Nepal has become famous for its handwoven carpets, and throughout the 1980s and 1990s, carpets were one of Nepal’s largest exports. Initially the industry was developed to provide employment for a large Tibetan refugee population. By the 1980s Nepalis from a number of mountain and hill ethnic groups joined the expanding industry. By the early 1990s the demand for carpets had grown and many new smaller factories opened. With this rapid expansion and a greater demand for workers a new trend of employing child laborers emerged.

According to ILO, in 2001 there were approximately 4000 children working in carpet factories in the Kathmandu Valley. These children were working in registered and non-registered factories, usually in weaving and wool spinning. According to the ILO 182 convention, work in the carpet factories is considered as hazardous type of work. The children working in this industry were usually under the legal working age for children in Nepal, working up to 15 hours a day and earning minimum wage. In many cases, they also worked to return their family’s debt. According to a study conducted by CWIN in 1998, these children are exposed to physical and mental exploitation, usually deprived of their basic rights and about 30% of the workers are under 14. The children lived and worked in the carpet factories usually paying NR.200 per month for rent, paid directly to the factory owner with more than 95% of the children living within the factory premises. Most of the children slept on the floor in crowded rooms with no basic hygienic sanitary facilities.

The carpet industry was the first industry to draw attention for the use of child laborers. Carpets being an export product this was unacceptable internationally. As a result the carpet factory owners with support from GTZ, UNICEF and their own resources sought to tackle the problem. Labor laws enforcing minimum age are now well enforced and few children under 14 years of age are still found on the looms. Government inspectors continue to inspect carpet factories regularly. More challenging are the 14 to 16 year olds as the carpet industry is regarded as a hazardous industry and by law no child under 16 is allowed to work in a factory. The better organized registered factories and those using Rugmark adhere to these child labor restrictions but many of the small sub-contractors hire new workers within this age range. Small family operations do much of the spinning at home on a contract basis and here too the industry needs to remain vigilant to prevent children being kept out of school to spin wool.

The removal of child labor from the production of carpets has been a major success story for Nepal but constant vigilance is needed to keep up this achievement.
The Carpet Industry and Nepal’s Laws

The constitution of Nepal stipulates that children shall not be employed in factories, mines and/or similar hazards work. The constitution also forbids slavery, bonded labor and the trafficking of individuals. The Labor Act of 1992 prohibits employment of minors younger than 14 years of age and regulates the work hours of minors between the age of 14-18. This Act applies to children working in urban industries and provides for labor inspectors in each district. The minimum age of employment in hazardous work under the Act is listed at 16. There are no specific laws related to the work of children in the carpet factories, though there are trade unions working with the carpet factories that are concerned with the conditions and wages of children and youth working in these factories.

Child Work in Carpet Production

Any child working at any stage of the production system is regarded as working in the carpet industry. Under international conventions any minor under the age of 18 is regarded as a child in need of special protection from national laws to protect them from exploitation in child labor or harm. Children engaged in wool spinning, thread rolling, wool dying, carpet weaving, trimming, and carpet washing are considered as children that are working in the carpet industry. Work may take place in the factory or be done in smaller home based settings or contractors’ premises. This work is considered as hazardous as it entails inhalation of wool dust contaminated with fungal spores, poor work posture and exposure to hazardous chemicals and poor environmental conditions.
Children Working in the Carpet Industry

According to ILO’s rapid assessment that was conducted in 2001, 4,227 children were working at that time in the carpet factories. The Brighter Futures program has been working for the past eight years with children in the carpet industry and each year has done a baseline survey of children in this industry. In all, 3,235 children were identified as being in child labor and in need of services to be removed. By the end of the project, few children under 14 were found in the industry because of successes in removing children and a reduced demand due to an economic downturn. Of the 3,235 Brighter Futures found working in the carpet factories, (55%) were in the 10-14 age range. Only very few children were under 10 (1%). Many children in the 14-18 age range had joined carpet factories while 10-12 years of age.

