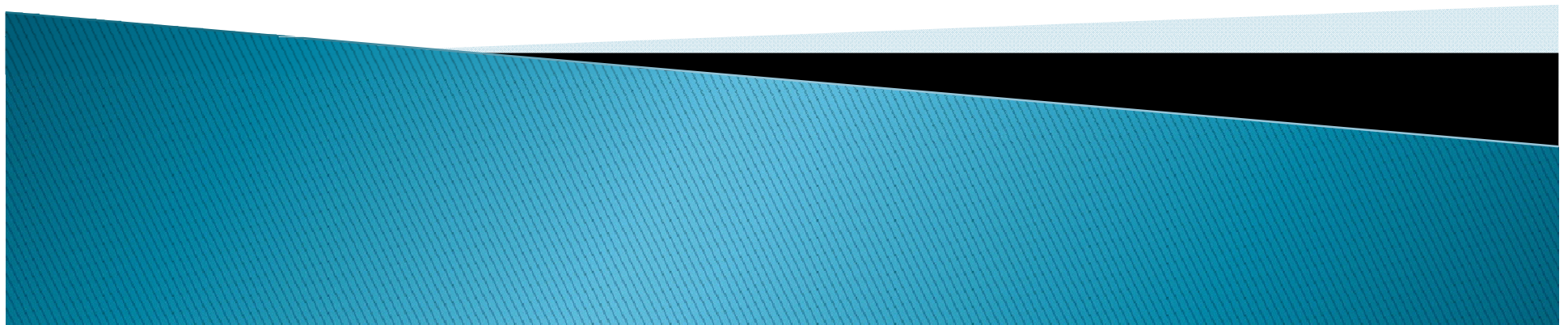


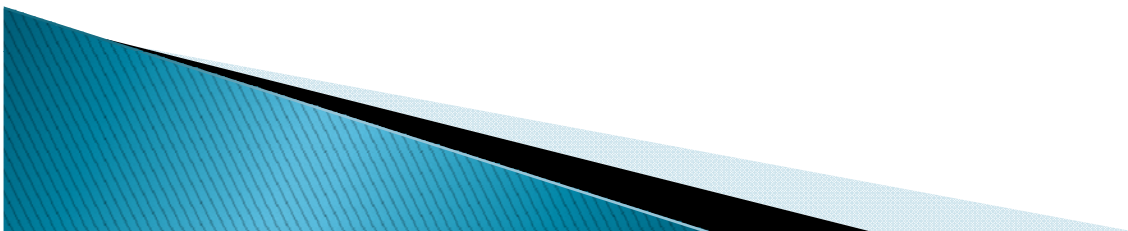
# Integration of local language and culture into the education policy and programmes of Nepal

C.M. Bandhu (Nepal)



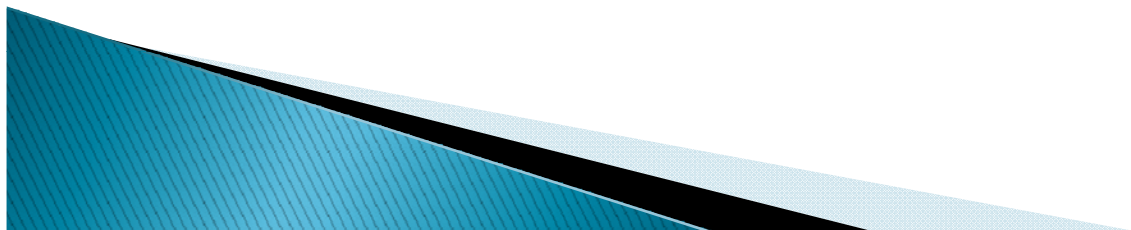
# Literacy in Nepal

- ▶ The most recent statistics shows an increase of literacy rate to 63%. So, 37% of the total population can not read and write at present.
- ▶ 17% of the children are not attending the school and 12% are dropping out early who are the children of ethnic minorities and those living in the remote places of the country.
- ▶ 2010 UNESCO Confucius prize for literacy was given to Nepal "for its ability to reach the most disadvantaged communities ..." (UNESCO, 2010).



