

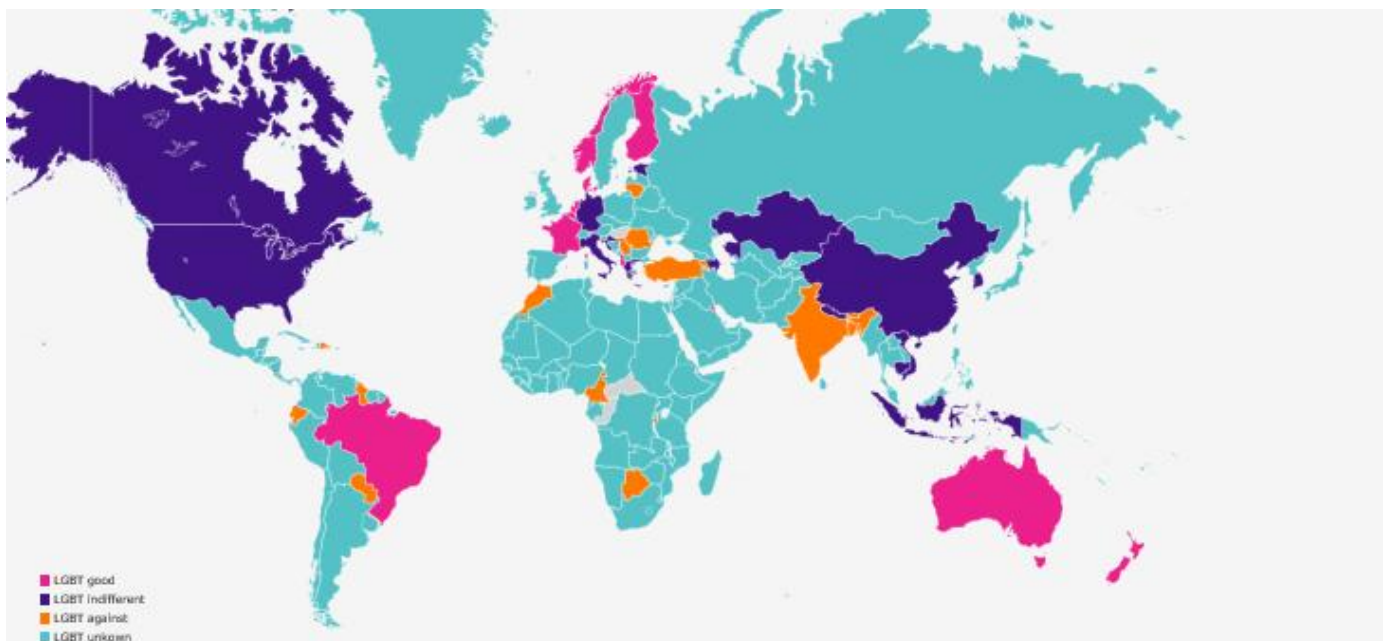
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INTERNATIONAL NEWS: GALE

Last spurt to finish the GALE World map

In the next two months, GALE is making the last spurt to finalize the World Map on the Right to Education. The map identifies States as supportive, ambiguous or denying, based on a 15-point checklist.



Insecurity about situation no reason not to score a country

Currently, 25% of the world countries have been mapped. So we still have about 150 States to go. One of the challenges we have encountered, is that most activists don't really know to what extent the Right to Education is implemented for LGBTI people in their country. So they feel insecure about filling in the GALE Checklist. Peter Dankmeijer, director of the GALE Foundation, says about this: "It is true that a sound assessment is difficult. A Map on education is not like the ILGA Map on States Sponsored

Homophobia. Those maps are about laws, and you can answer "yes" or "no" to the question whether there is a law or not. However, the Right to Education is not enshrined in one single law. Even when there are laws or State guidelines, that does not secure that they are actually implemented in schools. So sound mapping would require a body of desktop and social research. I see the GALE World Map more as an instrument to promote discussion and advocacy. By filling in the Checklist, we start the discussion. As soon as others disagree with the representation of a State, we can start a dialogue about other views. We can discuss which views are most based on facts, and we can discuss how items that are scored low can be improved.

