



2020

ANNUAL REPORT

www.ConsciousConnectionsFoundation.org

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Message from the CCF Board

Dear Friends of CCF,

Of all the things that come to mind when I stop to reflect on this year we've had, I think the most about resiliency. Over the past year we've seen people demonstrate levels of collective courage like never before: marching for racial justice, voting in unprecedented numbers, weathering a pandemic, and creating community-wide mutual aid networks. The thing I love most about working with the Conscious Connections Foundation is that it's our job every day to build the kind of relationships that allow this collective courage to grow. Our job is to bring people together and enable them to achieve, as a group, what no one individual could do on their own.

CCF's philosophy has always been to work ourselves out of a job; to build capacity in the communities we work with so our presence is no longer needed. During 2020, as Nepal underwent strict lockdowns and shortages of basic necessities, this work looked a little different than usual. The biggest barrier to girls attending school became COVID-19, and the biggest health crisis for many – alongside the pandemic – was hunger. The relationships we have, and the nature of our work means that if we want to continue pursuing our mission, we need to address these kinds of critical and emergent issues first.

Over the last year, CCF did just that. Our Nepali partners on the ground conducted emergency food distribution to some of the most vulnerable groups in the Kathmandu Valley and beyond. They distributed 500+ reusable cotton menstrual pad kits along with hundreds of masks, bars of soap, and essential food staples to women and girls who lacked the resources to purchase these

supplies themselves. CCF also helped some of our oldest organizational partners address the overwhelming challenges created by COVID-19. With traditional income channels shut off due to lockdowns and no financial aid coming from the government, some of these long-time partners strayed close to collapsing. CCF stepped in to provide nearly \$50,000 and help these groups sustain their basic operating expenses. These Nepali-led organizations have had years of experience and enormous impact. Seeing them fail was not an option. We accomplished all this while continuing to strengthen the infrastructure and resources of our Menstrual Pad Program, the Baseri Health Clinic, and the Girl Child Education Program. Once the pandemic passes, our focus will again return to these core issues of CCF.

We will go forward stronger because of the challenges faced in this past year. But our ability to go forward at all is due to the incredible support of so many unsung heroes. This report is one small way of acknowledging those relationships that have made us and our community resilient. To our volunteers, our board members, our donors, and our organizational partners: You are the fuel that keeps our engine running. Your support during this year has been a huge inspiration, and believe me, it changed lives.

Namaste and stay safe,
Cameron Conner, CCF Board Vice President



MISSION

The mission of Conscious Connections Foundation is to facilitate the advancement of marginalized individuals in Nepal by promoting access to education, healthcare, skills development, and facilities improvement, especially for girls and women, so they can create strong, vibrant, economically viable communities. And to educate North Americans on their ability to positively impact these individuals' lives with direct donations.

What CCF Does and How

In early 2019, CCF's Board of Directors decided it was time to clearly articulate the values, beliefs, and motivating principles that guide CCF's work in Nepal. For the sake of accountability to both our donors and partners on the ground in Nepal, we sought to make our intuitive mission concrete for all to see. The following guidelines "What CCF Does and How" serve as a crucial supplement to our mission statement.

CCF believes that when women and girls thrive, the world is better off. We support women and girls in Nepal becoming key participants in healthy societies by...

- Partnering with trusted Nepalis to identify the most pressing issues in their community and generating collaborative ways of addressing them.
- Distributing funds to accomplish these objectives through proposals that adhere to CCF's guiding values and the criteria created to reflect them.
- Linking communities and individuals across North America with the rich life of Nepal through fundraising and education.

What CCF does...

- Makes small and targeted grants
- Focuses primarily on women/girls
- Is locally led and cooperative
- Is relationship-based
- Holds a long-term perspective

CCF's motivating principles...

- A healthy society is one in which girls and women thrive.
- Working in ongoing relationships under Nepali leadership stimulates mutual respect, ownership, learning, trust, and long-term commitment to further benefit.
- Taking a long-term perspective creates lasting effect and enduring competence.