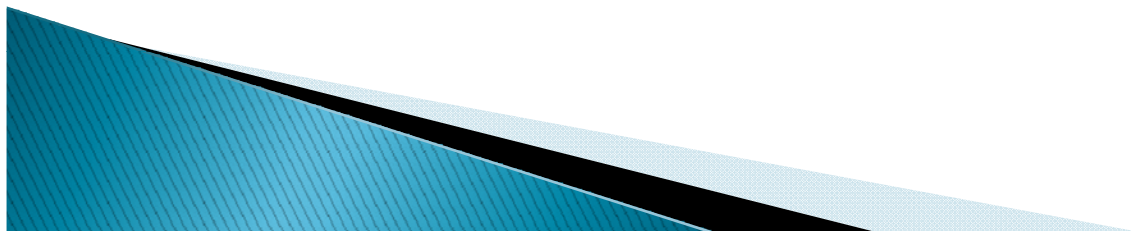
# Nepal: A country of diversities

- ◉ There are 3 regions: Tarai region, Himalayan mountain region and the mid-mountain region in between them.
- ◉ There are remote places in all three regions due to the forests, rivers, hills and high mountains.
- ◉ There are over 100 languages and dialects (Nepal census 92, Ethnologue 126, 140 languages) belonging to four language families (Indo-European, Tibeto-Burman, Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic) except Kusunda, a language isolate.
- ◉ Again, There are over 100 castes and ethnic groups with their cultures.



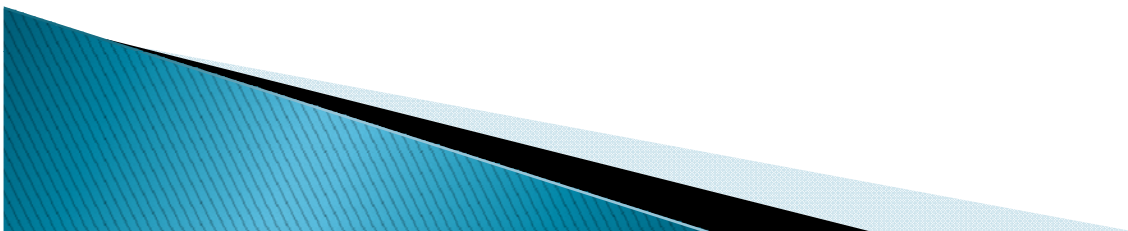
# The written and unwritten languages

- ▶ There are 3 types of languages:
- ▶ (a )The languages with long written traditions with their own scripts. Many of them are using Devanagari at present.
- ▶ (b ) Recently some more languages have been written down in Devanagari and reading materials are published in various languages.
- ▶ (c ) Some of the languages are unwritten . However linguists of SIL, students of TU and other linguists have analyzed and suggested orthographies for many of them.



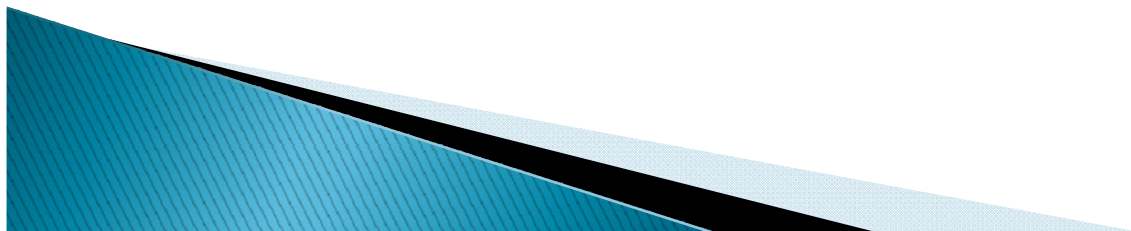
# Use of Mother Tongues in the education system of Nepal

- ▶ The constitution of Nepal (1991) has guaranteed that primary education can be given in the national languages of Nepal and the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2003) has reinforced it.
- ▶ While giving education in mother tongues, the languages have to be used in written and oral mediums. The unwritten status of many of the languages of Nepal requires to find ways and means to use these languages in primary education.



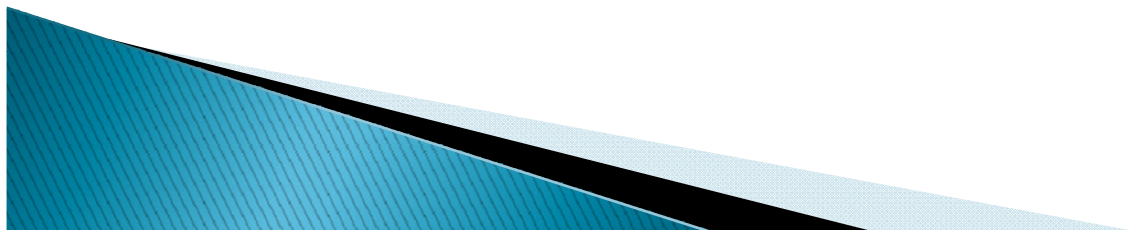
# Both Oral and Written languages are important

- ▶ Oral medium of the language is fundamental for use in instructions, explanations, dialogue and discussions in education. Oral languages are integral part of linguistic communities who carry their traditions.
- ▶ The written language is basic for developing literacy skills such as reading and writing for the transfer of knowledge beyond the time and space.



