



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

DOCUMENTS



from access
to engagement > COMMUNITY
ACCESS
CENTRES



from access
to engagement >

COMMUNITY
ACCESS
CENTRES

This publication is the result of an intersectoral collaboration between UNESCO offices in New Delhi, Bangkok and Kathmandu

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Special thanks to

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ISBN number 81-89218-09-3

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The origins of this book lie in a simple question: How best to show UNESCO's friends and supporters the many exciting developments taking place in Community Access Centres across South Asia?

All around this region, innovative people and organisations are finding creative and practical ways to realise the vision of a knowledge society, and are increasingly doing it through Community Access Centres. UNESCO is passionately committed to supporting these Centres, because we see them bringing to life the concepts of lifelong education for all and digital inclusion in some of the most isolated parts of South Asia. These concepts are fundamental to the UN Millennium Development Goals. They contribute to human development and support a culture of sharing and of peaceful, harmonious coexistence.

This book highlights some aspects of human development that are significantly enhanced by Community Access Centres. You'll see that these Centres take various forms and may go by various names: Community Learning Centres; Community Multimedia Centres; ICT Centres; Telecentres; Resource Centres or Community Libraries. It's the local community that gets to decide on the exact form the Centre will take. But whatever their name, the

fundamental idea is the same: to help the community progress from access to engagement!

In ways small and large, Community Access Centres provide support for breaking the chains of illiteracy or aiding the vocational skills of people displaced by conflict. They help young women improve their ability to express themselves and articulate their opinions via community radio or community television. They provide young people with useful marketable skills. The Centres expose communities to new sources of knowledge and provide hands-on experience in the integration of new technologies, such as the Internet, with more traditional channels of communication.

Community Access Centres are spaces where local communities translate the vision of human development in ways that make sense to their lives. The photos in this book will take you to the places where such wonderful things are happening!

Enjoy the journey!



Minja Yang

Director UNESCO office in New Delhi
Representative to Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka



access >



Reach | Connect | Communicate | Inform | Participate | Link | Universal |



Dilmah **MJE**
*Business is a matter of
human service*

re-inventing the wheel

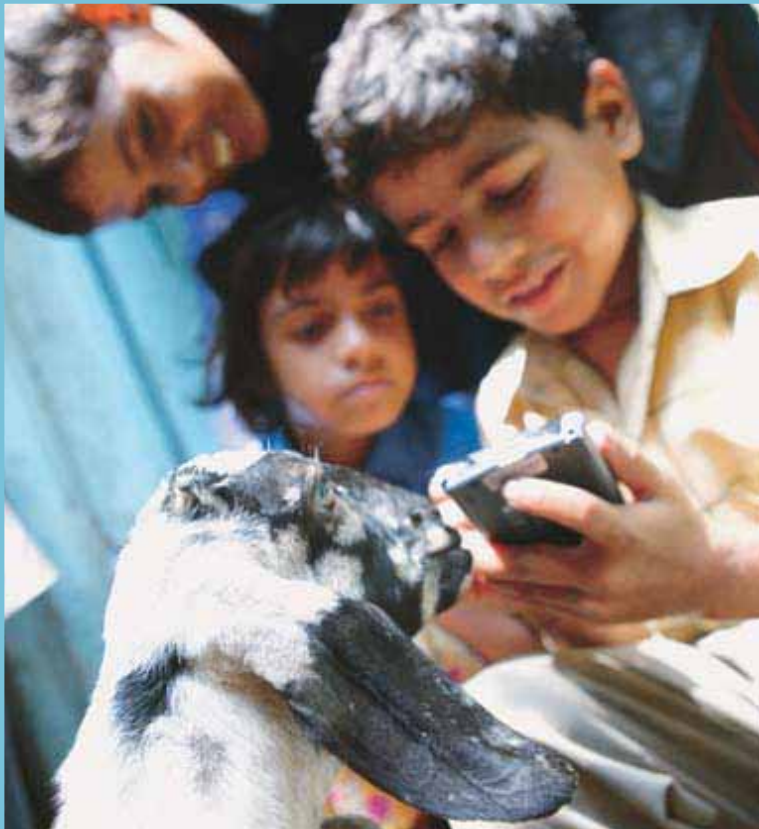


The tuktuk, a three-wheeled motorcycle, is a familiar sight on the streets of South Asia. Its usefulness for getting people from place to place, squeezing into the smallest lanes and over the bumpiest roads, has made it indispensable. But in the rolling hills of Kothmale in Sri Lanka, the humble tuktuk has evolved into something much more than a mode of transport.

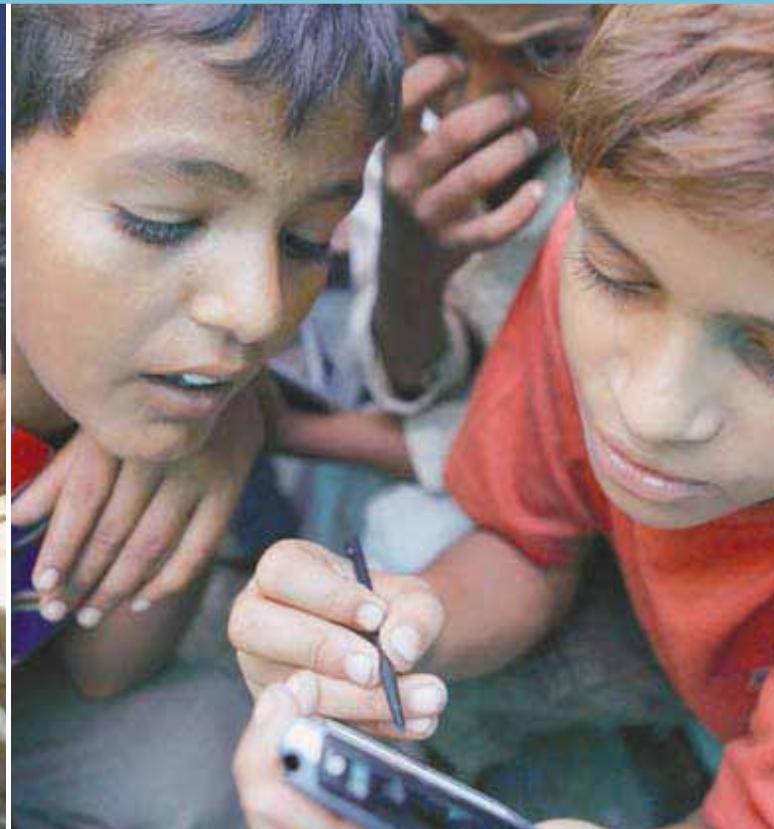
The eTUKTUK is a self-contained mobile telecentre and radio broadcasting unit, housed within a traditional three-wheeler, which literally takes the Kothmale Community Multimedia Centre (KCMC) to the community's doorstep. For more than eight years, KCMC has been serving as an interface between rural communities in the central hill region of Sri Lanka and new communication technologies. The

eTUKTUK is stocked with a laptop, battery-operated printer, camera, telephone and scanner, with Internet provided via a CDMA-enabled wireless connection and a 1000W generator for electricity.

By directly accessing villages, eTUKTUK immediately strikes a chord with the local community, and it makes new technologies less daunting by presenting it to users in a familiar environment. The weekly route of the eTUKTUK is broadcast over the radio to inform listeners of the location and time that it will arrive in their community. The two loudspeakers mounted on the roof rack and powered by an amplifier and CD player can narrowcast radio programmes and announce the telecentre's presence in a village. Judging by the scores of curious observers that the eTUKTUK attracts, it can safely be said that for once, reinventing the wheel actually did make sense.



Experiencing technology that they didn't know existed...



The future is in your palm | Experiencing technology that they didn't know existed, like the palmtop, is giving children the chance to literally take their future into their own hands. In this case children are creating their own pictorial video and audio dictionaries.