CCF Proposal Criteria

When a proposal is brought before the CCF Board of Directors, the following criteria are used to determine whether or not it should be funded. These criteria were developed in 2019 as a part of our “What CCF Does and How” initiative in order to help ensure the work we do aligns with our values and furthers our vision.

CCF Proposal Evaluation Criteria

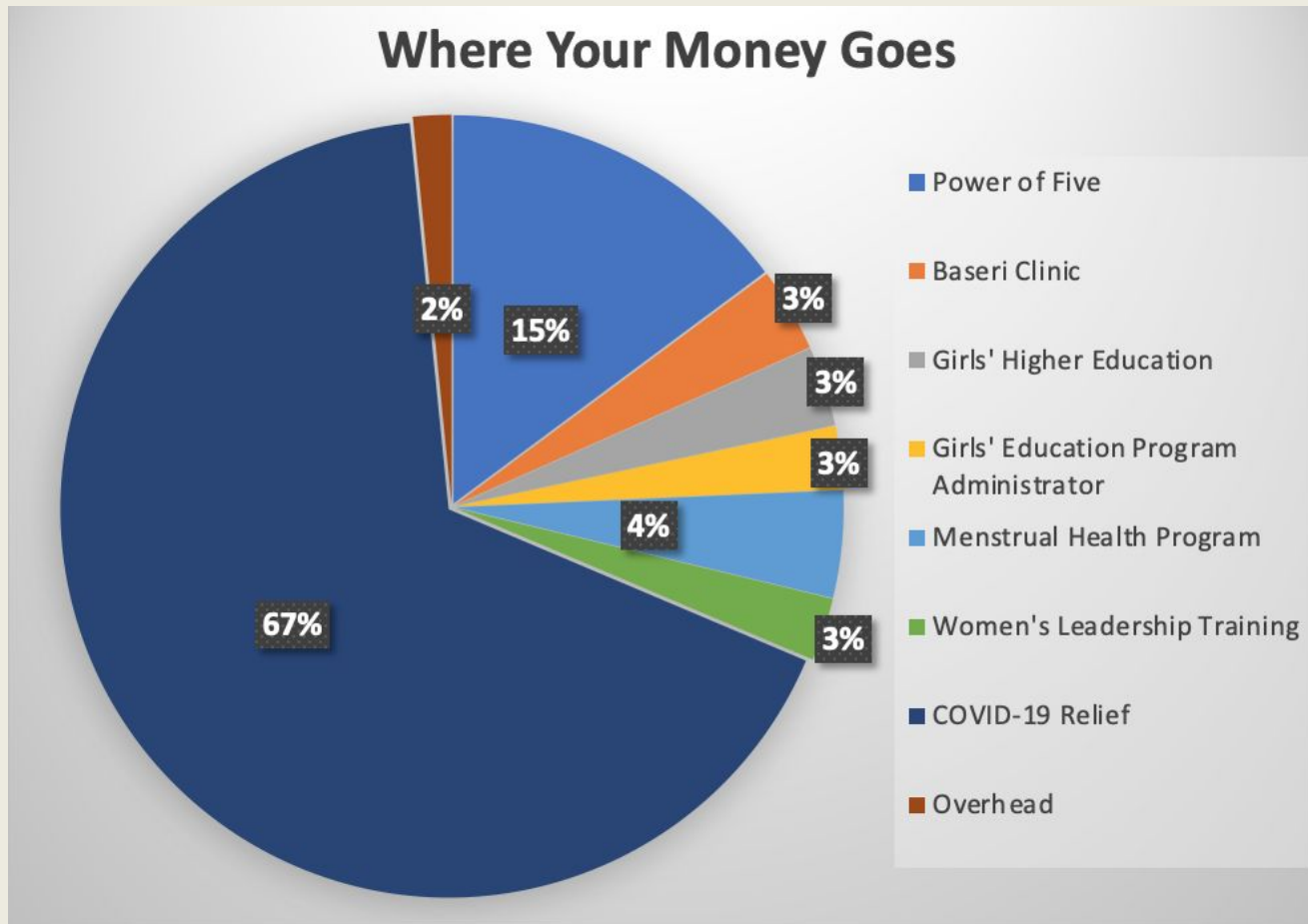
- 1) Does it increase the ability of women and girls to thrive as key participants in a healthy society?
- 2) Is it Nepali-led by a person/group we trust?
- 3) Is it a collaborative effort between CCF and the community being served? What is each of our contributions?
- 4) Does it invest in and empower the local community?
- 5) In 20 years, will this have proven to be a good idea?

