

Project Description

The Advocacy Project is a humanitarian organization that helps marginalized communities to tell their stories, strengthen their organizations, take action, and mobilize new support.

I will be working this summer with Backward Society Education (BASE) in Nepal on an issue that has long interested me – child labor.

BASE is a nonprofit non-governmental organization that works with the Tharu minority in Western Nepal to fight illiteracy, bonded labor from the Kamaiya system, and a number of other issues in the region. The organization has received an award from Anti-Slavery International for its work in combating bonded labor and promoting literacy among the Tharu. Its founder, Dilli Chaudhary is the son of two former bonded laborers and rose to become Nepal's Minister of Labor.

My specific focus this summer will be on helping BASE to campaign against the practice by which young girls (known as *kamlaris*) are sold into domestic slavery by their parents, often at a very early age. This abusive and illegal practice is widespread in central Nepal and BASE has been leading a campaign for its abolition. BASE is also looking for ways to ensure that girls do not slip back into slavery after they have been freed.

My job will be to assess the extent and nature of the problem and produce a report that will profile some of the girls and help BASE in its advocacy. I also hope to provide technical support for BASE, for example by improving its website, that will increase its network of supporters in Nepal and internationally. As well as helping my host organization, I am confident that my work will benefit me in my academic studies and give me valuable exposure to working board.