5/9/06

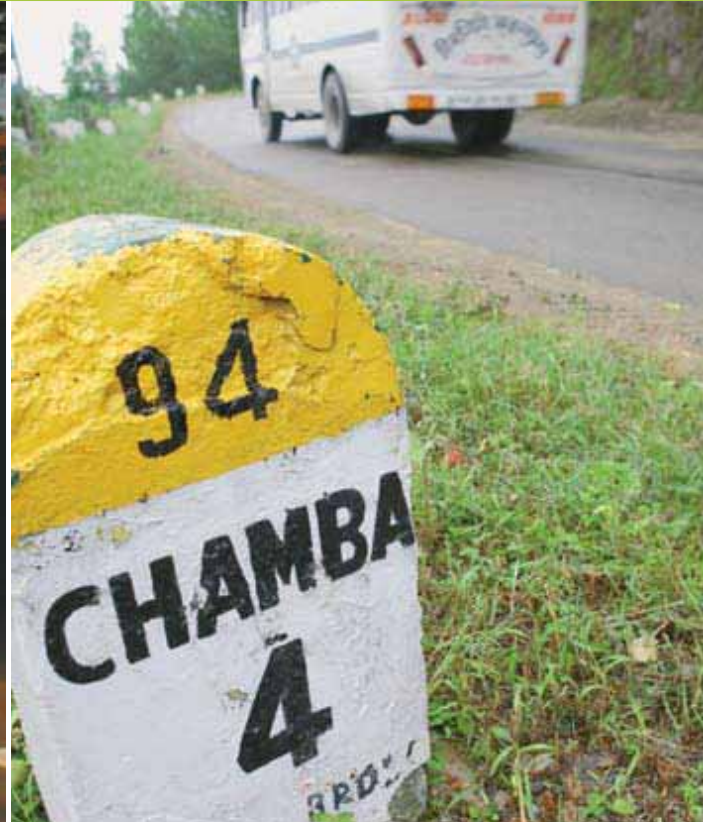
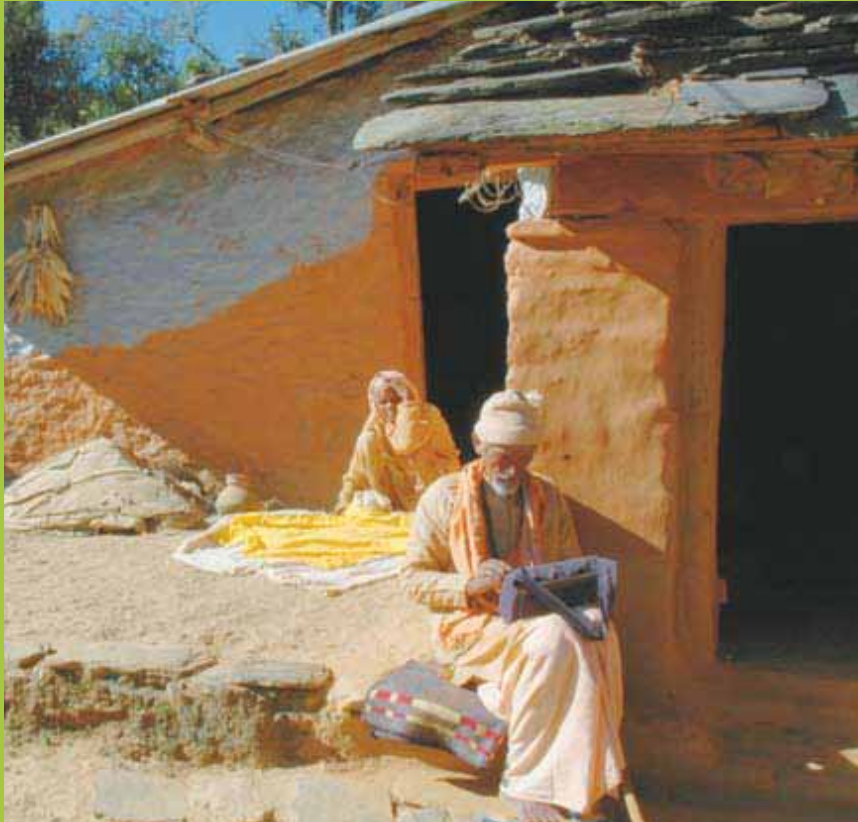
Big News

Community Access Centre

	1000	1200
	200	350
	300	415
	400	55
	600	90
	300	400
	—	—
	900	1400

A one-stop news shop | From the price of vegetables to exam results, from the weather to sports scores, Community Access Centres serve as a one-stop news shop for the community to learn more, understand better and stay in the know. Sometimes these bulletin boards are situated in important junctions in the village, so that access is easier.

	200	30
	—	—
	—	—



Located at villages, towns and even cities, community access centres cater to a wide variety of people



A suitable space | Community Access Centres are located in strategically chosen areas in urban, rural and semi-rural settings, catering to a wide variety of people from every part of the community. Locations include local temples, madrasas and annexes to local government offices.

Where global meets local | Women in a mountainous region in India tune into a satellite radio programme that is broadcast in their own dialects and produced by members of their own community.



A constant companion | CMC's in Western Nepal broadcasts programmes produced by the disabled for the disabled, making them feel part of the community in more ways than one.



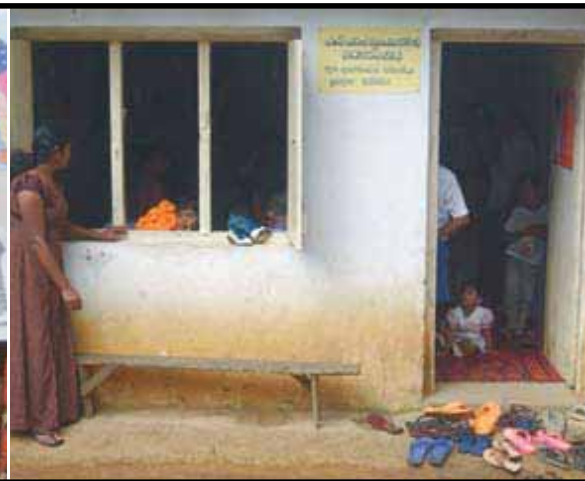
Well done! | A Manigram CMC researcher conveys the exam results to a member of the community after checking them online. The smiles tell us that the candidate is on his way to a brighter future!

Stay tuned | Public television viewing is a major draw at this CMC in Nepal. It brings people together irrespective of social barriers and provides those who cannot afford a TV at home an unobstrusive space.

Our turn | Reading newspapers is a regular habit for women in a Village Information Centre in Sri Lanka, bucking a trend which dictates that women as home-makers do not have time for this 'luxury'.

Footsteps into the future | The Village Information Centre library at Kurupanawela village in Sri Lanka is popular with school children in and around the area, playing the role of a public library that encourages reading habits and helps broadening minds.

(From left to right)







A part of everyday life | Radio has become a constant presence in the lives of people at Lumbini in Nepal, where the community FM station has become more popular and meaningful than the commercial stations.



learn >



Read | Write | Think | Demystify | Imagine | Challenge | Fun |

age is just a **number**



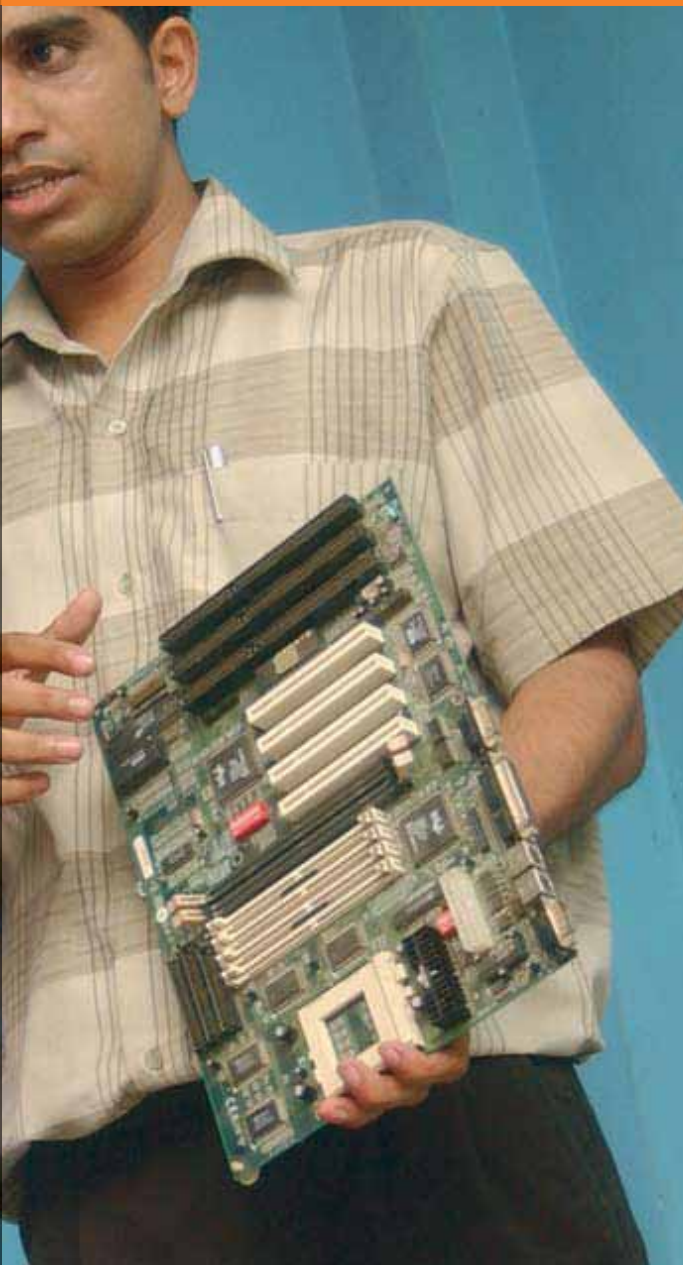
Old age comes with its share of problems, and for many a 65-year-old illiterate widows these can be magnified. But Palaniamma, formerly an agricultural labourer in Tamil Nadu's Dindigul district, begs to differ.