Spanish version launched

One continent where we still need to map a lot of countries is Latin America. To facilitate more responses, Manuel López Pereyra was so friendly to translate the GALE Checklist in Spanish. It can now be found

here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1j_HVEa6EBp27Rr3FP0axRHue2NSUIs2z3gPosV4az0A/viewform?usp=send_form. Please invite your Latin American friends to fill in the Checklist!



Strategic workshops

One way to make the mapping really work for you as an advocacy and cooperation instrument, is to organize a strategic workshop on education. Suggested short and longer programs for such a workshop and an Excel sheet to document the responses can be found here:

<http://www.lgbt-education.info/en/r2echecklist>. Such a workshop works best when you are able to invite activists, staff from education sector

and officials from the Ministry of Education and possibly the Ministries of Health and Justice. This is not possible in all countries. The workshop also works when you only do it with activists, but it works better if you have a range of views and sources of knowledge.

The more views and expertise are present in the workshop, the more expertise is required from the facilitator. The facilitator should be able to bridge varying views and sometimes deal with distress and frustration when for example educational views and activist views are not congruent at first. You can also invite GALE to facilitate strategic workshops.

Presentations of the state of affairs

At the end of this year, the current project grant by the Dutch government is coming at an end. GALE would like to publish a first report on the state of implementation of the right to education at the end of the year. Preliminary presentations will be done at the ILGA Europe conference and the ILGA World Conference in October. A formal final presentation of the publication will take place in December.

Wave of research on LGBTI's in education requires cooperation

"A wave of research on LGBTI issues in education is to be expected in the following years", says Peter Dankmeijer, director of GALE. "Authorities, schools and activists need to coordinate their needs and actions".

A new wave of research

Peter Dankmeijer, director of the GALE Foundation expects an unprecedented wave of studies on sexual diversity in education. "The new interest in research on sexual diversity in schools is set off by the worldwide UNESCO strategy to combat homophobic bullying in the education sector. One of the conclusions of the global expert meeting UNESCO convened in December 2011, was that more research was needed. Research to show discrimination to governments who deny there are challenges, but also research to show the way towards next steps in States who already have an ambiguous or supportive policy."

UNESCO itself is initiating a series of studies in Asia and Africa. In the USA, the Gay/Straight Education Network (GLSEN) is in the process of acquiring funds to disseminate and adapt the GLSEN School Climate Survey to other countries in the South. GLSEN also calls upon organizations to report their LGBTI oriented initiatives to a global project database. Also, UNDP and UNAIDS are working with several governments to develop and implement research. On a world scale, UNESCO is launching an exploration of laws and governmental guidelines which are going to be part of a state of the art report.

Research serves different needs

"When I look back on the studies done on education and sexual diversity in the past decades, I notice that often the communication between researchers, the education sector and activists was relatively limited or absent", Dankmeijer says. "Needs and often implicit goals of researchers, activists and schools are not always the same. Whereas researchers often put much emphasis on objectivity and professional distance, activist would prefer more attention to usability of results for advocacy. Schools often ask for concrete recommendations on pedagogical and didactic approaches."



"When different partners do not communicate or cooperate with each other, this may lead to disappointment."

"Research would have much more impact when objectives are discussed before the start of the study. Then the needs of all partners can better be integrated in the research questions, the development of recommendations and in the strategy to disseminate the results and discuss them with authorities", Dankmeijer says.

LOCAL NEWS: NEPAL

Nepalese Chetana teacher group organizes strategic workshop

The Chetana Nepal teacher group in Pokhara invited GALE to facilitate a strategic workshop to prepare a follow-up project after a series of initial awareness workshops.

