

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
**Between**  
**Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA)**  
**And**  
**Aasaman Nepal (ASN)**

**1. Background**

This memorandum of understanding (MoU) is signed amongst Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA) (hereinafter referred to as "**First Party**") and Aasaman Nepal (hereinafter referred to as "**Second Party**") for the purpose of facilitating a close and effective collaboration to enhance inclusive access to education.

The **First Party, Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA)** was established in 1996. It is one of the seven schools at the University, established to promote professional knowledge, understanding and skills in the development of arts, culture, and other social and economic potentials of human resources through scholarly activities, critical thinking, analysis and communications. At present, different academic and research projects are running under KUSOA in this, "Effectiveness and Scalability of Programs for Children who are at risk of dropping out in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal (ESP)" is one of them. This research project aims to contribute towards inclusive access and improved learning outcomes for the out of school children and children at risk of dropping out in pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary level education in Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan.

The **Second Party, Aasaman Nepal (ASN)** is a pioneer organization for education and nutrition, and one of the leading Terai-based NGOs led and managed by social activists since its establishment in Dhanusha, Janakpur in 1999. ASN has been engaged in developing and implementing programs aimed at the protection, promotion, and fulfillment of child rights in Nepal.

**2. Objectives of MoU**

The main objective of this MoU is to have an open sharing between partnering organizations, work together for increasing access of out of school children and retention of children at the risk

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of dropping out, and for enriching the quality of education in line with School Education Sector plan (SESP), 2022-2030 objectives. This partnership between practitioner and academic institution is envisioned to contribute in the strengthening and overall development of the local education system. This includes a) bridging of community and community school, b) planning for local education policy formulation and c) working for gender transformative, equitable and inclusive public education.

### **3. Roles of Partners**

#### **3.1 First Party;**

##### **A. Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA)**

- a) Coordination with federal level government agencies and other related non governmental organizations for program design, implementation and reduce duplication of work
- b) Develop projects in line with government priorities
- c) Implement interventions and programs at the local level with the support of Aasaman Nepal
- d) Monitor program jointly with Aasaman Nepal (ASN) as per the need
- e) Technical support to develop training manuals and designs for supporting materials
- f) Provide technical support to ASN on delivering training packages
- g) Provide guidelines to support implementation and coordination of training and monitoring activities

#### **3.2 Second Party**

##### **A. Aasaman Nepal**

- a) Provide Focal Person and volunteers for the coordination of all activities including; data collection, research facilitation, teacher training and development of resource materials
- b) Support scaling of impactful and effective intervention based on the evidence drawn from the project
- c) Coordinate and support to develop and pilot the baseline questionnaire of the project
- d) Facilitate and coordinate joint field monitoring and evaluation of program activities

- e) Provide technical support for related activities
- f) Technical support to develop training manuals and designs for supporting materials
- g) Joint planning with KUSOA and other related agencies for implementation of program activities
- h) Run activities in support of treatment schools in coordination with the education unit and training center at Province and Rural/municipality level and ensure that there is no duplication of effort
- i) Support the First Party to organize local level capacity building activities, workshops, and information sharing events

#### 4. Provision of Committee

For effective planning and implementation of the project a joint committee will be formed as follows;

##### Joint Committee

Principal Investigator, KU-ESP project	<b>Coordinator</b>
Country led, KU-ESP project	<b>Member</b>
Two PhD students, KU-ESP project	<b>Members</b>
Project Coordinator, KU-ESP project	<b>Member</b>
Country Director, Aasaman Nepal	<b>Member</b>
Field manager, Aasaman Nepal	<b>Member</b>
Technical lead, Aasaman Nepal	<b>Member</b>

#### 5. Terms and Conditions of the MoU.

- a) This MoU will be effective from the date of signature and valid for 2 years.
- b) This MoU may be supplemented and or amended as necessary by mutual consent of both parties.
- c) The MoU can be withdrawn or terminated by either of the parties by submitting a letter of such intention a month in advance. But if project activities are not satisfactory or against the community, First Party can terminate the MoU any time.
- d) This MoU will be implemented according to the rules and regulations of the Government of Nepal.

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## 6. Signatories

We accept all the above-mentioned terms and conditions and sign to bring this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) into effect.