A routine bus journey ended up taking her far from her desired destination, thanks to some wrong information given by a fellow passenger, but it also got her thinking. Taking the wrong bus or getting cheated by shopkeepers and vegetable sellers who knew she couldn't count came down to one thing –

her lack of literacy. She had heard about the Community Learning Centre in Dindigul, and decided to change her life.

Palaniamma began her education in earnest and didn't give up until she could read, write and speak the basics. Today, not only is she on the right bus, she has even ventured to places she hadn't been to before because of a lack of confidence in her ability to communicate. And what's more, four other older women have taken her cue and started a better-late-than-never course in basic literacy.





Demystifying the machine | One of the primary functions of the CMC is to help the people of the community get familiar with computers. Helping them understand that it is not as complex as it looks and it can make life easier has helped innumerable people get over their technophobia and enjoy using new technology.







The wheels keep rolling | Lack of proper facilities at some of the CLCs doesn't dampen the enthusiasm for learning one bit.





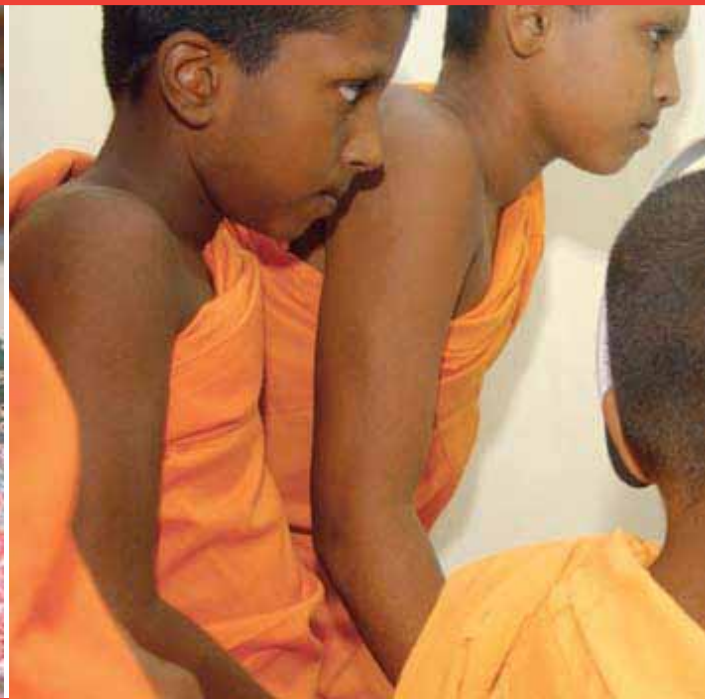
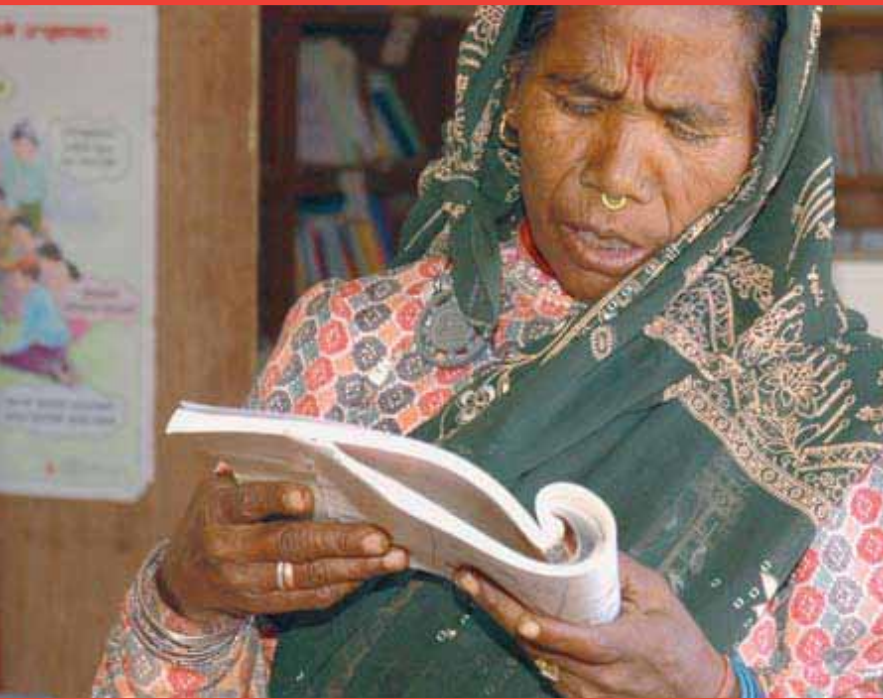
A unique mix of work and play ensures that these kids enjoy school

Technology in the classrooms | Local schools in Palpa District in Nepal have invested in technology like projectors to make learning and teaching an exciting experience. Children now listen to their class with rapt attention, and the results are showing on their mark sheets.

One for the future | The CLC at Doti Khirsain, Nepal, conducts special classes for underprivileged children. These classes are a unique mix of work and play, ensuring that these kids enjoy school.

All ears | Poor children who otherwise do not have access to schools find education is a new experience at the CLCs, and the enthusiasm for learning is apparent.

(Clockwise from left)



They are now connected to a wider, more fascinating world.



Logging on | Getting familiar with computers and the Internet at the Community Access Centres has given a brighter future to young kids and older people alike. They are now connected to a wider, more fascinating world.



empower>





Self-reliance | Confidence | Voice | Courage | Dream | Achieve |
Debate | Change | Equity |





a picture of **courage**



Little did Abida Bano know that her life would drastically change one Friday in 1998. An accident with a local bus left this young girl from Janta Mazdoor Colony, a decrepit slum in Delhi, without both her arms and, more harrowingly, without any hope for the future.

She had experienced pain before, ever since her father walked out on the family, leaving her mother Jameela Begum with six young mouths to feed. But this incident seemed to be the final straw, driving her even to contemplate suicide to ease her mother's burden. It was around then that her elder sister Sajida encouraged her to write with her feet. She was soon writing her name in Urdu, Hindi and English, and a new urge to learn more was born.

Her sisters used to go to the ICT centre at the local

madrassa to take vocational courses. An inspired Abida joined them, convincing the centre's computer trainer that she could use the computer with her feet if given a chance. To everyone's astonishment, Abida not only mastered the use of the mouse, but was soon creating images and even went on to complete a basic computer course at the centre. She was granted a full scholarship for further computer studies at the ICT Centre at Babul Uloom madrassa in Jafrabad.

Today, Abida volunteers with an NGO called Chetanalaya, encouraging other disabled people to challenge their deficiencies. She also has plans to open a computer training centre at her residence, to help her family out financially. Abida's story has already drawn the attention of the international media, and she has only just begun dreaming.





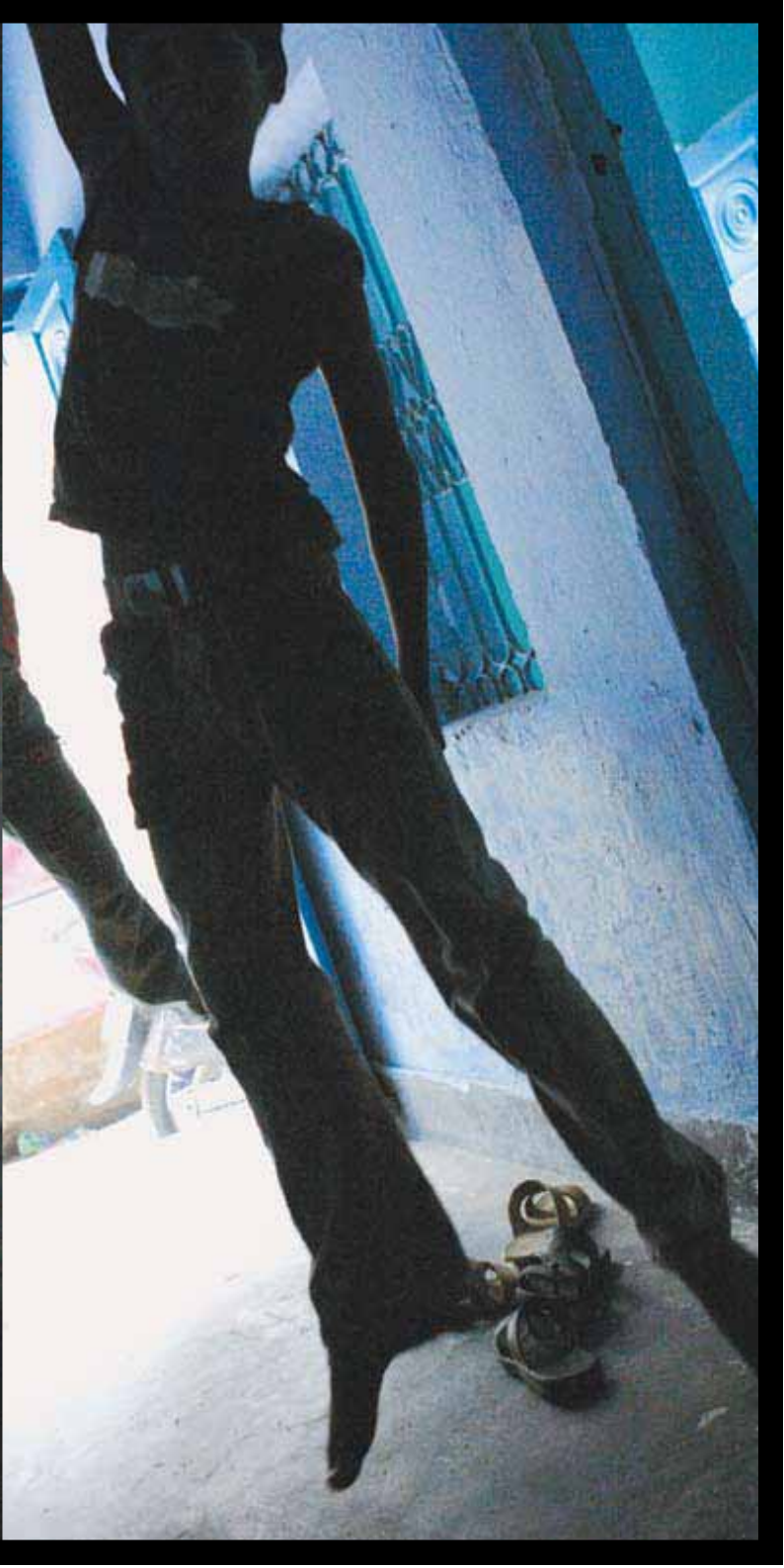
Hands On | People at the CMC get a hands-on feel for technology and discover the many uses of technology with live demonstrations. Here, student monks at a Sri Lankan monastery watch a digital story produced by their community.