Chetana: heterosexual teacher activists

The workshop took place at the end of a train the trainer course for the most experienced Chetana trainers. The Chetana Nepal group started to offer basic awareness trainings to teachers after being trained by the Nepalese LGBTI organization Blue Diamond Society. The (mostly heterosexual) teachers were so enthusiastic about the training that they took the initiative to repeat the trainings for fellow teachers. They formalized their group by founding the "Chetana Nepal" NGO and got a grant from the World Bank. In late 2013 and early 2014 they trained over 600 teachers in central Nepal (the province of Pokhara and bordering regions).

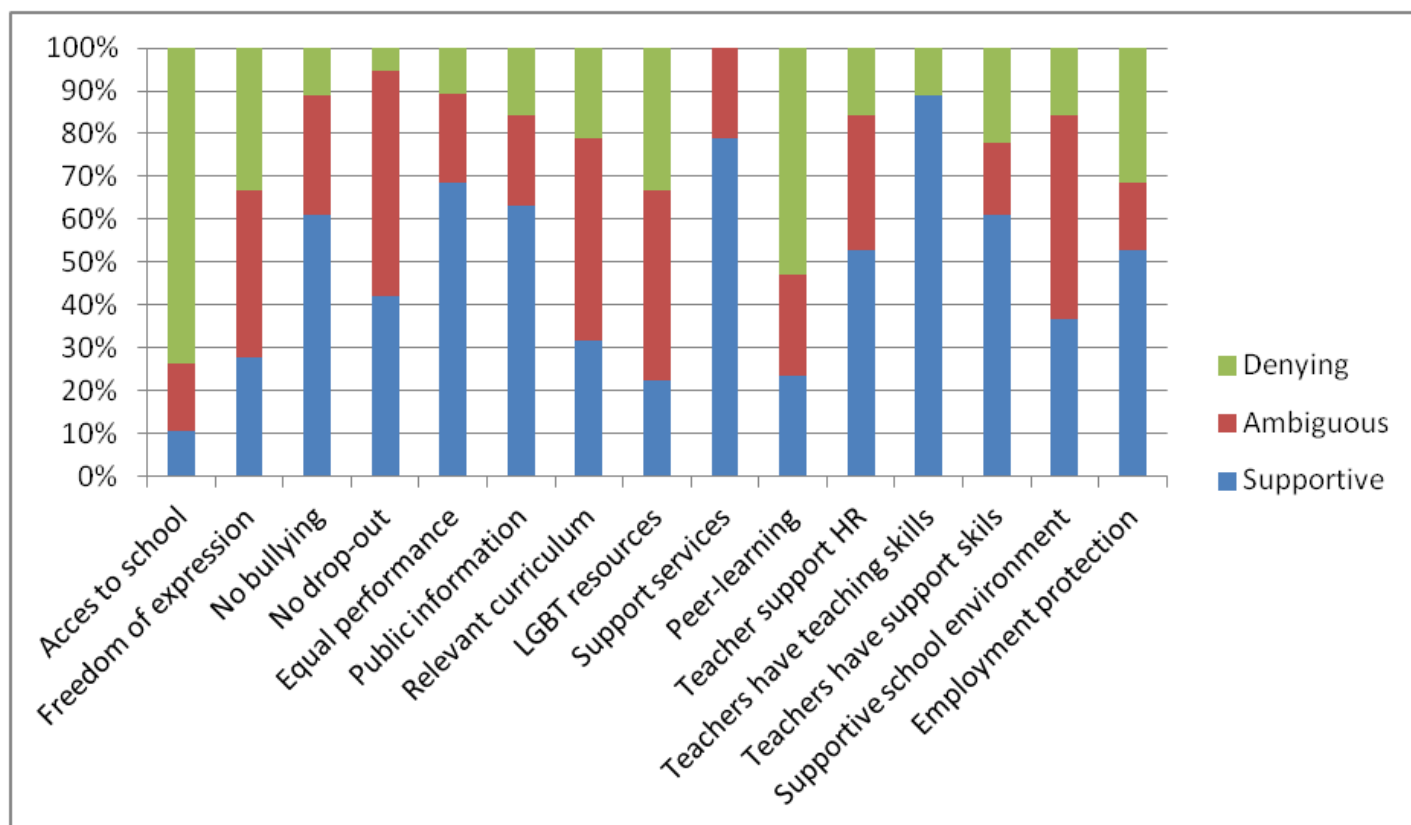
GALE
THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE
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CHETANA NEPAL

Nepal scores ambiguous towards supportive

The 19 participants started to score Nepal on the GALE Checklist. This 15-point checklist has been developed to get a fast insight in the implementation of the Right to Education as it is internationally recognized. Respondents can score each checkpoint on a scale ranging from the State is "denying", "ambiguous" or "supportive".