# Use of oral medium in the beginning

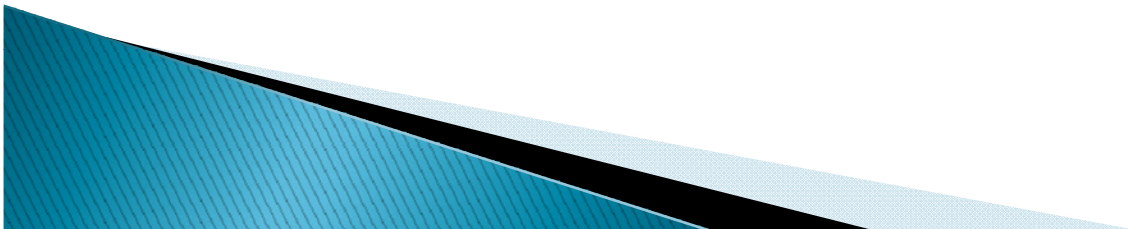
- ▶ There is a general feeling of the people involved in policy making that unless a standard orthography is prepared and textbooks are printed, minority languages can not be used in the schools. This causes to wait for starting the teaching in their mother tongues (Noonan, 2006).
- ▶ Preparation for written use of the language is important but the more important is to start the oral use of the mother tongue in education. As Malone (2003) suggested the oral language should come first and then the written medium should follow.





# Children, Local Languages and Culture

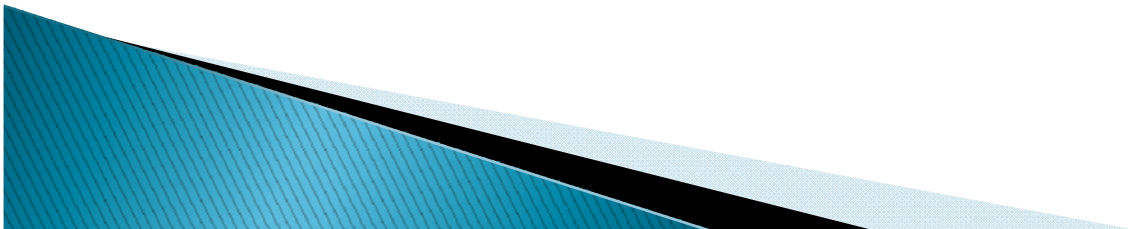
- ▶ The emphasis on local language and culture is practical and meaningful. The forests, hills and rivers have separated people and their speech from one another. If one walks from the low land to the height of the mountain S/he would find different environment, languages and life styles.
- ▶ The children of the mountain area do not see elephants, and of Terai do not find Yak around them. The children of the different geographical localities have different types of perceptions to their cultures and environments





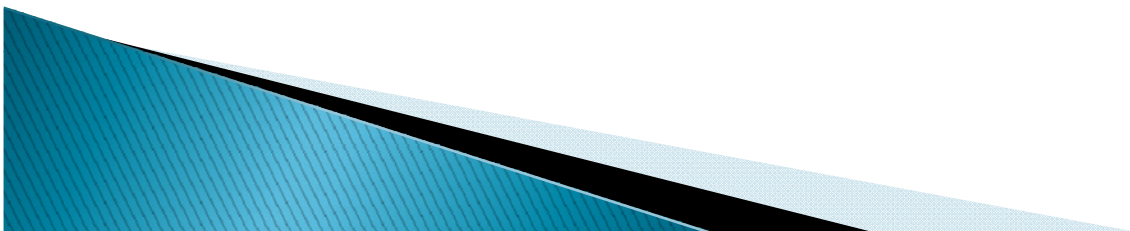
# Folklore/ Culture

- ▶ Culture of the minority language speakers is also understood as folklore. Folklore consists of (a) Oral Traditions (b) Performing Arts (c) Customary and (d) Material culture.
- ▶ Folklore is sometimes defined as "a small group interaction". The linguistic minorities constitute such small groups. The nursery rhymes that the children sing, the play songs that the children recite and the folktales that the elderly persons tell to the children are great resources from folklore for children's literacy.