Who said education was boring? | Curiosity is the driving force that makes innumerable children an integral part of CMCs. It certainly augurs well for a brighter tomorrow.









Helping people displaced by conflict get on the road to a better life.

Taking control | A CLC at Kohlapur, Nepal organises driving training for local people displaced due to conflict, helping them get on the road to a better life.

With honours | CMC staff in Nepal assist visually impaired friends browse exam results at the centre. The CMC serves as an access hub for students where results are displayed on notice boards, and also conveyed to students' homes via telephone.

Learning the Ropes | Training programmes, such as this journalism training workshop organised by CMC Lumbini, teach community members the principles of journalism. Like the proverbial five W's and one H...Who, what, where, when, why and how.

Its your right | Volunteers encourage refugees in the Lumbini World Heritage Site in Nepal to share problems on citizenship rights, and these issues are further discussed and broadcast on radio.

(Clockwise from left)



Everyone needs to be heard | Volunteers record children singing at a nursery school in Sri Lanka. Programmes produced by children seldom fail to bring a smile to the faces of listeners from the community.



Uncommon role models | Self Help Group members are encouraged to speak about how micro-credit programmes have bettered their lives at the Namma Dhvani cable community radio station in India, mobilising other women to come forward.

Marching towards a brighter future | Giving volunteers the freedom to choose their topics of coverage gives them an opportunity to decide what is newsworthy and most relevant to their community.





Cut off, but not disconnected | Children of tea estate workers from the Tamil community in Sri Lanka live in social and technological isolation within the estates, but taking technology to them ensures that they are not alone.

Finding a voice | Women who underwent literacy classes in a CLC in India now feel confident enough to get involved with day-to-day happenings, voicing their concerns to the Panchayat and the powers that be.

A platform for everyone | A blacksmith in a remote Sri Lankan village in Uva province gets an opportunity to air his views, thanks to a CMC volunteer who stopped by for a chat.

Having their say | Specially organised agricultural forums give local crop market employees and tea estate workers access to market rates on a day-to-day basis. Agricultural experts also use this platform to share their knowledge.

A voice for the unheard | The unique "Voices for the Disabled" radio programme run by CMC Lumbini is produced entirely by people with disabilities, reaching out to fellow disabled people with words of hope and encouragement.

(Clockwise from left)







The sounds of learning | CMC volunteers in Manigram help infuse new light into the world of the blind by recording 'Audio Books' for visually impaired and blind students.



A helping hand | Volunteers teach basic computing to end users, a majority of whom are from marginalized and deprived communities. The training is provided at subsidized rates. More than 1,500 people have been trained by the CMC network in Sri Lanka over the last four years. (left)

A new lease of life | Single women often do not have a platform to speak out, and this problem is addressed by the CMC Lumbini through different audio formats like interviews, debates and listener polls. (right)



Team CMC | Volunteers are the life-blood of CMCs, taking responsibility from programming to canteen management and from accounting to day-to-day running of the centre.







Wall newspapers | Cable TV | Community Radio | Loudspeakers |
Narrowcast | Radio Browse | Podcast | Virtual | Digital | Partnerships |



“twakka tukka” a window to their world

Twakka Tukka, a programme made and cablecast by the local CMC cable channel, is a reflection of the lives and times of the community in Tansen, Nepal. It is part of a flagship two-hour Tansen CMC programme that features a collection of snippets made by volunteers.

Twenty minutes in length, the Twakka Tukka programme airs once a week and attracts a diverse array of participants from children to senior citizens. Filled with generous doses of humour and focusing on social messages, Twakka Tukka provides members of the Tansen community a platform to air their views, showcase their lives and highlight their issues in a refreshingly different manner. Over 60 voluntary

actors are involved in this popular programme which has been in production for more than two years now.

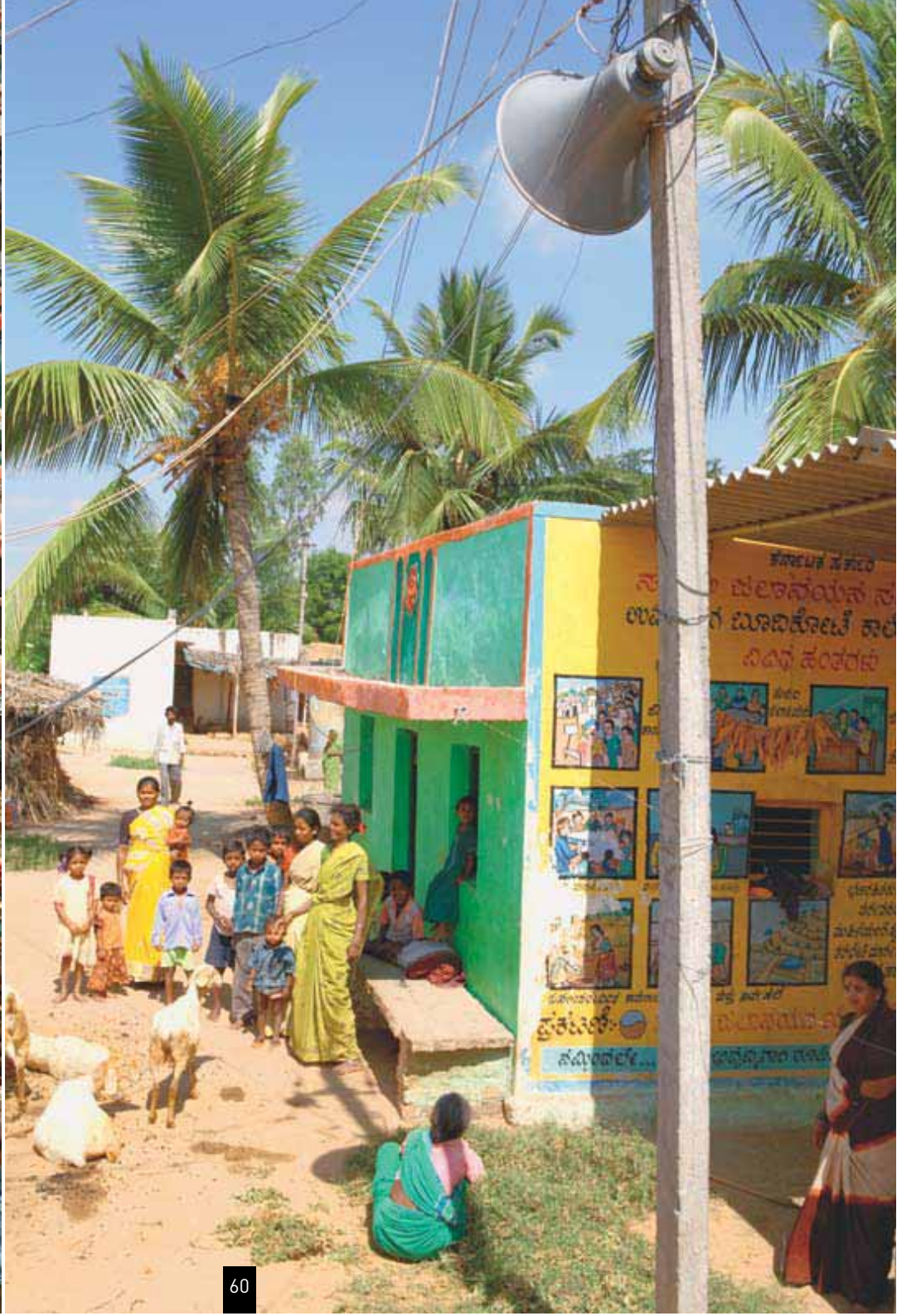
Sita Pandey, a twenty year-old resident of Tansen, is the brain behind Twakka Tukka. She writes, edits and produces the programme, often dealing with key issues like health, higher education and women's emancipation. "People here have many problems, and highlighting them in a lighthearted way helps make people happier and forget their worries," she says, explaining the programme's entertaining, positive tone. Today, Sita is known as Twakka Tukka in the community, and her fame and popularity clearly reflect that her unique way of showcasing key issues has struck a chord with the people.