Scores of 18 central Nepalese teachers and 1 activist on the GALE Checklist

The average score of the 19 participants was 2,36 on a scale from 0-4. This would label Nepal as an ambiguous State. However, although calculation of averages results in ambiguous scores, a majority of the checkpoints was scored as supportive. This resulted in the overview given in the given figure.

Child clubs

Peer learning was also scored quite denying. Most meti's and also same-sex attracted Nepalese students will not know where to find other LGBTI young people or support groups and have to rely on dating sites where most members try to remain as anonymous as possible. The pressure of the family to marry (for boys), and parents marrying their daughters off are main obstacles to free expression and personal development.

Nepal knows traditional "child clubs" that are organized by schools in cooperation with parents. Such clubs do not cater for meti's or same-sex attracted young people now, but might be a useful vehicle for improving peer learning in the future. However, teacher training and education of parents is needed first. Otherwise parents may incorrectly get the impression that "LGBTI youth clubs" are recruiting youth to sabotage traditional family values rather than offering them a safe space and room for empowerment.

Bullying of meti's a serious problem

In the discussion of the results, it emerged that Nepal scores rather denying on "access to school". This was explained by anecdotes about "meti's" (transgenders) who are often denied access or thrown out of school when they come out. The Chetana teacher think this is more due to a lack of knowledge and negative stereotyping than outright negative values. On the contrary, the teachers expect their fellow teachers to be interested in diversity and open to discuss it.



In addition to making their schools more safe for meti's, they think teacher even may want to advocate for a clear human rights perspective in the new constitution that is currently being drafted in Nepal. That this view of the Chetana teacher is actually rooted in practice became clear in a second training a week later.

Image: meti during the LGBTI Pride during the Gai Jatra ("Festival of Cows") Festival, 11 August 2014