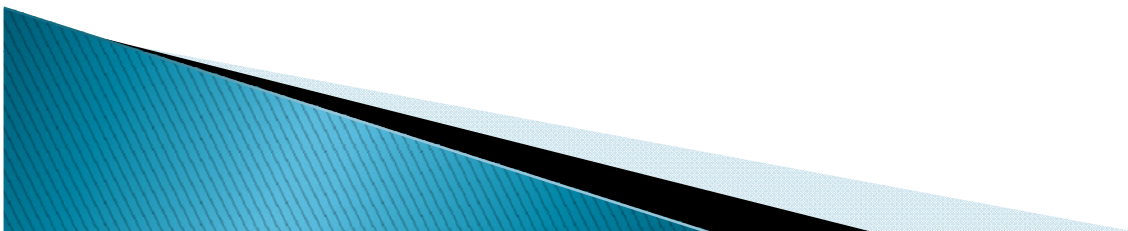
# Local Language Materials from local resources

- ▶ Recently, Nepalese society for Children's literature organized a workshop with objectives of preparing “books where there are no books “. Books for little children from locally available materials.
- ▶ The teachers of Tamang community were invited in a workshop to prepare books. Writers and illustrators helped them in writing and illustration.
- ▶ This shows that there are possibilities of preparing learning materials for children from local resources, if the teachers are encouraged to work.



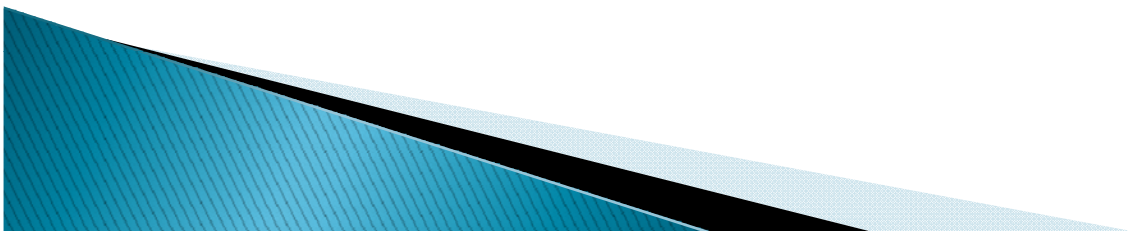
# Role of the teachers

- ▶ The teachers know the local language/dialects perfectly.
- ▶ They can tell stories and folktales, sing songs and recite poems and talk to the children about the things they already know.
- ▶ The local teachers perform better in socializing the children giving instructions in the language the children speak, which will also help improve their speaking and listening skills.



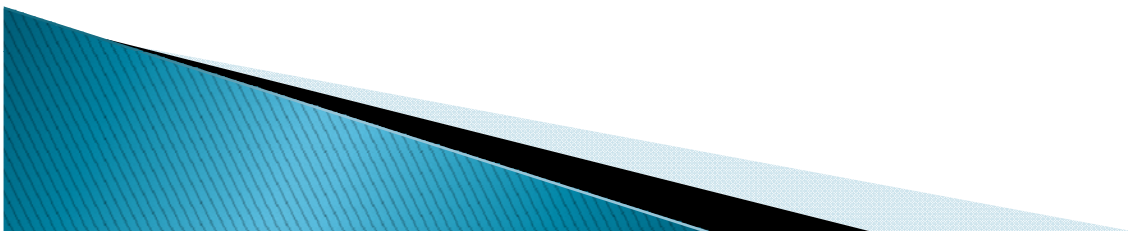
# Policy level decisions for appointing local teachers for local schools.

- ▶ Government has to make policy decisions to appoint local teachers.
- ▶ Those who are already appointed and know the local language and culture should be transferred and be placed in appropriate places to make MLE programme successful.



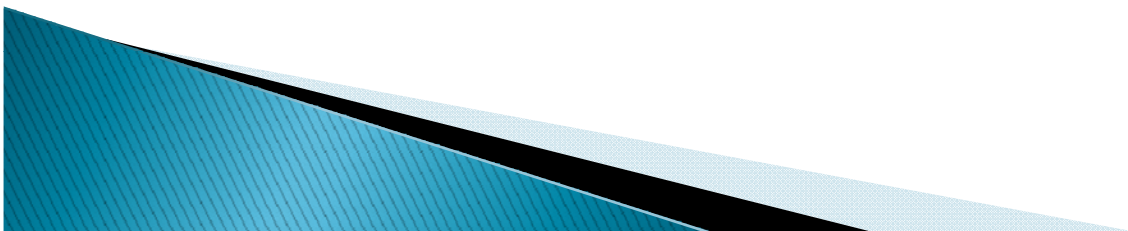
# Short and long term Programmes

- ◉ Short term programmes should be implemented to train the teachers for using local language and culture in oral medium.
- ◉ Long term programmes have to do with preparing the teachers as well as learning materials to teach local language and cultures with written materials with the help of organizations and community members.