The majority of children working in the carpet factories are Janajatis (71%), followed by Dalit (9%), Brahman/Chhetri (8%), Terai caste (6%) and Newar (5%). The children working in Kathmandu Valley are mainly migrants from the Tamang communities in Sindupalanchok and from Sarnali. Most of these children migrate by themselves or with friends and some have run away from their home. The youngest children working in the carpet factories are usually living with their families in the slum areas of Kathmandu. Wool spinning was found engaging children in Makawanpur, Chitwan, Dhading, Morang, Kaski and Baglung. Children in Sarnali were found doing weaving on looms.

Of the children working in carpet factories in Kathmandu Valley, 47% of the children come to the factories alone or in a group with a "Naike" (labor recruiter). Some run away from home, arrive to Kathmandu, and join the carpet factory. Some of the minors working in the carpet factories got married in their home district and when their parents did not accept the marriage migrated as couples to work in the factories. Many very young couples in the factories have one or more children before they are 18. Some of the children come from extremely poor and dysfunctional families and have migrated to Kathmandu to look for new opportunities.
Why Work In The Carpet Industry?

The main push factors for children to work in the carpet sector are the poor economic condition of the family, a dysfunctional family or being a school drop-out and wanting to work. Many parents send their children to work at the carpet factories to provide an additional income for their families. In terms of pull factors, many employers like to hire children instead of adults as they are easy to manipulate, they do not have negotiation/bargaining skills and children are more capable in doing the delicate weaving work. The inadequate legal enforcement, particularly of unregistered carpet factories and contractors premises, also encourages employers to keep children in the carpet industry.

Work and living conditions

Whole families live on the premises of carpet factories. Children as young as five years old, and living with families, have been found working alongside parents. The children work long hours in cramped and stuffy rooms which lack air and only have limited light. Some child workers sleep in shacks or "garage-like" rooms with metal roller doors and no windows often working and sleeping in the same space. The better factories provide rooms which workers have to pay rent for and usually share. The children also pay for their own food. Child workers in the carpet industry indicate that they work very long hours and they are usually paid a flat fee rate of NRS 3,500-5,000 per month. However, they do not receive any payment during the "learning" period that can last as long as three to six months.
Adult workers are usually paid based on production per square metre rates or by the volume of processed wool prepared. Child weavers generally work in unhealthy conditions, and common health hazards in the carpet factories include swollen knuckles, arthritis, eye strain and lung diseases. Moreover, according to CWIN, 32% of the children are sexually abused by male co-workers, “naikes” and factory managers. Many Nepali girls are sold to brothels in India every year and many have said that they were trafficked from carpet factories while other young female carpet workers in Kathmandu Valley have been forced into prostitution.

Efforts To Address Child Labor In The Carpet Industry

Responding to the threat of an international ban on carpets made by child labor, the government, non-governmental organizations and private sector expressed an interest in creating a "child labor free" certification to be used in the carpet industry. All these concerned stakeholders agreed to implement a certification of Nepal RUGMARK. Carpet manufacturers, the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, non-governmental organizations and the Nepal –German Chamber of Commerce and Industry, ILO and UNICEF worked together to support initiatives to eliminate child labor in carpet sector in Nepal, rehabilitate child workers, and control industrial pollution. RUGMARK has been working on child labor in the carpet industry and implements a program that certifies the carpets that are produced without child labor. Carpet manufactures who do not employ children or receive any materials produced by children under the age 14, and who pay at least the minimum wage, are eligible to receive an internationally recognized "RUGMARK" certification to affix to their carpet. RUGMARK also supports the health, education and welfare of child workers who are removed from factories and supports their rehabilitation.

After the support from CWIN, I feel privileged to get an opportunity to study. The scholarship program has brought hope in me that I will be able to make something out of this life.

