Sunrise Children's Association Inc.

"Bringing a brighter future to the children of Nepal"

Newsletter
April-June
2020

Sunrise Home and Reintegration Program

Dear Sponsors,

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.

Other than the carers that live with the children at Sunrise Home, most work was conducted virtually and most of us had to work from home.

Our team also supported the children and families in our reintegration programs on a daily rotational basis via phone, and we are delighted to report that there have been **no positive cases or other new illnesses. Some children living with older siblings and single parents suffered from a loss of daily wages, so we provided additional food and other basic support.**

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 at Sunrise Home are privileged to get an opportunity to **self-study under guidance of our live-in carers.**

They are also **helping in cultivation of the crops they then get to consume (!), caring for the cows (fresh milk they get to drink (!)**, and visiting the nearby forest for outings.

Highlights from the last quarter

- Children received new textbooks for new school year
- Dil Bahadur safely reached to Humla, where he is reintegrated back into his family
- 4 children spent lockdown with relatives; Abhishek, Deval Devi, Shiva Shanker and Dil Bahadur
- Celebrating Dahi-Chiura festival

Sunrise Home

Children received new books

Despite schools not having re-opened yet, the students were able to get their new school year books, so they could study from home.

Above: From left to right (Dhiraj, Ram and Laxman) with their new books

Children enjoying with their families and relatives

4 children went to visit families and relatives after their final exams at the end of March just before lock-down and have very much enjoyed this long quality time with them. This time is also a **great stepping stone to permanent reintegration,** which we are aiming for soon.

Above and below: Abishek with his grandmother and cousin. Below: helping his uncle with their poultry farm

Above: Dewal devi celebrating the birthday of her cousin where she has been staying

Children grow organic veges!

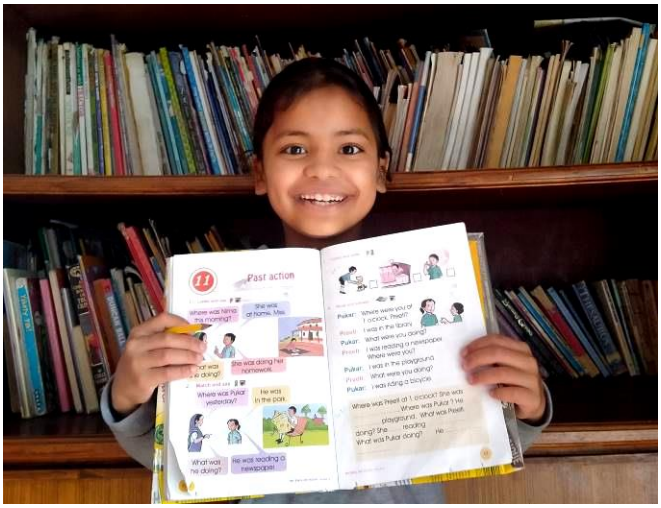
A very useful skill for the future and growing them with their own hands will no doubt make them even more delicious!

Above: Sushila and Joshna helping the staff and learning how to grow delicious organic vegetables in the Sunrise Home garden

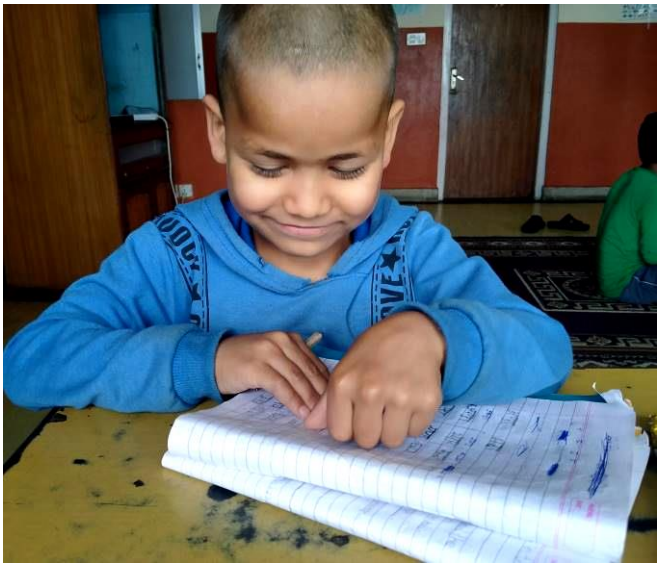
Above: Vegetables grown by Sunrise children and carers

Extra-curricular activities

Given the limitations of Covid-19, the staff and children have done well to keep busy with not only studying and gardening, but reading story books, games, and further developing their household and cooking skills, including fresh curries with the Sunrise veges.