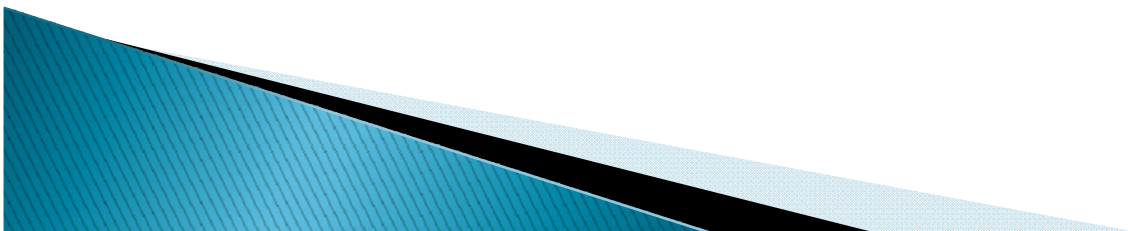
# MLE and the use of local language and culture in education

- ▶ In multilingual countries like Nepal, a model of multilingual education suggested by Susan Malone (2003) is very appropriate. The children need to be competent in the standard variety of their language and also the language of wider communication.
- ▶ In the context of Nepal where all the languages are not identified and described, the local variety should be chosen though it may not be the standard dialect.



# Policy decisions

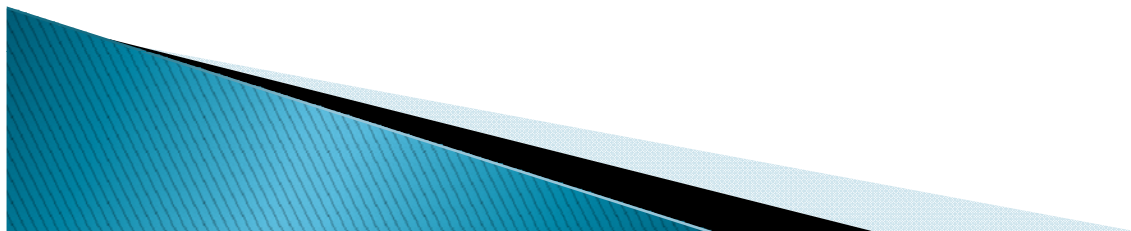
- ▶ Some policy decisions can be as follows:
- ▶ (a ) Use of oral medium in mother tongue education at the local level with local language and culture,
- ▶ (b ) Appoint local teachers who know local language and culture,
- ▶ (c ) Transfer qualified teachers to appropriate places to teach in children's mother tongues.





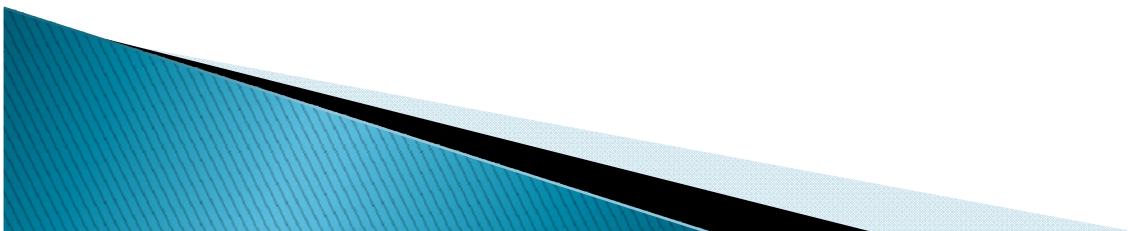
# Contribution of community members

- ▶ The members of local community should be involved in preparing the programme to use local language and culture in education.
- ▶ Since promotion of languages and literatures is one of the state policies guaranteed by the constitution of Nepal, it is desirable that the people involved in promoting the minority languages should be supported and encouraged.



# Conclusion

- ▶ In conclusion, Local language and culture can be integrated into the education policy and programmes of Nepal by appointing local teachers and giving them short term training to use the oral medium in the beginning without waiting for the textbooks.
- ▶ By deciding to use the local language and culture we can help to implement and extend the MLE programme making it more enjoyable and effective.



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