



CREATING A BETTER TOMORROW

AS COUNTRY DIRECTOR AND CEO OF CHILD FUND INDIA, **NEELAM MAKHIJANI** HAS BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN. SHE TELLS **BINDU GOPAL RAO** ABOUT HER EVENTFUL JOURNEY TO DATE

Armed with a Master's in Business Administration from London University, Neelam Makhijani has been with ChildFund India for over four years now. Prior to this, she spent several years in the UK where she worked with major organisations like The Resource Alliance, HelpAge, and Oxfam GB.

Born in Delhi, Neelam schooled at Frank Anthony

and admits education was a priority for her family. "But I was always a sports person who then went into Science and Management. I have never been a bookworm and I did vocational courses like travel tourism as I love to travel. We were constantly on the move because my father was with Indian Airlines, so that's something that fueled my interest."

Soon enough, the travel bug took her to New York, where she got into journalism. "I covered

South Asia extensively, finally joining 'India Abroad', a weekly in New York as a journalist and lived there for 11 years. I have interviewed about five or six of the Prime Ministers of India as part of my job. I also did a lot of activities and campaigning for India in my role there."

Wanting to be the change that she wished to see in the world, Neelam moved back to India in 1999 and applied for a job at HelpAge India in Delhi which kick

started her career in the charity sector. "So from communications, I got into fundraising and I have never really looked back ever since." It was only a natural progression then for her to be promoted to Director and transferred to the UK. "I was the first Indian Asian woman to head a global organization then."

After 15 years in London, Neelam returned home and joined ChildFund India as Country Director and CEO. "ChildFund India