Saving the day | Community radio reporter Birandra Misra's story on water shortage in Lumbini, Nepal brought some much-needed attention to the plight of many children in a hospital who were sick with dehydration.





Having loudspeakers unobtrusively placed in public places keeps people in the know at all times



An omnipresent voice | Having loudspeakers unobtrusively placed in public places keeps people in the know at all times and helps them go about their lives with the comfort of knowing what is happening in the community. Here, in and around the village of Budikote in South India, CMC programmes are played over the loudspeakers especially to reach households who don't have access to other media like radio or television. (Left and above)

A circle of trust | Self-help group members in Budikote listen to the narrowcast produced by the CMC along with members of the community. Narrowcasting has proved to be an effective medium for reaching specific target audiences as well as receiving immediate responses, opinions and suggestions. (Below)



Strategic partnerships with private entrepreneurs in the community such as cable operators help broaden the scope of the CMCs

NAMMA DHWANI INFORMATION CENTRE PROGRAMME SCHEDULE BUDIKOTE

7:00 - 7:05 5 ನಿಮಿಷ	7:05 - 7:10 5 ನಿಮಿಷ	7:10 - 7:30 10 ನಿಮಿಷ	7:30 - 7:35 10 ನಿಮಿಷ	7:35 - 7:45 15 ನಿಮಿಷ	7:45 - 15 ನಿಮಿಷ
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Open to all | The entrance to the Namma Dhvani community radio centre at Budikote, India. An open-door policy lies at the heart of all the CMCs.

The plan of action | Notice boards at the CMCs inform the community about programme timings to help people schedule their listening and viewing hours around the programmes that interest them most.

Joining forces | Strategic partnerships with private entrepreneurs in the community such as cable operators help broaden the scope of the CMCs and reach out to more people.

(From left to right)



The HQ | The main operating room of the Tansen CMC cable channel, from where the CMC broadcasts its programme in Tansen Palpa in Nepal.

e-news | The Deurali magazine, a popular news website in Nepal, is just a click away, much to the delight of the visitors to the Tansen CMC.



By offering services like telephone, fax, photocopying, typing, translation & even utility bill collection, the CMC is a focal facility of information & communication.



The video camera,
requires only basic
literacy and education,
and gives volunteers a
chance to capture the
world through their eyes.

Ahead of their time | Before the community
radio legislation was passed in India, community
members from the village in Budikote used the
innovative method of listening to radio broadcasts
through their TV and modified radio sets via cable.
(Left)



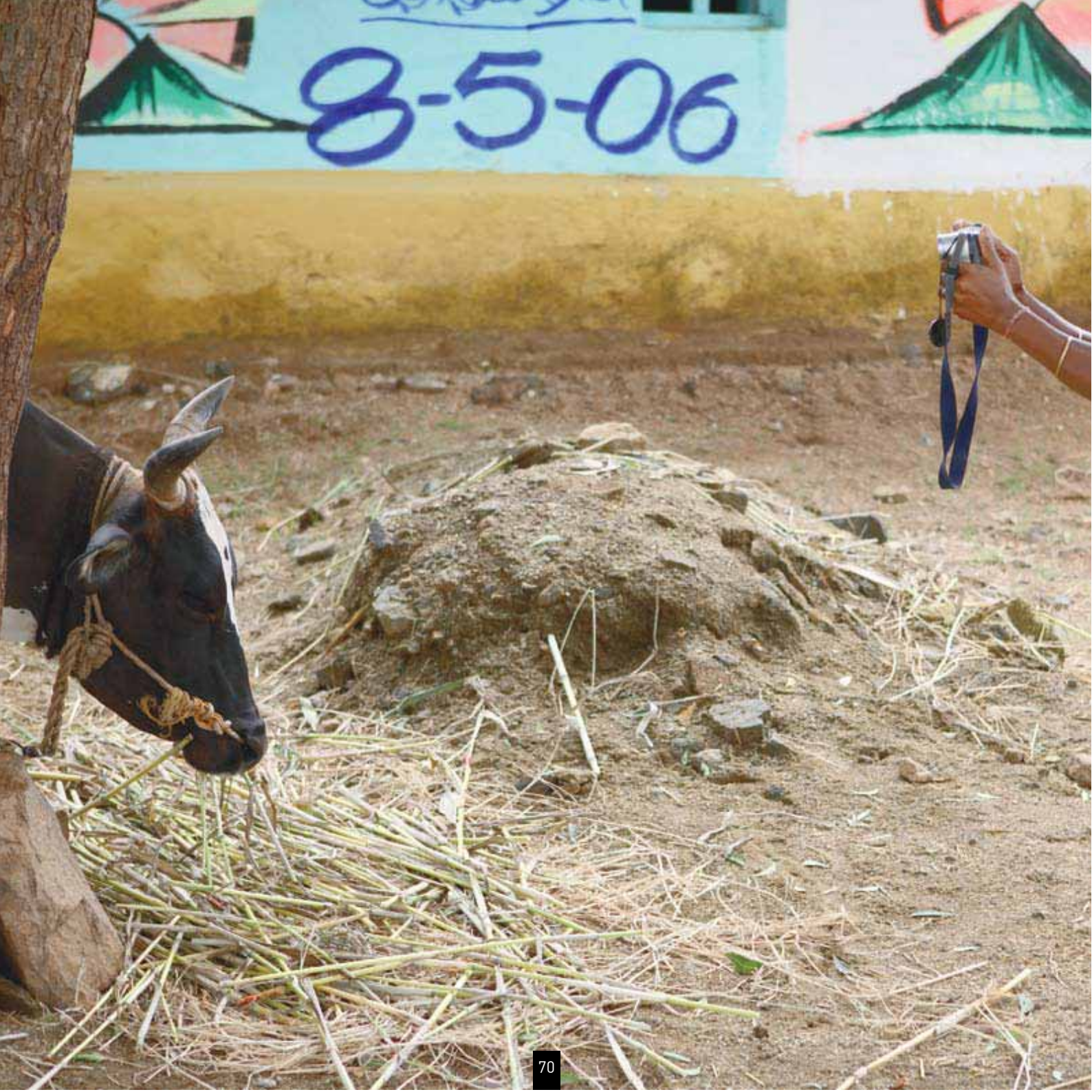




A show of hands | Old women holding up self-help CDs at the centre. The power of digital literacy has reached further than we can imagine.



The Panchayat in your home | The community has the comfort of keeping a tab on developments in their local Panchayat from their home, thanks to meetings being recorded and cablecast by the Namma Dhvani CMC.





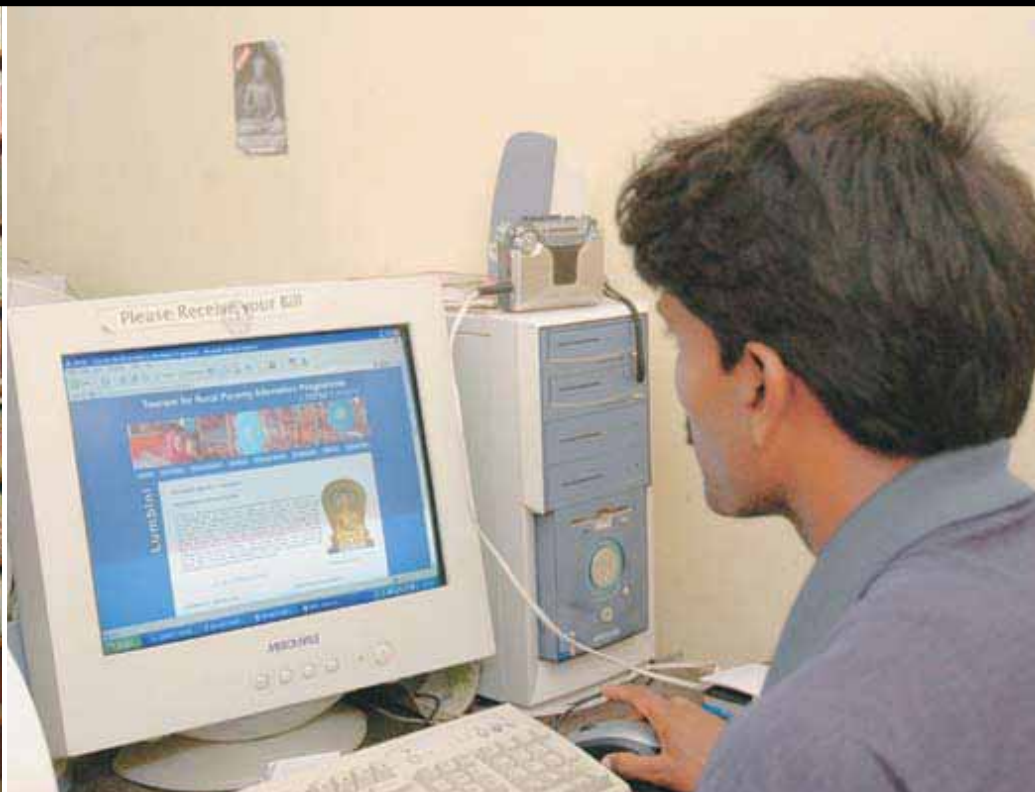
In Dindigul CLC in Tamil Nadu, neo-literates use cameras to take photos of the environment around them. These photos are later used as material that aid their learning process, also giving them the chance to simultaneously use basic technology.