Bonus Criteria

- 1) Does it create interconnections (both within Nepal and between North Americans and Nepalis) and lay the foundation for more opportunities down the line?
- 2) Is it adaptive and emergent (both before, during, and after)? Is it listening for and responsive to what is truly needed?
- 3) Does it reflect a commitment to the communities where we work, enhancing their potential?



2020 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY



In 2020, CCF granted **\$75,040** to its partners in Nepal. The grants were distributed as follows:

- **\$51,113** – COVID-19 Relief
- **\$11,316** – Power of 5 Child Education Stipends
- **\$2,675** – Deurali Community Service Center (aka Baseri Clinic) for salaries and building maintenance
- **\$2,536** – Girls' Higher Education: Joy Attwood & Individual Scholarships
- **\$2,000** Girls' Education Program Administrator
- **\$3,400** – Girls' Menstrual Education Program
- **\$2,000** – Women's Leadership Training

In 2020, CCF spent **98 cents of every dollar** donated directly on programs in Nepal. Only 2 cents went to administrative expenses

Conscious Connections Foundation

2020 PROGRAMS

DISASTER RELIEF

- COVID-19 Pandemic Relief
- Windstorm Relief
- Menstrual kit, soap and mask distribution

EDUCATION

- Power of 5 Child Education Fund
- Girls' Higher Education
- Girls' Education Program Administrator
- Women LEAD Collaboration

HEALTHCARE

- Baseri Clinic
- Menstrual Health Programs
 - Kit Production
 - Leadership Training
 - Menstrual Education
 - Training Manual

Conscious Connections Foundation

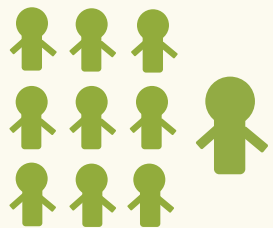
2020 DISASTER RELIEF

In 2020, many of CCF's close partners in Nepal were heavily impacted by the economic and social devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Building on our experience in earthquake relief, disaster relief, and emergency preparedness trainings, CCF focused on helping these well-established and vital organizations that lost their funding sources survive the downturn. CCF also connected with trusted groups to do broad-based outreach to some of the most vulnerable populations in Kathmandu and beyond.

Direct COVID-19 Pandemic Relief



900 masks and bars of soap distributed



615 FAMILIES *provided with food and cooking supplies*

COVID-19 Institutional Relief

\$45,600

worth of grants given to our institutional partners in Nepal to help them survive during the pandemic

500 REUSABLE menstrual pad kits distributed to women during lockdown



DISASTER RELIEF:

Direct COVID-19 Pandemic Relief

As COVID-19 lockdowns went into effect across Nepal, it was clear that many families, most of whom already lived day-to-day, would soon face disaster. With the Nepali government providing next-to-no support for these families, CCF reached out to our network to provide multiple on-the-ground partners with funding to give immediate relief. These partners included:

Hiteri Foundation (left) – A Nepali-led NGO set up for the purpose of providing hot meals and food packs to families in Nepal who have run out of money because of the COVID-19 lockdown. More than 150 families of construction workers, house workers, street vendors and others who fell through the cracks received emergency food aid. 120 women & girls also received menstrual kits, masks, and soap.