Arnu Gurung, Himalayan Secondary school
Class: 3, Age: 11 yrs
The Brighter Futures Program and Education

Under the Brighter Futures Program World Education and its NGO partners provided educational support to help remove children from work in the carpet industry. Each child was assessed and provided with various educational services as per the need of the child. Children working in the carpet industry are scattered in urban areas, and often unregistered factories which employ children are well hidden, making this a hard-to-reach group. Each year, the NGO partners conducted a baseline survey of new children and collected information on the family background, age, sex and the needs of the children. Based on this information and the interests expressed by the children the education interventions were designed. As a result 53% of the children attended nonformal education classes. Different educational packages were used, with Jeevan Shiksha through regular class schedules (28%), or through Open Learning Centers (6%), the Girls Access to Education package (16%) and Naulo Bihani (3%). Some of the children received second services and they participated in vocational trainings such as SEEP (27%) and those who were of school-going age and wished to be reintegrated in school received school support (19%). More older children were identified who were interested in vocational training but the program gave first priority to those under 14, second to those 14-16 and only a few older children 16-18 were included in classes when possible.

In addition, 98 families with children working in the carpet factories were supported to improve their family livelihood. Through microfinance and diversification of livelihoods to reduce dependency on the carpet industry many families are now able to support their children’s education and keep them out of work and in school.

In total, 3,235 children (2,343 girls and 892 boys) working in the carpet factories have received educational services from the Brighter Futures Program. As many of these children received multiple services, a total of 9,257 educational services were provided to these children. A total of 55% of the services were nonformal education classes (OLC, NFE Modular, GATE, Naulo). 18% were SEEP classes, 24% were scholarship for school support and the remaining 2% are trainings in vocational training centers.
Education Services For Carpet Industry Children

Nonformal Education

Jeevan Shiksha

The Jeevan Shiksha curriculum is a modular curriculum that can be used in multi-level or multi-grade classes. Learners with a wide range of educational backgrounds can be accommodated and pick topics of interest to them to learn about.

A. Scheduled Classes:

28% of the children who participated in the educational program attended regular nonformal education classes using the Jeevan Shiksha curriculum. Classes were conducted for two hours a day in locations close to the factories. Using a multilevel or multi-grade approach to learning, illiterate children and school dropouts were able to participate together. The choice of level and modules used in each session were based on the existing literacy level and skills of the children and the issues of interest to them. This modular curriculum covered issues that related to the health and safety of these children, and was seen to be of immediate relevance and benefit to the participants. The health modules helped build important life skills in addition to literacy and numeracy skills. Content on money management, hygiene, negative effect of drugs, nutrition, and risks from malaria and HIV and AIDS were of great interest to children in factories.
**Most successful approaches**

- **Factory Community Orientation**— Meetings to orient the factory community about the classes was done involving parents, employers and contractors and other local stakeholders such as teachers or community leaders. This helped ensure the community was aware of the program, its objectives and the aims of the project. NGO partner staff oriented the community about the eligibility, class facilitators, class duration, roles as well as the roles and responsibility of the NGO partners and World Education. These community orientation programs helped to ensure the participation of the children and employers and the community helped with the running of the classes.

- **Formation of Class Management Committee (CMC)**— Involving parents, union representatives and community members helped the classes to run in a proper manner. In some cases, the CMC helped the class facilitator to encourage regular participation. The CMCs held monthly meetings in which the participants discussed the achievements of the month, the participants’ regularity and any problems that occurred during this month.

- **Content Related To Money Management**— Children in the carpet factories usually come from very poor rural families. The social environment of the factories exposes them to city life and they quickly aspire to having many clothes, recreational outings, better food etc. Many lack the skills to even manage their modest incomes and find themselves continually living on “advances” from factory owners or contractors. Learning about managing money and how to save and keep track of money was initially a major motivation for many to attend classes.

- **Periodic tests/exams**— also helped the children to be regular in the class. Using the Jeevan Shiksha package, the facilitators took periodic exams in the class. Knowing there were to be exams played a vital role in motivating the children to attend regularly in the class.
Major challenges:

- **Fixed Class Schedules** - Classes run for two hours a day in a more traditional and structured approach were difficult for many of these working children to manage. The time slots were not always suitable for the children working in the carpet factories as they spent most of their time at work and many found it difficult to concentrate on lessons for two hours while working and caring for themselves.