Emerging innovation of the curriculum

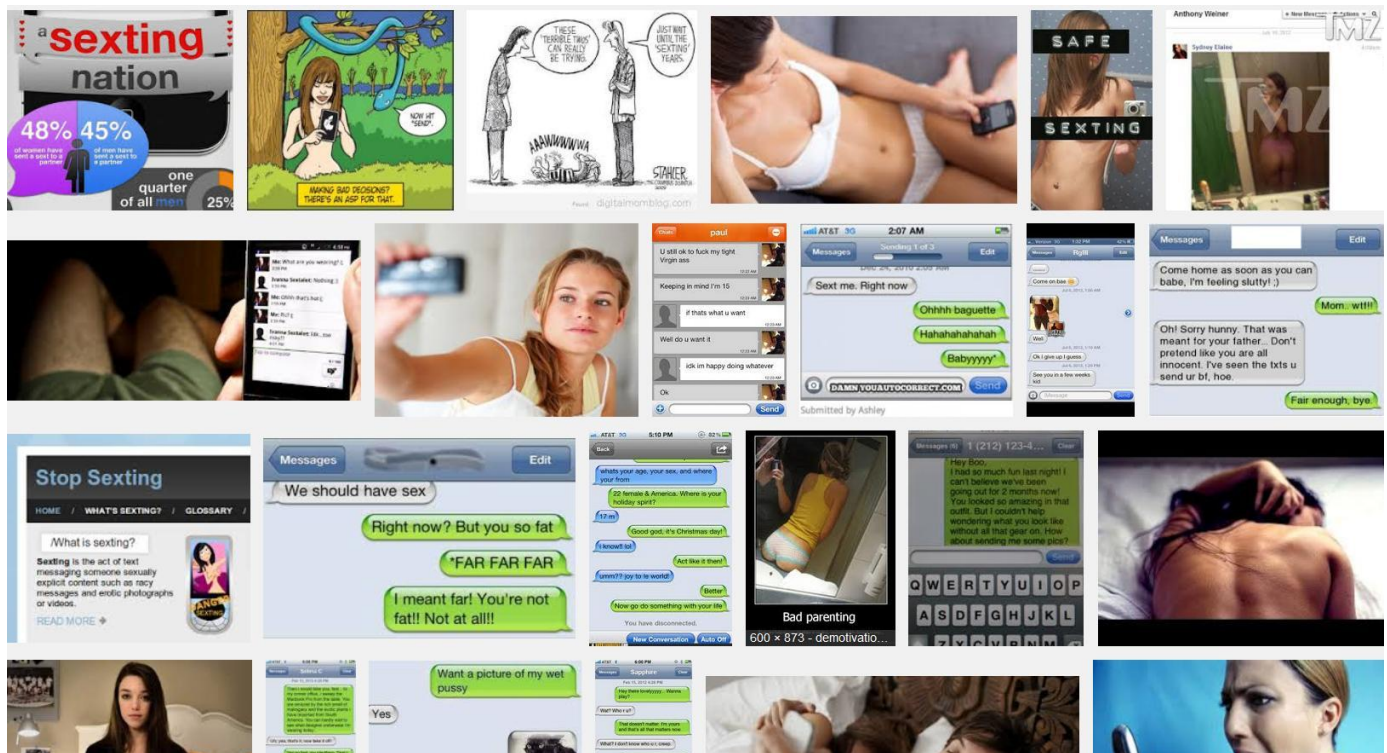
The teachers were most ambiguous on whether Nepal has a curriculum that is relevant for meti's and same-sex attracted students, and if there are adequate specific resources. This is certainly not yet the case, but if teachers are aware, they would be able to offer such information. Another aspect is that the Blue Diamond Society has been in contact with the national institute for curriculum development, which is now working on inclusion of SOGI issues in the formal curriculum.

Because this strategic workshop lasted only for two hours, there was no time to engage in a proper strengths/weakness analysis or to come to strategic recommendations. However, during the days and weeks afterwards, GALE, Chetana and the Blue Diamond Society are developing follow-up plans to improve the quality and expand the number of teacher trainings. In addition, it was decided to do more research among teachers and to frame the current successful teacher trainings in a wider strategy on safer and more inclusive schools.

LOCAL NEWS: UNITED KINGDOM

Stonewall urges better sex education after survey on sexting

A survey showing "sexting" is now part of everyday life for teenagers highlights the need for compulsory sex and relationships education, says Stonewall. "Sexting" means sending explicit pictures of yourself to others.



Half of teenagers think sexting is common

Research commissioned by the UK Institute for Public Policy Research (<http://www.ippr.org/>) found 80% of UK young people said it was too easy to stumble across explicit images and videos on the internet. Almost half (46%) said the phenomenon of sexting, where people send explicit pictures of themselves to others, was part of everyday life for teenagers nowadays. A majority said pornography was making life

harder for adolescents and 70% said watching porn was seen as normal among their classmates at school. Two-thirds also described porn as addictive.