Know your world | A health worker trained in health counselling at the Kohlapur CLC in Nepal conducts an HIV/AIDS awareness camp for displaced people in the conflict-ridden area of Kailali.



Treasure chest | The audio library at the Lumbini CMC in Nepal has a wealth of local material.



Guided by the net | The Buddhanagar telecentre in Nepal is a useful port of call for local tourist guides who want to brush up on their history before taking tourists through the World Heritage Site of Lumbini.

PHOTO FEATURE



The news-spread | Passers by get the gist of the day's news thanks to the wall newspaper, an innovation of students of a journalism course in Palpa.



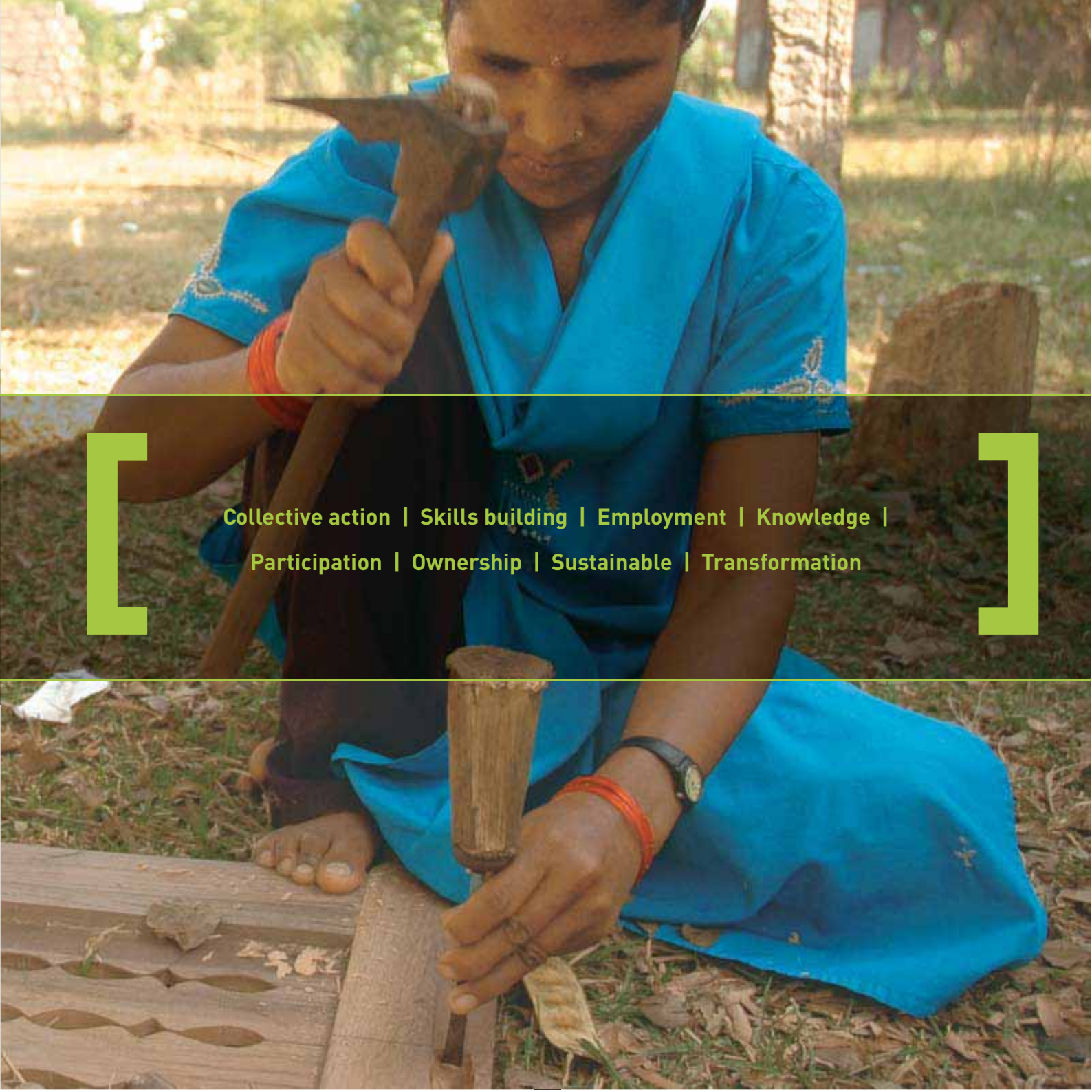


Worth the wait | The rickshaw is a popular mode of transport at Lumbini, a World Heritage Site. This driver tunes in while he waits for his next customer.



develop >





Collective action | Skills building | Employment | Knowledge |
Participation | Ownership | Sustainable | Transformation



carving out a niche



The Community Learning Centre at Kohalpur in Nepal is using a century-old profession of furniture making to create a better tomorrow. Between September 2006 and February 2007, a group of ten trainees, mostly displaced and local people, honed their skills at the workshop and are now ready to branch out on a furniture making career that will vastly improve their financial and societal standing in the community. The fact that one of the trainees is a woman in a male-dominated profession, adds to the innovativeness of the initiative.

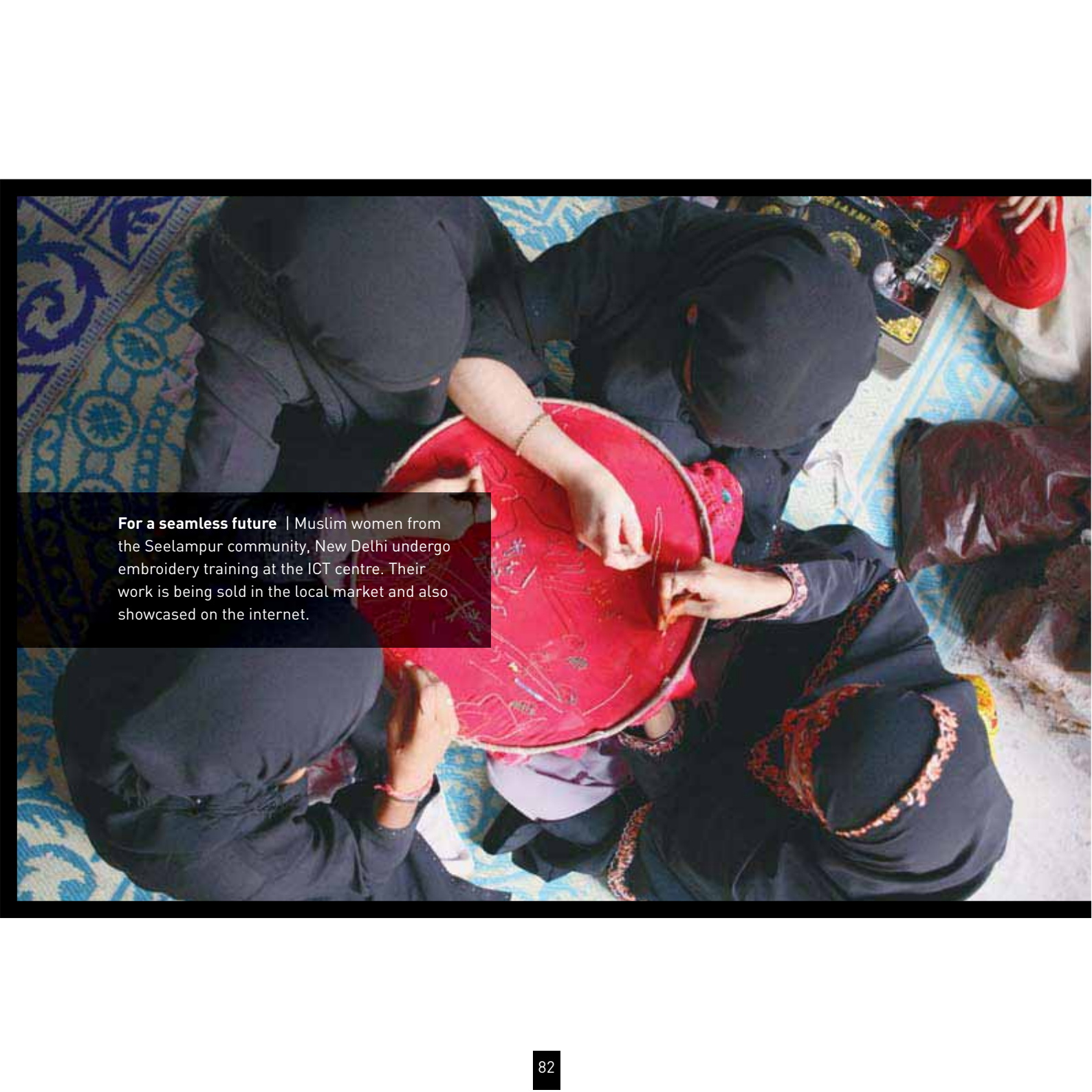
The trainees are receiving a flood of orders for home furniture like chairs, tables, beds and window frames quickly followed. They are not yet on full wages or regular contracts, but the level of trust and respect

they have earned is compensation enough. The CLC's future plans for these talented carpenters include organising them into a group, supporting further training, and helping them set up shop in the Kohalpur bazaar. The CLC also plans to put them in touch with local schools that will need new furniture for the upcoming academic year.