The Fatima Foundation works primarily in the Southern region of Nepal with poor minority Muslim and Madhesi communities. They reached out to CCF for help mitigating the spread of COVID-19 and providing immediate relief. CCF sponsored one-day trainings on how to prevent the spread of COVID and provided over 500 women and children with food, masks, and menstrual hygiene supplies.



DISASTER RELIEF:

COVID-19

Institutional Relief

In July of 2020, CCF was contacted by our partner, Meera Bhattarai, the director and founder of the Association for Craft Producers (ACP) regarding a dire situation. Due to COVID-19, ACP's incoming funds were 40% lower than previous years. Without a significant and rapid infusion of capital, Meera shared, ACP would collapse. There was no national assistance program for businesses, organizations, or individuals struggling because of the pandemic.

Apart from administering and overseeing CCF's Power of 5 and Joy Attwood Scholarship programs, ACP also employs over 1000 female artisans in Nepal. Their focus is to not only employ women but to also provide fair wages and social benefit programs. Since their inception in 1984, ACP has truly changed tens of thousands of women's lives across Nepal.

With Nepal shut off from the outside world and women unable to come to work because of the lockdown, ACP faced economic collapse. Had ACP collapsed, it would have taken priceless experience, relationships, important jobs and organizational infrastructure with it.

In early July, CCF was able to provide an initial \$25,000 grant to cover ACP's most urgent operating expenses. These funds were taken from CCF's general fund as an emergency expenditure. Thanks to donor support specifically geared towards ACP relief, CCF was able to follow this initial grant with another \$15,000 grant several months later.

Though ACP is still vulnerable to the economic pressure of future lockdowns depending on containment of the pandemic in Nepal, these funds have provided the relief needed to weather part of the storm and keep them functioning. As with CCF's other emergency relief efforts, this support is temporary until normal conditions resume.

DISASTER RELIEF:

TEAM Nepal Covid Relief

In June of 2020 Team Nepal contacted CCF explaining how their children's home and school is supported by a combination of donations from volunteers who come to work at the school and proceeds from Neel Shahi's shop in Thamel. Each of these had to shut down due to the pandemic and so their annual budget to keep the school running could not be met. They asked for a one time grant of \$5600 to cover their expenses and keep the school running for three months. Since they work with such a vulnerable community CCF knew this support would keep them functioning and keep kids in school through at least part of the pandemic.



TEAM Nepal (Together Everyone Achieves More) is a non-governmental, non-profit social organization based in Sindhupalchowk, Nepal. The organization helps to support local schools, offers scholarship funds to underrepresented youth, and runs a children's home for orphans, youth from very poor family backgrounds, and otherwise vulnerable kids. CCF has worked with TEAM Nepal in various capacities since 2015 when it provided substantial support to rebuild their children's home following the earthquake and in 2019 when they suffered devastating windstorm damage.

Conscious Connections Foundation 2020 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

114 CHILDREN
ABLE TO
ATTEND SCHOOL
This year!



*Raised for the Power of 5
educational program*

26 GIRLS
ABLE TO ATTEND
HIGHER
EDUCATION
SINCE 2015



982 YEARS OF SCHOOLING
PROVIDED
SINCE THE INCEPTION
OF THESE PROGRAMS

EDUCATION

WHY KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL IS IMPORTANT

When a Nepali girl isn't in school she is 3X more likely to be married before the age of 18, have children at an early age, and continue the traditional cycle of exclusion and poverty. Girls, families, and society suffers. A lack of education for girls means a lack of options. CCF believes that EDUCATION = OPPORTUNITY, and that all girls deserve an education.