Demand for better and compulsory sex education

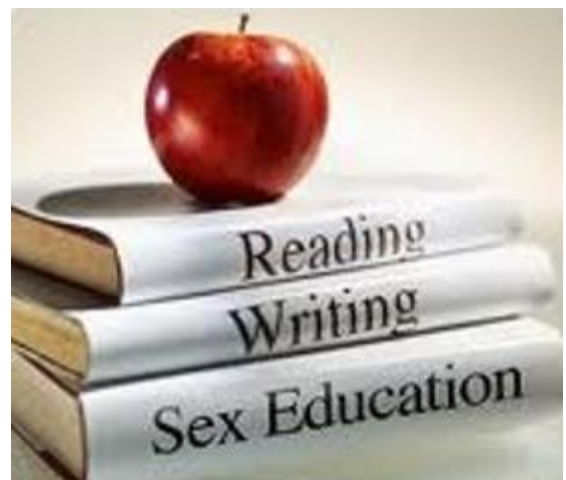
Stonewall, Britain's largest gay rights charity, said the survey highlighted why the government needed to improve sex and relationships education. Stonewall Head of Policy, James Taylor, told PinkNews.co.uk: We know that, all too often, young lesbian, gay and bisexual people aren't getting the information they need about sex and relationships. When those resources aren't available, pornography can become the sole source of information for young people, setting wildly unreasonable expectations and standards. (..) Compulsory sex and relationship education needs to be the starting point for these conversations in schools.

In a Pink News interview, former Health Secretary Lord Fowler urged the Tories to back statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education, in a bid to safeguard the health and wellbeing of young people. Last month, Green MP Caroline Lucas tabled a new Private Members Bill urging for statutory PSHE. It will receive its second reading in the autumn.

International controversy

On the international level, the same controversy is apparent. In the dialogue on the revision of the Right to Education and the Millennium Goals, it has been suggested that not only access to education needs to be promoted, but also the quality of education. As part of this, many NGOs and the former Special Rapporteur on Education have suggested that sexual education should become a part of the quality standards of the Right to Education. This has been supported in a massive way by NGOs due to the AIDS pandemic and the need to protect girls against sexual mutilation and violence.

However, the proposal of the Special Rapporteur on Education was severely criticized by conservative States and the recommendations were rejected. It was obvious that the UN is not ready to make international agreements on sex education, even when millions are dying and violated because of a lack of information and empowerment. Sex education and combating HIV and LGBT stigma is still seen by conservative States and religious NGOs as non-traditional and threatening the "natural" social order.



Source: <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2014/08/21/stonewall-porn-survey-shows-why-we-need-better-sex-education-in-schools>

Improving teacher training on LGBTI issues training in Nepal

In August, an improved awareness training for teachers in Nepal was piloted. It was an enhanced version of an earlier training that was already given to over 600 teachers.

Third gender

In 2013, the Blue Diamond Society trained a group of teachers to be more aware of LGBTI issues in Nepal, it is not common to speak about "LGBTI" and people are more used to speaking about "the third sex". This strictly refers to transgenders, but in the Nepalese understanding, same-sex attraction is just a variation of gender expression, so it is logical to also frame "LGB" as "third gender". In Nepal, most transgenders call themselves "meti". Meti's are biological men who feel they are a woman. They express themselves accordingly, but they do this individually. In the Southern provinces, there are also "hijras", who are very similar to Indian hijras. These are biological men, but when they decide they are a woman, they join a hijra "house" which is a traditional way of community living for them. In order to be admitted, the joining hijra has to undergo an operation to remove the penis. Both meti's and hijras are considered lower class in Nepal.