### Authorized Signatories

#### Second Party



Mr. Nawal Kishori Yadav

Country Director, ASN

Date: 24/06/2022



#### First Party

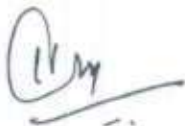


Ms. Ekku Maya Pun

Acting Dean, KUSOA

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022

#### Witnesses



Name: Gury Subedi

Designation: Governance & Policy Adviser

Date: 24/06(2022)

Name: 

Designation: Assistant Professor

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> of June, 2022

*Note: A separate contract will be developed for exchange of resources as per the project requirement during implementation*

## Annex I

### “Effectiveness and Scalability of Programs for Children who are out of School and Risk of Dropping Out in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal”

Amidst the COVID-19, 430 million children in the South Asia region are facing educational deprivation at all levels due to school closure (UNICEF, 2020). Additional 10 million girls are at risk of child marriage due to it. The UNICEF issues warning on International Women's Day that school closure, economic stress, service disruptions, and parental deaths due to pandemic are putting the most vulnerable girls at increased risk of child marriage (UNICEF 2021). Moreover, the estimated projection of UNICEF depicts that South Asia still has to enroll 30 million (UIS, 2019) children not attending schools. These figures suggest that out-of-school children (OOSC) stand out as a pertinent problem in this region. This challenge demands the immediate attention of the governments of this region. To ensure an inclusive and equitable education for all in general and vulnerable children in particular, the governments of this region need to address the issue of OOSC.

The issue of children not attending school in South Asia is on account of several different reasons such as gender discrimination, household poverty, child labor, child marriage, issues related to disability, language barriers, natural disasters, and armed conflicts. These are the daily lived experiences of the OOSC, and such barriers to access education are marking them the most vulnerable group needing urgent attention.

In Nepal, the Census 2011 records 14.3% of 5-12 aged group children out-of-school and accounts for 0.77 million of the total population in this age group, and at present estimated as 0.33 million (CEHRD,2020). Whereas in Bangladesh, this magnitude is even higher, as per the data of UNICEF (2019), 4.3 million children aged between 6 and 15 are still out of school. As for Bhutan, the out-of-school rate at the primary level is 3.64% and has a dropout rate of 8.2% at the secondary level (UIS, 2019). UNESCO estimates show that nearly 30 million children in South Asia are not in school. Of these, an estimated 4.65 million are in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Given this context, a consortium comprising Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA), South Asia Institute for Social Transformation (SAIST), and Paro College of Education (PCE) aims to contribute towards inclusive access and improved learning outcomes for the out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out at pre-primary, primary, and lower-secondary level education in Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. This joint endeavor seeks to examine incentivizing, informational, and educational approaches targeted to OOSC and children at risk of dropping out.

The Governments of Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan have been offering different educational programs to the children not attending school and at risk of dropping out; intended to provide inclusive and equitable access to education for all children. They include financial supports to families, enrolment campaigns, non-formal education program, and programs for children with disabilities, and bridging courses to integrate children into the school system. For children at risk

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of dropping out, programs include remedial and after school supports. However, what remains to be understood is the extent to which these programs serve their intended purpose.

This Project will look at educational campaign and after-school programs to harness the evidence on what works and what does not work including practices, methods, and tools used to identify out-of-school children and those at risk of dropping out. It will contribute to understanding how these educational programs work, factors that determine their success, cost-effectiveness, and scalability.

The Project will employ an experimental design and a mixed-method participatory action research approach guided by the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) methodological framework and Scaling Theory of Change. The OOSCI Conceptual and Methodological Framework profiles children excluded from educational access and at risk of dropping out of school at different stages of education. It facilitates an analysis of the multiple and overlapping forms of exclusion and their linkages to policies and strategies to address the barriers and bottlenecks within education and beyond. A scaling theory of change recognizes that scaling is complex and involves many actors, changing conditions, and limits to knowledge. It calls for dynamic decision-making based on emerging evidence, and engagement and coordination amongst key stakeholders.

The general objective of the study is to enhance inclusive access and learning outcomes for Out-of-School Children and children at risk of dropping out of schools in Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan. It has three specific objectives:

1. To build knowledge about innovative practices and strategies to address barriers to inclusive access to education and better learning outcomes for out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out including their scalability and scalable pathways.
2. To support the mobilization of the knowledge generated in and across education systems to inform policies and practices.
3. To build capacity of key stakeholders to generate, use and exchange knowledge and practices that promote inclusive access and improved learning outcomes for out-of-school and at-risk children at scale.

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