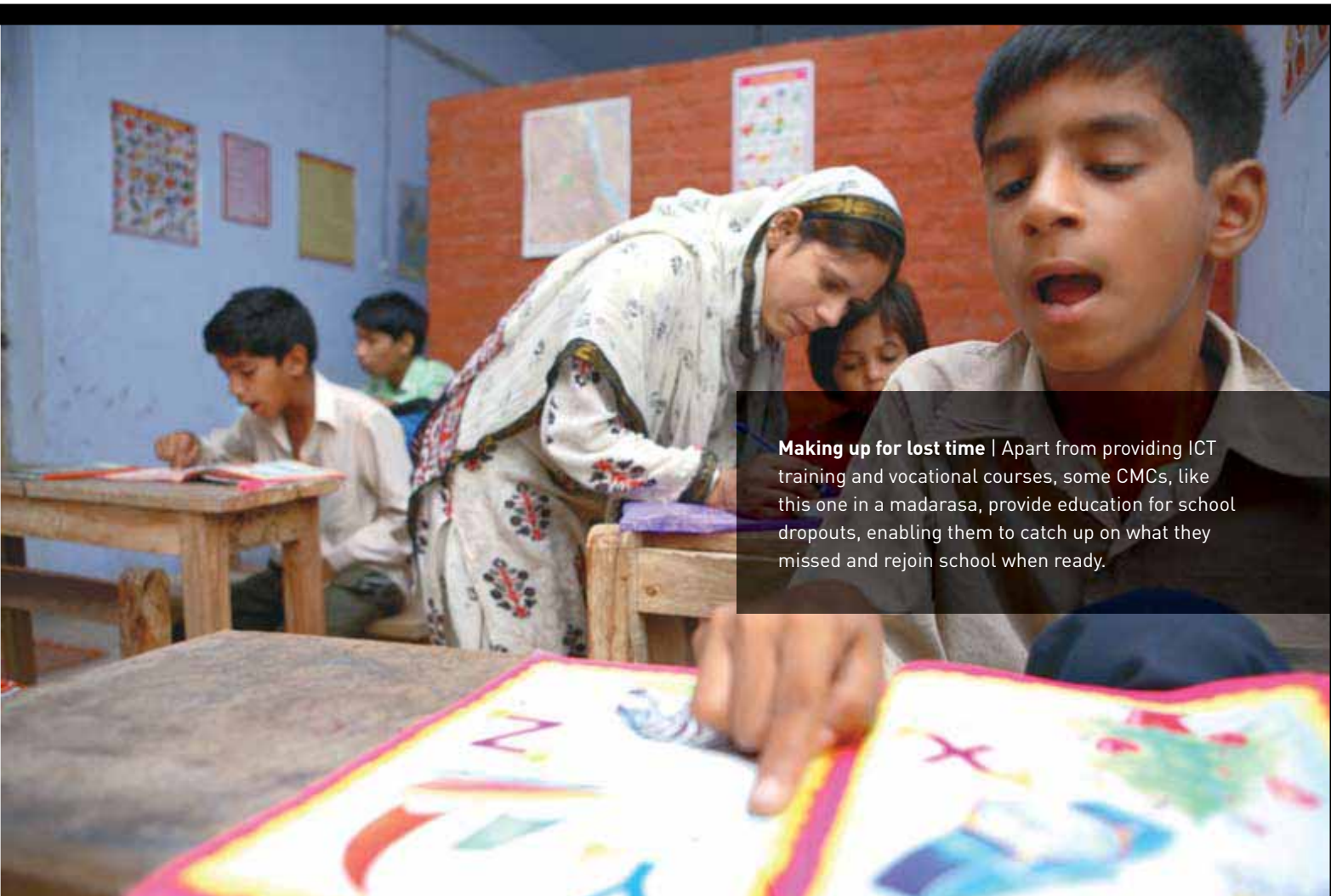
The carpentry training workshops organised by the CLC are part of UNESCO's project of supporting internally displaced persons through Community Learning Centres. With funding support from USAID, UNESCO has been implementing a wide range of skills training for income generation for displaced and local persons, to improve their income and livelihood options.







For a seamless future | Muslim women from the Seelampur community, New Delhi undergo embroidery training at the ICT centre. Their work is being sold in the local market and also showcased on the internet.



Making up for lost time | Apart from providing ICT training and vocational courses, some CMCs, like this one in a madarasa, provide education for school dropouts, enabling them to catch up on what they missed and rejoin school when ready.





A self-help scheme by the Doti Khirsain CLC supports locals with livestock which they use as a source for sustainable income generation. Even the poorest of the poor now have a chance to make something out of their lives.





Information on best practises in agriculture gives communities an insight into self-reliance



Proof of potential | Producing programmes on local entrepreneurs like bee keepers and tomato farmers, later broadcast on Madan Pokhara Community Radio, gives the community an insight into the potential of self-sustainability.

Reaping the harvest | The Pokhara CLC has helped the locals develop organic farming skills to produce vegetables in the off-season, adding to their incomes. (right & below)



Beyond the voice | Listener clubs now have become active stakeholders in their development. Members of the Suseli Radio Listeners Club and the Chaap Pani Radio Club in Western Nepal are seen paving new village roads and organising health camps.





His master's voice | Relief announcer at the Kothmale CMC interviews a monk about an upcoming prayer festival in the area.



Help us help you | The fundraising drives undertaken by the community radio station help the community understand that by contributing to the station, they are the ultimate beneficiaries.