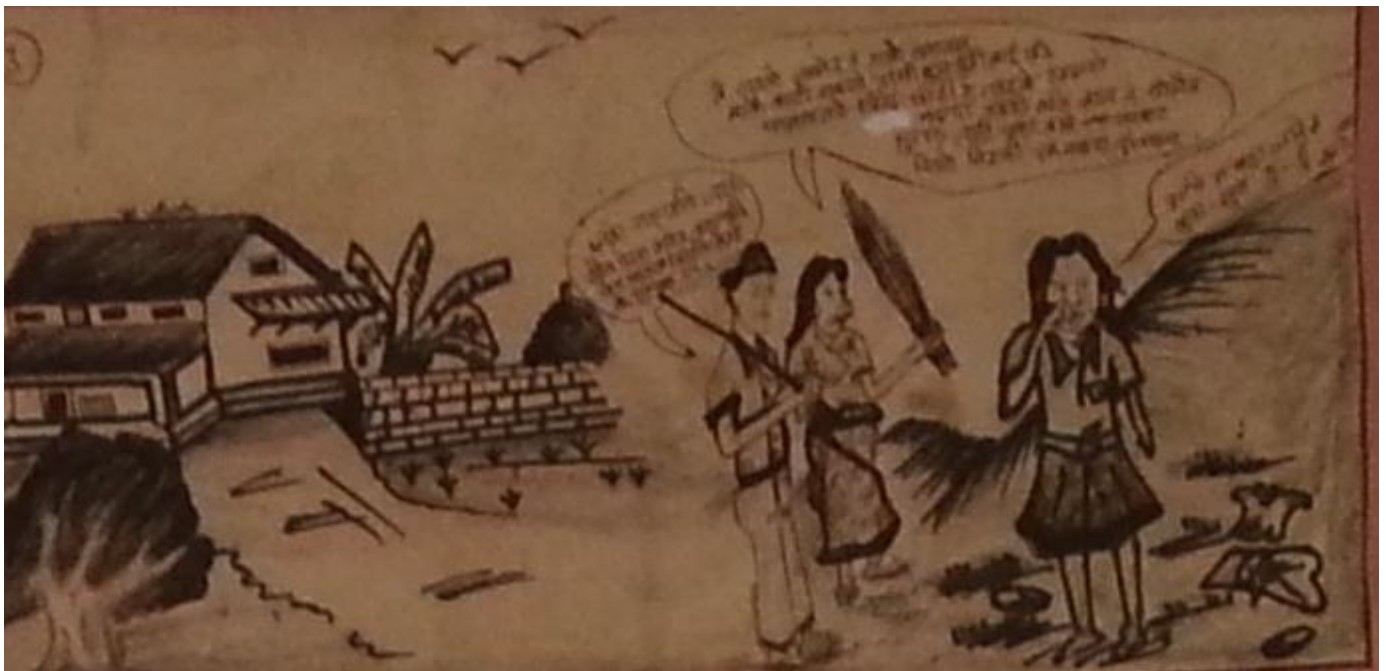


Image: drawing by a meti in Pokhara: she is bullied out of her school and community for dressing like a girl

Evaluation showed more needs for improvement

The reviewed training was piloted two times, on 2 August for experienced Chetana teachers and on 9 August for un-experienced teachers in the rural village of Galyang. The second training was formally evaluated with an evaluation survey. This evaluation showed high scores for the assessment of all objectives and for the trainers, but the separate parts of the program were evaluated more ambiguously. The team drew the conclusion that the training reached its goals because the trainers were considered to be very good and engaging. However, the different parts of the training program still need improvement. One aspect was that the second training had a variety of participants. Some hardly had any training, while others had academic training. Some were very religious, while other were not. The differentiation of levels requires to be have very concrete and clear information in the training which does not leave much space for misunderstanding. Also, the explanation of how social exclusion occurs needs to be even more presented in concrete ways how this is visible at classroom level. It was also concluded that the

discussion about concrete resolutions could have a higher quality when we include a discussion on feasibility of the resolutions.

Gender resource teacher network

After the participants, the trainers also made resolutions on how to proceed. Obviously, the awareness training can be improved. We decided to keep on evaluating the trainings to continuously learn from the experiences and to be able to keep updating the program.

Left: part of the emerging gender resource network Chetana is creating



But we also realized that when we ask teachers to make resolutions for actions in their own school, they may come back to us with further questions. More to the point, we know that they may encounter challenges in implementing their resolutions and that a need will arise for further training. Such a follow-up training will need to give more attention to innovation processes in a school: how: do you convince your

colleagues, your principals and the local community and administrators that actions to improve the situation of third gender students is a common responsibility. Apart from the need of a follow-up training, a support network for "gender resource teachers" needs to be created.



Scenes from the LGBTI Pride during the Gai Jatra ("Festival of Cows") Festival, 11 August 2014

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Colophon

LGBT Education 9,
27 August 2014

Published by the GALE Foundation,
Supporter of the Global Alliance for
LGBT Education, info@lgbt-education.info.

The GALE Foundation is financially
supported by the Dutch Ministry of
Education, Culture and Science