

## Education Support to VMLRs

As part of UNIRP, UNICEF has been providing education support to Verified Minors and Late Recruits (VMLRs) in 48 districts through its Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) network. Education Support is one of the rehabilitation options designed to assist VMLRs resume their schooling, either back in their own community or in a chosen place of study away from their homes.

This option offers both Open and Formal Education to participants in the programme.

**Formal Education** takes place through the local Government school from Primary to Higher Secondary Level (Grade 12).

**Open Education** is flexible, allowing students to appear for their Grade 8 and 10 exams after attending an agreed number of hours at school and upon completion of course work.

Education Support is offered for a maximum of four years. Support to Government schools and Community Colleges include admission fees, school fees, school uniform, tuition fees and stationery. The participants receive a monthly stipend of 1,800 Nepali Rupees for the first two years of their studies. Students who for various reasons, such as protection issues or stigmatisation, cannot stay at home but live away from their families, receive an additional 2,200 Nepali Rupees to assist in accommodations. Extra coaching is provided to help prepare for exams and to catch up with other students in the class. The programme also sponsors one vulnerable child from the community for every two VMLRs enrolled in school to encourage community support towards the programme. Educational support, in the form of a grant of 7,000 Nepali Rupees, is provided to schools to use for the enhancement of school facilities (educational materials, libraries, toilets and drinking water) and to directly benefit all students in the school.

### Participation of Women

The high level of participation of women in the



*A participant of Education option participating in a child club activity.*

education training programme has been a key indicator of success in the interagency integrated approach of UNIRP. With the aid of psychosocial, socioeconomic and gender-based support, as well as through counselling and peacebuilding activities, female VMLRs have been guided in making informed choices about their future. They are encouraged, alongside their spouses and male members of the community, to play a part in the community as civilians. Support for young male VMLR's has helped them to overcome inadequacies in literacy skills and fear of stigmatisation, allowing them to work alongside their wives to foster better community and family relationships. Many are now on their way to completing their Grade 12 exams.

**Working with implementing partners** within the local community, NGO's and Government local offices, the education support option has provided an opportunity to establish a basis of trust, open up healthy debate and deal with issues of stress and unease felt on both sides of the community. VMLRs are given an opportunity to reintegrate into the community and work with their peers as forces of change in working towards a lasting peace.

"I miss those days I spent with my PLA friends, but I am happier now as I could continue my study with the help of the programme", Sita, age 20, a student of Grade 11.



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.



Funded by  
the UN Peace Fund  
for Nepal (UNPFN)