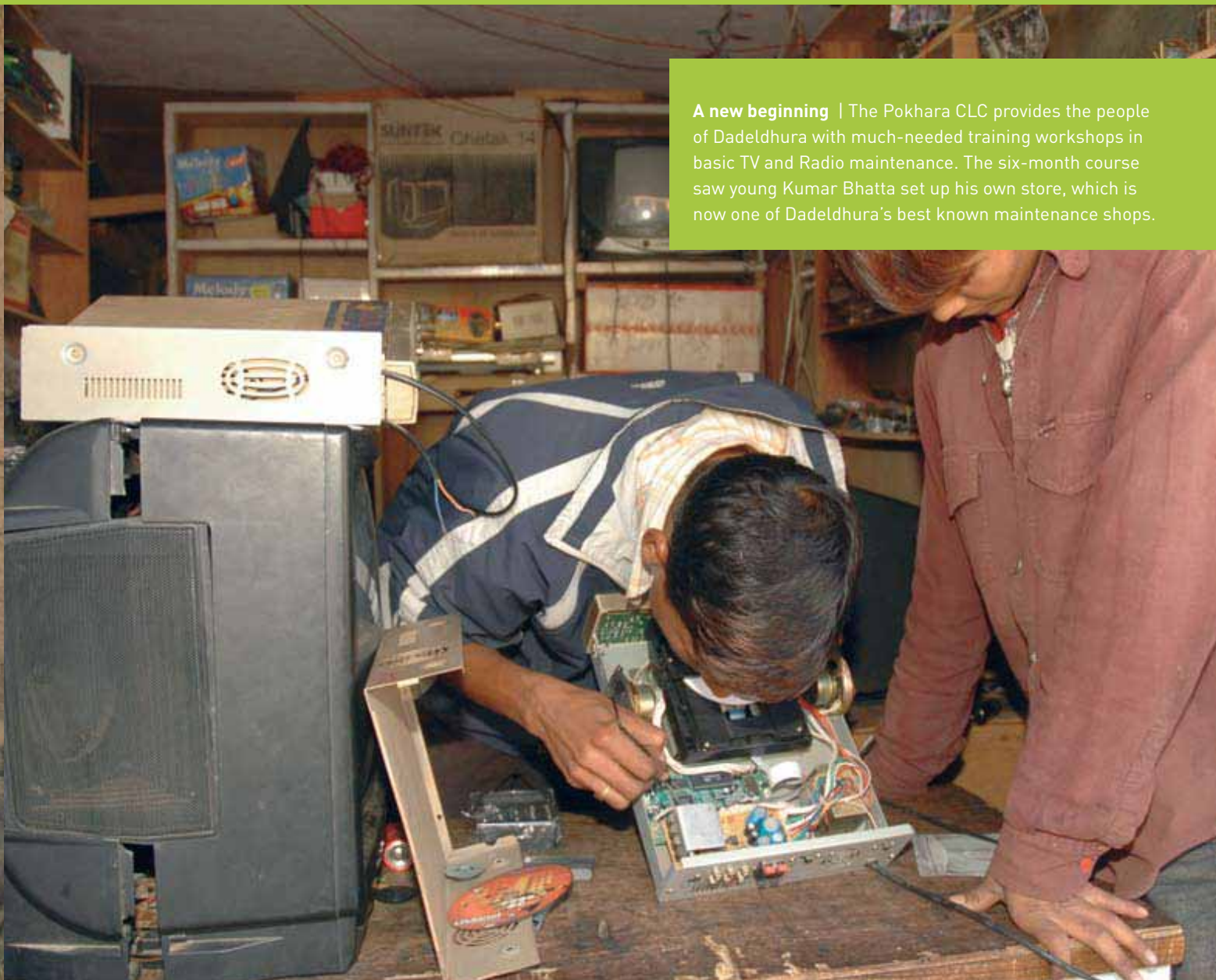




The locals of Pokhara in Nepal are trained in the craft of bamboo basket weaving by the CLC, reviving a craft and helping the community benefit financially too.

The circle of life | A unique incentive by the Kholapur CLC involves supplying the village women with livestock. Groups of nine collectively take care of the livestock for two days at a time in rotation. The livestock litter is eventually sold and profits distributed.






A new beginning | The Pokhara CLC provides the people of Dadeldhura with much-needed training workshops in basic TV and Radio maintenance. The six-month course saw young Kumar Bhatta set up his own store, which is now one of Dadeldhura's best known maintenance shops.



On their terms | The Housewives Savings Group, initiated by the Kohlapur CLC, ensures that the womenfolk are in control of their finances and have access to cash as and when necessary.




Lest we forget | Volunteers of CMC Tansen in Nepal interview a local artisan as part of the income generating programme for the local cable channel that simultaneously helps keep old traditions in the news.



Dream-weaver | The CLC at Doti Khirsain provided housewives with specialised training in making woollen clothes, which now serves as an additional channel of income for them.

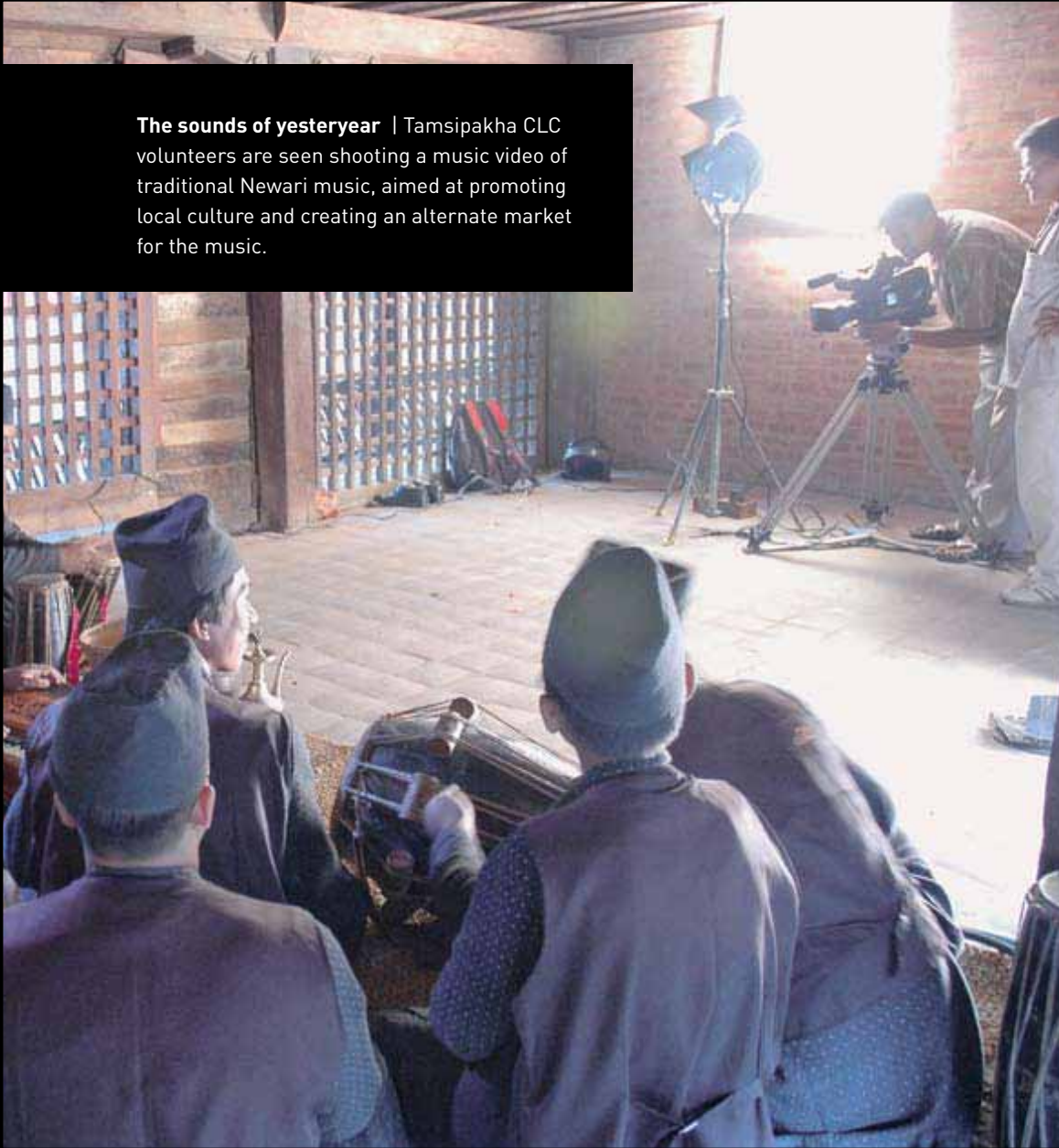


A photograph of a man with dark, curly hair and a mustache, shirtless, working on a wooden structure. He is using a hammer and chisel. The background shows a corrugated metal roof and some greenery. A red text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Keepers of the flame | By providing training classes in age-old crafts that run the risk of dying out, the CLCs are not just helping keep tradition alive, but also preventing migration to cities and lending the much-needed dignity of labour to these crafts.



The sounds of yesteryear | Tamsipakha CLC volunteers are seen shooting a music video of traditional Newari music, aimed at promoting local culture and creating an alternate market for the music.







A stitch in time... | Learning a new skill gives these girls at a stitching class in Sri Lanka a much-needed tool for financial independence and self-reliance.

Acknowledgde

ments

Staff and volunteers of the following centres:

INDIA

Namma Dhwani CMC, Karnataka
Seelampur ICT Centre, New Delhi
Hevalvani CMC, Uttarakhand
Pudupatti CLC, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu
Samiyarpatti CLC, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu
Sevanakarayanpatti CLC, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu
Kannivadi CLC, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu

NEPAL

Lumbini CMC, Anandavan VDC, Rupandehi District
Buddhanagar Telecentre, Madhawani VDC, Rupandehi District
Madanpokhara CMC, Madanpokhara VDC, Palpa District
Tansen CMC, Tansen Municipality, Palpa District
Kohalpur CLC, Banke District
Kwapa Adarsha CLC, Bhaktapur district
Khirsain CLC, Doti District
Pokhara CLC, Dadeldhura District
Tamsipakha CLC, Kathmandu

SRI LANKA

Kothmale CMC - Kandy District, Central Province
Uwa CMC - Badulla District, Uwa Province
Balagolla Telecentre - Badulla district, Uwa Province
Bibile Telecentre - Monaragala District, Uwa Province
Madolsima Telecentre - Badulla District, Uwa Province
Nuwaraeliya Telecentre - Nuwaraeliya District, Central Province
Siyambalaanduwa Telecentre - Monaragala District, Uwa Province

THANKS

Kiran Mulenahalli	Benjamin Grubb
Thamizoli	Govinda Acharya
Rengalakshmi	Deepak Koirala
Venu Arora	Rupa Pandey
Datamation Foundation	Sashi
VOICES	Ajith
MYRADA	Sanjeevan



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

From Access to Engagement

Community Access Centres take different forms and go by different names: Community Learning Centres; Community Multimedia Centres; ICT Centres; Telecentres; Resource Centres or Community Libraries. While the focus may tend to differ from building social and technological networks, to education, to creating livelihood options, the fundamental aim is to facilitate human development within the communities through these centres.

The photos in this book will take you to such places. Enjoy the journey!

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