Above: Sushila enjoying the Sunrise Home library books



Above: Sushil practicing handwriting

Above: Sunrise Home manager/bis sister, Ms. Angur guiding students to study

Above: Children studying at home

Above: Sushila and Joshna sweeping the indoor floor (the boys equally share the household duties)

Above: Dhiraj peeling the ginger for vegetables curry

Festival celebrations

This quarter, our children weren't able to celebrate festivals and gatherings externally, however they did enjoy celebrating "**National Dhan Diwas"** at home, where tradition is to eat curd and beaten rice with fruit, to mark the farmers' hard work in producing the rice.

Above: Curd with beaten rice and banana, marking National Dhan Diwas.

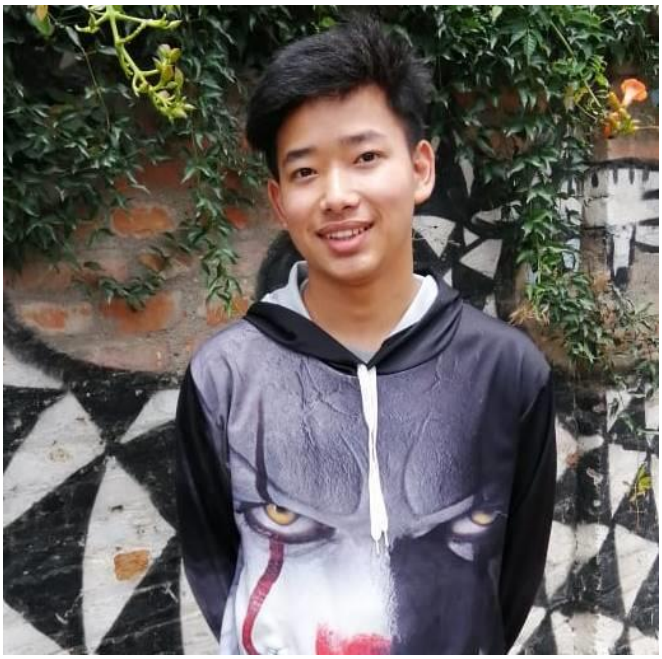
Above: Sunrise children wishing happy National Dhan Diwas.

Reintegration Program

Some of the children live in semi-urban or urban areas with their older siblings or relatives, but due to schools and colleges being closed, **many went back to the home villages, where it is not only safer and easier to access freshly grown local food, but they can spend more quality time**.

Some of the students have been preparing for their year 11 and 12 board exams, some with arts and crafts, home-made games, and personal exercise during lockdown – as well as

helping with household chores and family farming.



Above: Bibhu Limbu, preparing for year 11 exams and now planning to go to British Army training

Above: Mitthu Tamang preparing for her year 12 board exam at home

Above: Puja and Pushpa self-studying at home

Above: Rajaram with his art (Nepal's flag) and continuing his blog on YouTube

Above: Sapura-Alina and Alisha studying at their home in far west Nepal

Home visits to reintegrated children who require extra support

In a few special cases, our team was able to reach the children who needed extra support, despite fairly strict lockdown.

Above and below: Som with his new books and studying at home

Coordination with local service providers for food and medical support

For long term sustainability, wherever possible, we try and link the children's families with local service providers and supplement or provide our further support when this is not possible.

Despite the lockdown, our team was able to coordinate some **food support and medical care** for an ear issue of Pushpa with the local government. We also provided much needed support for siblings whose **mother passed away and have no income at all due to relying on daily wages.**

Above: Food to Kajol and Bikash

Above: Food distributed to Puja and Pushpa

Above: Anushka at home safely with her mother after having to travel during lockdown to get her fractured arm treated

Amber Bhaju started working in a cooperative

We are always thrilled when our graduate youth gain reliable employment, so it is particularly good news given the difficult situation over the last few months.

Amber, one of the Sunrise graduates managed to get a job at a cooperative in Nuwakot district (the district where all of SCAI's projects are). He is now also living with Mangaldas, his childhood friend (who also graduated from Sunrise home) and his family.

Congratulations Amber!

Above: Amber started new job in a local cooperative

We would like to thank you again sincerely for your ongoing support through this challenging time and hope you remain safe and well.

Emma, Raj and Mansingh
SCAI Australia/Nepal