Sunrise Children's Association Inc.

"Bringing a brighter future to the children of Nepal""

Newsletter
April-June
2020

Nuwakot (Shivapuri) Education Scholarship Program

Dear Sponsors,

We are very happy to bring you some news from Nepal. Despite the challenging situation over the past few months, we still have lots of good news to share, so please don't miss it – especially the **'Family 'Progress'** at the end!

We may be physically isolated but we're in this together.

COVID-19

Since early 2020, the global pandemic COVID19 has affected our daily activities and in an instant, our worlds shrunk to the size of a living room.

Whilst records of positive cases were slow to start with, **18,000+ positive cases have been confirmed** by the Ministry of Health and Population, with **numbers continuing to increase** as more Nepali's return home from working abroad. Many positive cases came from Nepali's returning by land in crowds from India. On their arrival, many suffered from a severe lack of basic needs, including food, water, shelter, health facilities, including very poor quarantine facilities, making the long journey home for them even more challenging.

On a more positive note, the recovery rate is also increasing (12,000+ recovered), so we are spreading hope, and remain committed to the children and families we support.

Lockdown

Physical meetings and social events were postponed as the government declared nationwide lockdown on 24th March 2020. Like many around the globe, we were walled off from our friends, neighbours, and co-workers, and our only available connection was through our phones, radios, TV's and computers. Most work was conducted virtually and most of us had to work from home. But with close daily contact, we have been ok. Our team also supported the children and families in our programs on a daily rotational basis via phone, and **we are delighted to report that there have been no positive cases, other serious illness or major negative impacts to report amongst our children and families.**

However, for so many people, the pandemic has been terrible. Numerous jobs have been lost. Businesses have been closed, and people who rely on daily wages have had no income at all. Schools have been temporarily shut down. Hospitals have been and still are overwhelmed and medical equipment is in short supply.

Lockdown restrictions started easing on 10th July, and lockdown officially ended on 22nd July in order to preserve the economy, as so many literally rely on it to survive. With cases increasing, minimal social security and a low level of medical support, certainty still hangs over everything.

Schooling

Schools have not officially started yet (the new school year was due to start in mid-April), because of ongoing COVID19 and its impact. However, the children in our project area and our sponsored children are privileged to get an opportunity to learn from their teachers through weekly cluster-based teaching.

Local teachers gather students in a local school ground or other safe, open space and provide them tuition and guidance on a weekly basis to help them continue their studies at home.

Highlights from the last quarter

- Children received new academic books from school
- Home visits of **15 students** since the easing of full lockdown
- Exam results of final term released
- Saving group meeting restarted
- Highlights of child and family progress

Home visit of children recommence

This quarter our team visited **15 children's homes** and undertook **1 school visits** with the ease of lock down.

After more than 3 months of monitoring over the phone, where the team also briefed our families on precautions and explained about the symptoms of COVID-19, preventive measures to adopt and how to keep occupied in academic studies and household work during this time, our team were very happy to get back to meeting the children and families face to face. In doing so, they took full safety precautions and continued to practice social distancing where possible to maintain everyone's safety.

As vulnerable communities are at high risk during the pandemic and other health emergencies, we have continued to follow up the children and their families we haven't reached physically yet through phone calls.

Above: Karuna with her grandmother and younger brother

Above: Soniya with her grandmother

Above: Rojina with her mother

Above: Sumana with her mother

Above: Parbati with her mother

Above: Usha with her mother

Above: Nikesh with his parents and younger sister

Above: Manisha (middle) and Sarita (right) with their mother

Above: Rubina with her mother

Above: Sabina with her mother

Above: Usha with her mother and younger brother

Above: Prabin studying at his home

Above: Rabina Mijar with her mother, ready for going to cluster-based learning session

Above: Sundar feeding grass to his goats

Above: Little Niraj studying at his home

Child Progress

Creditable Final Term Results!

57/57 (100%) of students passed their final term exams conducted at the end of March by their respective schools with **4 Distinction,** 28 1st Divisions, 18 2nd Divisions and 7 3rd Divisions. 16 students' exams are yet to be conducted as they belong to college students (Grade 10,11 and 12).

Congratulations to all!

Above: Laxmi 91% in final term (1st)

Above: Shital 82% in final term (1st)

Above: Niraj 80% in final term (1st)

Above: Justina 80% in final term (1st)

Further,

- **7 students topped their class**; The above 4 + **Ashmita Tamang** (Kalika), **Anita Tamang** (Mahendra) and **Usha Tamang** (Gramindevi)
- 6 students came 2nd; **Rojina Shrestha** (Mahendra), **Yunisha Tamang** (Mahendra), **Suntali Tamang** (Gramindevi School), **Ashmita Tamang** (Janagyan), **Manisha BK** (Janagyan) and **Sumana Tamang** (Kalikadevi)

Livelihood program

Monthly Saving Group meetings

This quarter our **5 saving groups** with **63 members,** conducted only one meeting in the month of June, due to lockdown in April and May.

Our team joined all 5 meetings by each group to **record their savings, details of loans and monitor the progress of the families who have taken loans**.

Because of ongoing pandemic and the season of cultivating crops, we couldn't operate skills training to the group members in this quarter as originally planned.

Above: Monthly meeting of Kalikadevi Savings Group

Above: Monthly meeting of Janagyan Savings Group

Above: Monthly meeting of Gramindevi Savings Group

Family progress

From the saving group's collective savings, we continue to see families strengthening their livelihood through taking loans and starting or expanding their small businesses.

Some of the progress highlights are:

- Soniya's grandfather bought 2 goats and have sold 1 male goat for income.
- Ashmita's father bought a buffalo.
- Nishan's and Dipesh's grandfather sold about 60 chickens from their poultry and earned 40,000 NRs.
- Sandip's grandfather have tunnel for vegetables. He has already sold tomatoes of worth 5,000 NRs and he is growing cucumber and more tomatoes.
- Simrala Pandey's mother sold litchi's worth 150,000 NRs this year so far.
- Parbati's mother bought 2 goats, and now they have bred and have 4.

Above: Mother of Parbati with their goats

The above family progress continues to reinforce the difference our support and coordination makes in helping the families of vulnerable children onto the road of sustainability and independence. All they need is hard work and little support.

We acknowledge your gracious support and would like to thank you sincerely again for your support through this challenging time and beyond. Please stay safe and well.

Keep up to date with more news at www.facebook.com/SCAI.Aust and Instagram sunrisechildrensassociation.

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