- **Access to Factories** - In some cases in Kathmandu Valley, it is very hard to reach children because they are living inside the carpet factory and employers do not allow outsiders to enter the factory.

- **Role Of Trade Unions** - Trade union are more focused on ensuring fair daily wages for the carpet factory employees and they are not as concerned about child labor and child right and education. Were they to be more proactive on this issue they could make a major difference.

- **Mobility of Child Workers** - Often children in the carpet factories are highly mobile and constantly shift carpet factories. Even when a child wants to continue it is not possible to run enough classes in enough locations for migrating children to transfer. This results in non-completion which is slightly higher than in other sectors.

- **Engagement of Stakeholders** - The NGOs have limited capacity to reach trade unions and other policy makers for support.
Lessons Learned

- **Seasonal calendar in the carpet industry** – Most classes started during July in order to prepare children for the formal school session. The main national festivals, Dasai and Tihar fall in September and October and the majority of the children working in the carpet sector have migrated from other districts and return home to celebrate the festival during this time. Some return only after two months and then shift to another factory and some do not return at all. It is also hard for those who return to catch up on their learning after such a long break. It is therefore more effective to start the classes only after the holiday season.

- **Involvement of key stakeholders** – The trade unions, factory managers, employer/contractor are all actively involved in the children’s work. For an effective program these stakeholders need to be involved and oriented about the nonformal education classes and other educational activities for the children. Organization of periodic key stakeholders meetings helps to involve them in all the activities.

Nonformal Education Paves the Way for a Return to School

“An under-privileged young boy like me had to go through difficult times after my father abandoned my mother for another woman. We had no source of income so my mother and I moved to Kathmandu and started to work in the carpet factory as weavers for survival. At the age of 15, I was working with my mother at the carpet factory and lost hope that I will ever be able to see school in this life but after I joined the nonformal education classes run by Child Development Society my hopes were revived. Initially, I joined the classes for two hours each day. After I finished the course I joined school and now I am in Grade Seven in Janakalyan Higher Secondary School in Mahankal. This was possible through the scholarship support provided by the Brighter Futures program. Going back to school and getting an opportunity to continue my study has built up my confidence and I am hopeful that someday I will be able to make a mark and support my mother who has worked day and night to raise me.”

Bal Krishna Shrestha, 15 years, Dolakha, Busha Phera VDC
B. Open Learning Center

Based on the lessons learned from using the Jeevan Shiksha modular curriculum in regular classes in phase one, the Open Learning Center concept was introduced in the second phase of Brighter Futures. About 6% of children in the carpet sector got the opportunity in the second phase to participate in nonformal education through an open learning center.

**Most successful approaches**

- **Developing library corner in the classroom**— when children were free, they used the library to study with different books. This kept the children busy for a few hours.
- **Greater Accessibility**— The Open Learning Center approach is very useful for providing education to children working in the carpet sector. Offering greater time flexibility and multi grade/level approach enables children to attend sessions when they have leisure time. When children work on large carpets with other workers leaving for a class can be impossible.

**Major Challenges**

- **Accessible Locations For Centers** - Children in carpet factories live in the factory area and prefer to have the learning center in the factory area. However, factory owners were not willing to provide space and it was often difficult to rent a proper place for the center.
- **Difficulties to run the class by a single facilitator** – Approximately 45-60 carpet children attend the learning centers in a day. The facilitators felt that the responsibility for so many needy children with such a range of learning needs was very difficult to manage.

**Lessons learned**

- Factory communities include a large number of children, youth and adults who all need learning opportunities. Many older workers, particularly women, requested the opportunity to be in the educational program. Many suffer as a result of not having the literacy and numeracy skills they need. Open Learning Centers established in factory areas could cater for a wider range of learners.
C. Girls Access to Education

The Girls Access to Education (GATE) program and Lalima curriculum were designed by World Education in 1998 to provide an alternative education to girls who were deprived of the educational opportunity to go to school. It uses an integrated approach aimed at supporting the educational growth and healthy development of adolescent girls. The nine-month-long nonformal education program provides them with foundation skills through a curriculum that simultaneously builds their knowledge, skills and healthy attitudes on issues of personal health, child rights, safety and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and trafficking.