In 2020, the pandemic made the importance of girls' education even more blatant. According to Michele Obama "It's not only girls' education that's at risk. It's their safety and security too. During a crisis like this one, adolescent girls face a heightened threat of physical and sexual violence, early and forced marriage and unintended pregnancy on top of sustained economic hardship. For all of these reasons, even temporary disruption to girls' education could have devastating long-term impacts."

Research also shows that *two of the top 10 most effective responses to climate change are investments in girl's education and voluntary family planning*. Combined, they reduce carbon emissions more than any other solution identified.

CCF partners with Nepali organizations that help struggling families keep their girl children in school without any cost to the family. Every eligible family receives \$10/ month as an educational stipend and in return they provide monthly evidence of the girl's attendance and progress in school. The program's focus is girls but boys in need are not excluded.



EDUCATION

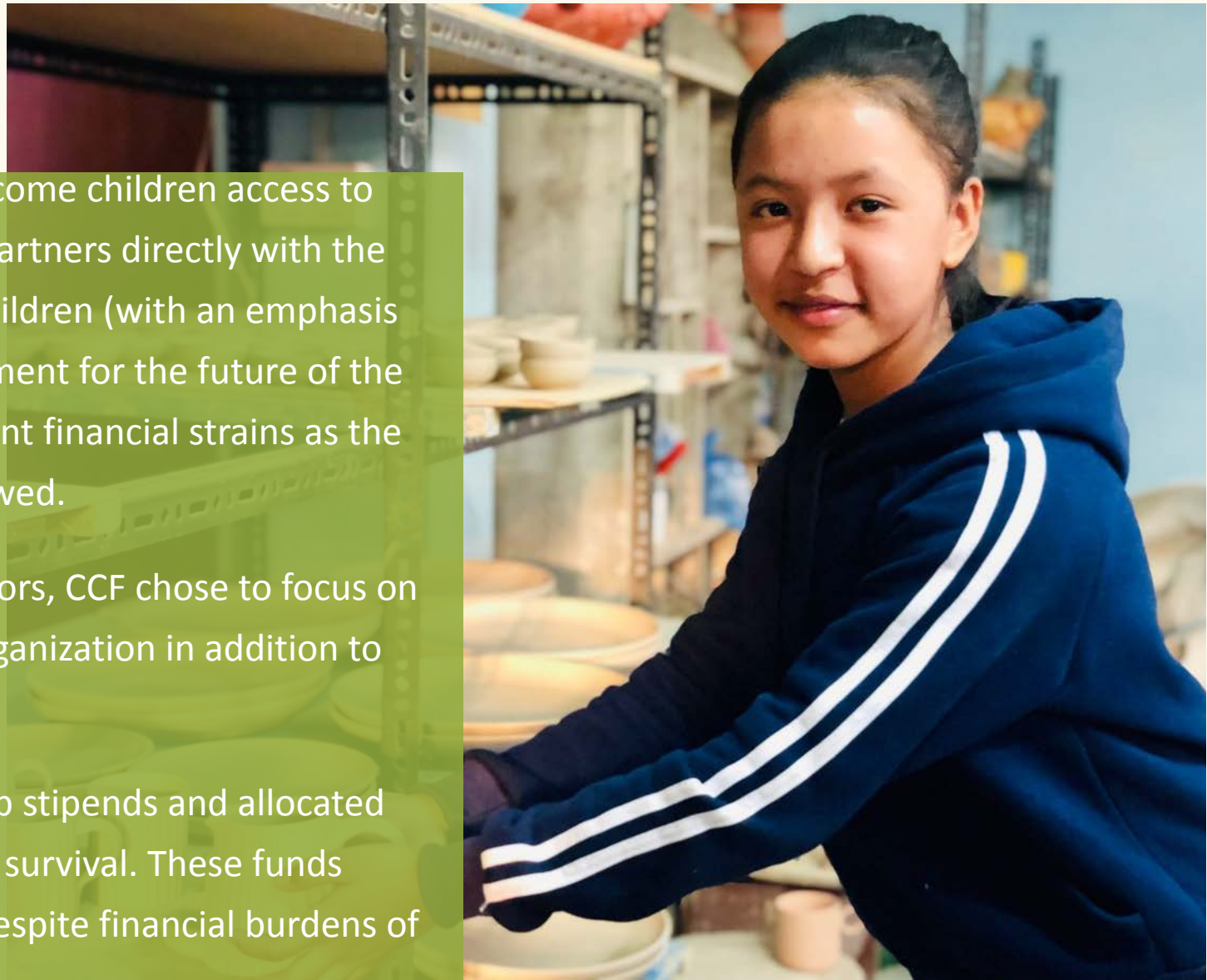
THE POWER OF 5

The Power of 5 Child Education Fund provides low-income children access to education through a monthly stipend program. CCF partners directly with the Association for Craft Producers (ACP) to keep 100+ children (with an emphasis on girls) in school and to create a sustainable endowment for the future of the program. Due to COVID-19, ACP experienced significant financial strains as the government locked down and international trade slowed.

In response, through discussion with ACP administrators, CCF chose to focus on fundraising to support survival of the broader ACP organization in addition to the Power of 5 (see page11).

In 2020, CCF provided \$11,316 to fund the scholarship stipends and allocated remaining resources to supporting ACP's institutional survival. These funds enabled 114 children to remain in school (virtually) despite financial burdens of the pandemic.

Since Power of 5 began in 2012, over **982 years of schooling** have been provided in K-10 education for an average of 120 kids per year.



EDUCATION THE JOY ATTWOOD SCHOLARSHIP



In 2014, CCF created a Girls' College Scholarship. This competitive scholarship, administered by the Association for Craft Producers, gives up to three Nepali girls with the need, ability and desire a means to continue their education into the 11th and 12th class. This program was fully funded in 2020 in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic

Meet our 2020 scholarship recipients!

Diya Maharjan – Age 16

“A role model for me is someone who is immensely dedicated towards his or her work and inspires others to chase the dream they behold. So for me my mother is my role model.”

Diya describes herself as a hardworking, passionate person who aspires to become an IT engineer. She achieved a 3.6 GPA and her favorite subject is Computer Science. Beyond studies, she loves to dance, read, and give back to her community by frequently volunteering at a nearby old-age home.

“I’m confident and determined to achieve my goal - so I know that my strength will overpower my weakness.”

Rakshya Rai – Age 17

Originally from a village at Dhankuta district, Rakshya’s family moved to Kathmandu when she was young so that she could attend a good school. She describes herself as a “girl with short height and pure heart.” Her aim is to be a doctor and help the underserved people in her village. For this she has been studying Biology and plans to go abroad for higher education.

Belonging to a Kirant community, Rakshya is also passionate about spreading her culture, tradition, and religion to promote them. Besides studying she loves to play football and dance with her brother. She is also an avid public speaker and works as a radio jockey.

Sheligya Maharjan – Age 16

Sheligya is shy but she puts herself out in society to build her strength. She aspires to be the first in her family to pursue medicine by becoming a dentist. She achieved a 3.65 GPA and in 2020 took online classes during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Sheligya believes a “lack of mutual understanding between people in each community brings social conflict and disharmony.” She wants to bring people together from different communities and ethnic backgrounds through festivals & idea sharing to create social harmony. She has also been engaged helping Nepal Red Cross programs for 2 years.

EDUCATION

POWER OF 5 & JOY ATTWOOD SCHOLARSHIP IMPACT

Riza Prajapati has been an enthusiastic recipient of both the Power of 5 Education Fund stipend and the Joy Attwood College Scholarship. You might recognize her from our CCF bookmarks! Now 17, she wants to tackle poverty and help make a prosperous community by getting a degree in Business Administration with a specialization in Marketing. Her goal is to continue her family's traditional pottery making business while providing trainings and business assistance to improve the lives of others in the handicraft sector.



