible in the development process. Moreover, Mr. Nayan Singh Mahar from Nepal Students Union expressed the need of pressurizing the government so as to ensure that the youths are equally made partners in the development process. He also expressed that politics is a powerful weapon and the youths of political parties need to work with collaboration so as to make the government accountable regarding the commitments made in the forums.

Various other participants from other political parties, youth networks also highlighted the need of youth involvement in the development process and also showed their commitment so as to carry on this message to the grassroots level so that youths would no longer be treated only as the beneficiaries in the overall development process.

Summarizing the overall discourse, Dr. Baburam Adhikari, Advisor, NCE Nepal requested the youths to start up their intervention in the development process. The one possible way could be the involvement in the School Management Committee recently being formed by the government so that youths could play the effective monitoring role in the education sector. Furthermore, Dr. Adhikari also urged the need for all the youths to be responsible one regarding all the goals envisioned by Sustainable Development Goals and move collectively ahead since the goals are future of nation not only for the upcoming fifteen years but throughout the development history.