The GATE Program is designed for girls aged 10 – 14 years and includes those who have never had the chance to enroll in school as well as those who have dropped out of school during the first years of primary school. To contribute to the girls’ long-term opportunities, every effort is made to help girls smoothly transition into formal school or to link them with vocational training and livelihood development activities. This kind of link is critical for the future of adolescent girls, as the overall goal is to enable them to develop life skills that can have a sustainable impact in their life encompassing literacy and numeric skills, self-confidence, knowledge of health and safety issues, as well as livelihood development skills.

The majority of the children working in the carpet industry under 14 years of age were girls. In all, 16% of the children working in the carpet sector benefited from GATE classes.
Most successful approach

- **Inclusion of Safe Migration and Trafficking Content**—Supplementary materials about safe migration and trafficking were very useful for girls working in carpet factories as they are extremely vulnerable to trafficking and sexual abuse that can occur in the carpet factories.

Major challenges

- **Traditional and structured approach**—Fixed class schedules with classes for two hours a day in a more traditional and structured approach were difficult for many of these girls to manage. The time slots were not always suitable and many found it difficult to concentrate on lessons for two hours while working and caring for themselves.
- **Reaching Girls in Factories**—In most cases in Kathmandu Valley, it is very hard to reach girls in the carpet industry as they are living inside the carpet factory and employers deny access to the factory.
Lesson learned

- **Peer Education** – Many of the older girls in the factories are at high risk of trafficking and experience many problems due to a lack of knowledge and life skills. The girls in nonformal education can play a valuable role in the factory environment as peer educators.

**Formal Education**

The children in the factories that want to attend formal school are either children living and working alongside parents that need to attend local schools or children returning to the village and village schools. The Brighter Futures program provided the bulk of the scholarships to children that had been working full or part-time in carpet factories in Kathmandu to help them attend school. Providing in-kind scholarships, uniforms, stationary, payment of school fees etc. was very successful at getting them to attend school more regularly and completely leave work in the carpet factories. Families were also supported with training and setting up microfinance groups and many families have diversified their income sources and are better able to keep children in school full-time and out of the carpet industry.

"I have never ever dreamed that I will be able to get education but scholarship support came as miracle in my life. I want to make best use of this opportunity."

Bikarm Budhathoki, Jan Pravat Secondary school
Class: 5, Age: 13 yrs
Back to School - A Dream Fulfilled

The Lamas migrated to Kathmandu in search of work, but were not prepared for the expenses of city living and soon fell into major debt. They owed their employer 30,000 rupees. But with an income of 3,500 rupees in a good month, even with board at the factory, it’s not enough to meet monthly expenses, and make payments on the initial loan and medical bills. To make things worse, the mothers health kept her from working, increasing the burden on her only daughter, Urmila. When her parents could no longer afford the school fees, with a heavy heart, Urmila Lama dropped out of Grade 2. That year, Urmila began working fulltime at the carpet factory that hires her parents, to help support their family of five. The work mostly involved spinning yarn, and she occasionally assisted her father on the loom. Three years ago, Urmila heard about World Education’s nonformal education class—run by partner organization, Child Development Society (CDS)—and joined. The nine-month curriculum, specially designed by World Education to meet the educational needs of working children, equipped Urmila to make up the year she lost, and CDS enrolled Urmila in grade 3 at a school near the factory to ensure she’d attend regularly. World Education has provided Urmila school support for grades 3, 4 and now 5.

Her social worker attests, without the support, Urmila would be working fulltime, but she really wants to study. She regularly attended nonformal education class, and now school. She still does some work before and after school. Says Urmila, now 13, with a brimming smile, “I don’t have time to play. But I’m going to school and I work less hours. I need my spare time to do homework.”
Vocational Education

Employers and children in the carpet industries often see themselves as already having a good occupation with a steady income. Many have few ideas as to what they would like to do other than carpet work. Through participating in the program, the participants become aware of the most appropriate jobs and trainings in their locality and the basic requirements needed for their participation. Most of the children are young girls and expect to eventually return to the village, marry and settle down there. Few vocational trainings for urban occupations seem relevant to them as there are few potential employers in their home districts. As a result the focus for most of the working children in the carpet industry was on self-employment.