Riza as 2021 Joy Attwood Scholarship recipient



Riza (left) as 2015 Power of 5 recipient

Impact of Covid: *“Due to restrictions and lockdown, currently I have been taking online classes but physical classes would have been more interactive. However, our classes are not affected so I feel happy about it. The lockdown has a few pros despite of all the cons. In the current situation we have been seeing various businesses emerge: many of them found online medium fruitful and are making a living out of it. So, in future I am looking forward to expanding this business and delivering in local areas.”*

Riza (right) for CCF's bookmark campaign (2012)



“Without education, life is dark.”

Name: Riza Prajapati

Age: 11

Favorite Subject: Math

In Her Words:

“Without education life is dark. I need education to lead a successful life. I want to become 'ThuloManche' (an important person), so I need scholarship to give continuity to my studies. I hope you will help me achieve my aim.”

Let's make it happen.



EDUCATION

POWER OF 5 & JOY ATTWOOD SCHOLARSHIP IMPACT

Heema Maharjan's story helped catalyze the creation of CCF's Power of 5 program in 2011. In 2012, Heema became one of the first Power of 5 stipend recipients and in 2015 she was the first Joy Attwood College Scholarship recipient. Every year her story gets more inspiring!

Now 22 years old, Heema is finishing up her third-year bachelor's degree in Business Management & waiting to take the government exam. Even through COVID-19 she has continued to work in the financial sector and has been taking care of some of her family's expenses. Without Power of 5 and the Joy Attwood Scholarship, she says there's no way she could have stayed in school.

Flashback: Heema and her mother Maya (2004)



Heema is awarded the very first Joy Attwood Scholarship (2015)



Above: Heema & Mother Maya talking about her success in education (2019)



Heema drops by ACP after work (2020)

EDUCATION

GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

As CCF's Power of 5 and Joy Attwood higher education scholarship funds have grown at the Association for Craft Producers (ACP), administrative and reporting requirements have grown along with them.

In 2018, Prastuti Dhakal was hired as the Girls' Education Program Administrator. Her salary is split between CCF and our program partner, ACP. Prastuti helps CCF and ACP oversee and administer the education programs and reports to CCF and ACP on their progress. She also is responsible for mentoring and counseling the girls and their parents as they move through the educational system and puberty.

2020 is Prastuti's third year in her position and one that has been highly challenging due to COVID-19. According to Prastuti, ACP could not conduct any special programming for children but was able to at least provide the stipend during these hard times. She spent time encouraging parents to monitor and engage with their children as much as possible during the long spells of staying indoors and not going to school. Prastuti is a shining light for all in the program and said: "It is difficult for all, but we hope for a better tomorrow." Amidst the challenges posed by this last year, Prastuti was ecstatic that we have been able to select the new cohort of Joy Attwood scholars for the coming 2021 school year.



Prastuti Dhakal, CCF's Girl's Education Program Administrator, meeting with CCF board members & Joy Attwood Scholar Samjana Shreshtha- Jan 2019

"Being someone who is proactive and loves working with kids, our overarching goal to empower women and help their children is very inspiring. 'Educate women and you will educate a family; Educate a girl and you will educate the future.' With this belief, the Child Education program at ACP would not just help the girls to have a better income for quality life; they will further have better perspective in life... I would like to keep on giving my best to enhance [this program's] progress and achieve its objectives and goals."

EDUCATION

CCF COLLABORATION WITH OTHER NGOS IN NEPAL



To create a greater cumulative impact in our priority areas, CCF collaborates with like-minded NGOs working to provide young women with the skills, education, support, and opportunities to become changemakers. Women LEAD has been one such partner since 2018. In 2020, CCF gave Women LEAD a \$2000 grant toward their flagship LEAD program. This LEAD Course helps participants explore their own value systems and strengths by providing young women with a safe space and connecting them with a growing support community of other young women who share their vision. This will drive unprecedented change and transformation in Nepal. Working with high school girls in Kathmandu ages 16 to 18 years old, the Women LEAD programs focus on intensive leadership training, skills-building opportunities, mentoring, a peer-support network, and university preparation.

