



Opening Welcome - Professor Karen Malone,
Chair 3rd International Child Friendly Cities Conference, Kathmandu Nepal 2013

Namaste! Welcome to all participants, especially the young people and special guests to the 3rd Biannual Child Friendly Asia Pacific Conference in Kathmandu Nepal. Building on previous conferences, Tokyo, Japan in 2009 and Solo-Surakarta Indonesia, in 2011 the honor of hosting the 3rd biannual Child Friendly Cities Asia Pacific Conference was given to the City of Kathmandu in the expectation it would provide an exciting and memorable venue for sharing the progress being made to support children's rights in the region. I am sure you will not be disappointed.

Child Friendly Cities Initiative Asia Pacific regional network was established in 2008 and acts to support and facilitate the implementation of the global UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative in the Asia Pacific region. With over 500 members in 20 countries around the region and beyond the network provides through a regular newsletter, website (www.childfriendlyasiapacific.net) and the biannual conference the opportunity for participants from a diverse range of settings and roles to share their experiences, resources and knowledge of child friendly city projects with other city officials, researchers, community members, NGO's and UNICEF staff.

The conference in Kathmandu entitled a 'Child-rights approach to Governance: Equity, Inclusion and Sustainability for children in the Asia Pacific' will offer a forum for sharing, discussing and action for creating child friendly communities and enhanced child friendly practices in the Asia Pacific Region. Focusing on the key areas of local governance, monitoring, assessment and accreditation, learning and play and child participation and sustainability the conference has delegates speaking and providing workshops from over 14 countries with invited keynote addresses from representatives in Government, UNICEF, Universities and Child Not for Profit Organisations. Additional to the intellectual program the conference has been set in this resort accommodation at the foot of the hills, to allow you the opportunity to use this time for networking, socialising and sharing with others in a relaxed setting.

As the Chair of the network and the conference organising committee I would like to thank the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD), UNICEF Nepal, NSSW, ENGAGE and CWIN for their support and organisation to make the conference be realised and personally welcome all the delegates to the culturally rich and exciting city of Kathmandu. I know your stay will be both intellectually and culturally engaging and you will come away from the conference with a renewed vigour to continue to support the children and families of the cities where you work. I also hope you take the time to make new friends and colleagues from the region and across the globe who are also endeavouring to do the same.

Warm wishes Karen Malone

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