Self-employment and Economic Education Program - SEEP

The SEEP Program develops the skills needed for self-employment for participants. Skills are developed through class study and through “discovery learning” actually running a business. The program supports the youth to get engaged in microfinance and regular savings and credit activities. Where possible they are helped to build relationships with local organizations such as Mothers Groups, cooperatives and microcredit organizations so that it is easier to get financial help from them to operate the business once they get started.

About 27% of the beneficiaries working in the carpet factories have benefited from the SEEP Program.
Most successful approaches:

- **Forming group management committees** – The group management committee of SEEP classes have supported the children to conduct market research and provided them ideas for business and saving.

- **Inclusion of Microfinance** – Getting participants involved in savings and credit helped them improve their immediate situation, getting them out of debt, and helped them to start saving and envisage alternative futures to work towards. Eventually these savings helped hundreds of participants to start their own enterprises, on their own, with friends or family.

- **Running A Business** – For the “discovery learning” component beneficiaries had to actually plan for and run a business. Many of the participants quickly discovered they could make more money from these businesses than factory work and many then continued these businesses as group enterprises.
Challenges

- **Highly mobile group**— The children working in the carpet factories are highly mobile and often shift carpet factories. It is therefore challenging to keep them enrolled in any type of vocational training and they need shorter more intensive training but this requires full financial support and cannot be done while still working.

- **Carpets For Secure Employment**— Some of the children prefer not to take any risks with potential businesses and not to leave their current occupation. Although it is exploitative and poorly paid, many consider it as stable and safe livelihood option.

- **Market Assessments** — The capacity of facilitators and participants to do market assessments is limited. In complex urban markets they lack the time to do thorough surveys and lack access to their home communities. They also have little time to manage marketing even for their “discovery learning” activity.

- **Role of Facilitators**— The facilitators available usually lack formal training for vocational work. At times some resorted to teaching as they would in a literacy class and putting less emphasis on “discovery learning”. Learners too are trying to work long hours and depend heavily on the facilitators for help. A greater commitment to independent learning is needed from participants and facilitators need more exposure and training on vocational education options and approaches.

Lesson learned

- **More Practice and Support**— Participants need more practice and support on market management and bookkeeping.

- **Funds For Experimental Businesses**— With large number of learners working more than full-time more budget for the experimental business stage could help them work in smaller groups. This would be more manageable and they would have more learning opportunities.

- **Family reunification**— Many of the children want to return to the village but first need to get out of debt and then need financial support to return home and then a scholarship to return to school or start a small business.
Occupation Specific Vocational Training or Apprenticeships

Most children in carpet factories are working full-time and cannot participate in vocational training or apprenticeships easily. Most beneficiaries interested in vocational training were therefore supported with a view to self-employment but 1% carpet children did receive other vocational training.

Most successful approaches

- **Career Planning**— Using Career-counseling tools to select appropriate training helped ensure appropriate training was selected.

Challenges

- **Lack of Jobs Post training**— Due to the economic downturn and high unemployment children who attended vocational training had trouble competing for jobs. Due to lack of enough resources those not finding employers found it difficult to set themselves up in business.

Lessons learned

- **Self-employment Orientations**— In addition to occupation specific trainings youth unable to find employers need to be supported to start their own businesses. Prior to training participants need to be aware that they may need to be self-employed.
Family Support

Large families, poverty, sickness or the breakup of a marriage can force families into the carpet industry. In the Kathmandu Valley, NGO partner Child Development Society identified the poorest families most likely to need to return children to child labor without other support. They provided training and support for the women from these families to form microfinance groups. The women were then supported to diversify family livelihoods so that they are not solely reliant on income from the carpet factories. Many of these families are out of debt and now have other income generating activities to help them support their children’s education. This effort is proving so successful that Child Development Society has managed to raise additional support from Rotary International to expand the effort.
A Changing Industry

The carpet industry has declined greatly from its peak in the 1990s. Far fewer workers are employed and few children below 14 are found on the looms. Wool spinning is gradually being relocated to family enterprises increasingly outside the Kathmandu Valley. However, any sudden upswing requires new workers and the factory owners and contractors have shown a tendency to fill these new spaces with children each time demand increases. In Makawanpur in 2007 an upswing in demand resulted in girls being pulled from school to spin wool.

To retain its international image the industry, trade unions and government have to remain vigilant and keep up the pressure to keep children out of child labor. This will always be difficult when work is paid on a piece rate and families live in factories. Of emerging concern is the need to address the occupational safety and health issue in factories. Until the factory environments are upgraded there will be international resistance to allowing any child under 18 to work in these factories. While risks of injury are few and carpet weaving could be a good job for school leavers the wages paid need to be livable wages and the environmental conditions can not pose a threat to health.
Geographical coverage

Valley cluster

The largest numbers of children in the carpet industry were found in the Kathmandu Valley. About 75% of carpet children benefited from different activities in the Kathmandu Valley. Children from all over the country have migrated in the Valley but most have migrated from neighboring districts Sindupalanchok, Kavre, Dolakha Ramechap, Sarlahi and Sindhuli. Out of these the most have migrated from Sindupalanchok and Sarlahi. The children were 66% of Janjati, 11% Brahmin/Chettri, 9% Newar and 7% are of Dalit castes.

Specific challenges and lesson learned

- Highly mobile group shifted factory with group.
- Do not want to take risk in business
- Do not want to leave work in the carpet industry
- Need to work closely with trade unions to enforce child labor policy in carpet factories.
Eastern Cluster

In the eastern region, many children were found in the carpet industry in Morang district. Children living near the highway (particularly around Pathari) were living with parents and engaged in wool spinning work at home. 59% children are from Janajati, 19% are Dalit, 9% Brahmin/Chhetri and 13% are others. In total of 156 children were found in Morang district. Out of them 108 participated in nonformal education, 30 children received school support and 17 children attended the SEEP program. Carpet children of eastern cluster, are often migrants from eastern hill districts such as; Terathum, Bhojpur, Sankhuwasabha and Dhankuta and stay with their parents close to market areas.

Specific challenge and lessons learned

Carpet children of out of valley need a family support program. Improving family livelihoods and incomes is key to keeping children in school.
Central Region

In total of 360 carpet children from the central region have participated in the Brighter Futures program. Of these 66% are Janajati, 16% are Dalit, 7% Brahmin/Chettri and 7% Tharu and 4% other. Out of 360 children, 53% are found in Makwanpur, 23% in Sarlahi, 22% Dhading and 20% are in Chitwan. Carpet children of Sarlahi are working as carpet weavers and children in other district work as wool spinners.

Western Cluster

In total 140 carpet children were found in the carpet industry in the Western cluster. Out of 140, 56% in Baglung, 35% in Kaski and 9% in Myagdi. 58% Dalit 25% Brahmin/Chettri, 11% Janjati and 6% others. Mainly children of western cluster belong to the Dalit community. These children stay with parents and prepare the homemade carpet (Radi) in case of Kaski, most of the children migrated from rural area and children of Baglung and Myagdi are from the same district. The majority of the carpet children of western cluster were girls and they have participated in GATE classes.
World Education Brighter Futures partner NGOs providing services for children working in the carpet industry.

- Child Development Society (CDS)
- Aama Milan Kendra (AMK)
- Community Women Development Centre (CWDC)
- Child Protection Organization
- Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)
- Pokhara Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Integrated Community Development Center
- Rapti Green Society

The Brighter Futures Program is an eight year initiative supported by the USDOL with matching support from UNICEF, WFP and private donors to eliminate child labor through education. Over eight years the project has provided educational and other support to 43,291 children working in the worst forms of child labor in Nepal and 72,140 children at risk.

Child Labour Status Report 2009
prepared by World Education and its NGO partners