The girls come from diverse backgrounds but share a passion for creating change in Nepal. Many of the participants had never written a resume or spoken up in public before attending a Women LEAD program. Now they are leading workshops, mentoring others, and creating social ventures to address problems such as waste and poverty in their schools and communities. In 2020, the Joy Attwood Scholarship started requiring all applicants to also apply to this LEAD program, and although none have yet been successful, they all said the application process was a valuable experience.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020/21 LEAD course has been conducted virtually and will continue this way until the number of cases of COVID-19 decreases to a safe level. Though challenging, one Women LEAD representative said the transition to virtual also was *“a huge step, and succeeded very well. I could see some girls who'd never put their opinions forward, speaking during the sessions towards the end of the Leadership Institute. The ones who spoke more, stepped down for others to step up.”*

Conscious Connections Foundation

2020 HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS: THE BASERI CLINIC

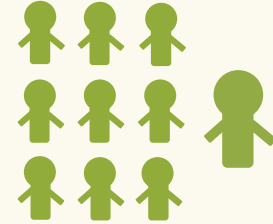
1500

PATIENTS
SERVED
THIS YEAR

COVID-19 Precautions

Free hand soap, water, medical checkups and medicine provided to prevent the spread of COVID-19

**10 BABIES
DELIVERED**



3

WOMEN
EMPLOYED

MOST COMMON TREATMENTS:

- IV Rehydration
- Fevers
- Burns
- Maternal Care
- Gastric Issues

HEALTHCARE

THE DEURALI COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER'S BASERI CLINIC



The Baseri Clinic opened its doors in February 2010, serving thousands of people in nearby villages and even more remote areas. Patients are seen at the clinic for everything from maternal healthcare issues to burns, breaks, and intestinal disorders.

Tragically, on April 25, 2015, the first Baseri Clinic was reduced to rubble in the massive magnitude 7.8 earthquake that struck Nepal. With help from volunteers in the US and Nepal, CCF constructed a beautiful, five-room, insulated, and quiet earthquake resilient building. This new clinic is easily accessible to all of the surrounding communities and was fully built and functioning within 14 months of the earthquake.

As of December 2020, no COVID-19 cases have been documented in Baseri, but the clinic staff is taking precautions. CCF provided the staff with medicine to provide for free to all those who presented with symptoms of the virus.

The Baseri Clinic Staff



Anita Ghale

Anita has been a NMA nurse midwife for 3 years before joining the Baseri Clinic staff in Dadagaun in early 2018. She is on call 24/7 for birthing and maternity issues only.



Parbati Bhandari

Parbati has been a CMA (Certified Medical Assistant) for 3 years before coming to Baseri in early 2019. She works in the clinic 5 days a week and is on call for emergencies.



Sita Gale

Clinic assistant, Sita Ghale does all of the cleaning, opening and closing, and takes care of staff and patient needs. Sita has been working at the clinic since its opening in 2010.

Conscious Connections Foundation

2020 MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM IMPACT

400

Reusable menstrual kits produced in 2020



Six jobs created to produce kits and MHM manual

What's in a CCF Reusable Menstrual Pad Kit?

3 Shields (2 day, 1 night)

5 Liners

1 Soap

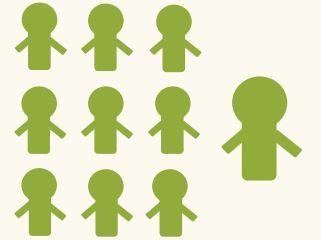
2 Underwear

1 Carry bag

1 Use and care instructions manual

500

Reusable menstrual hygiene kits distributed



Total cost to produce 400 kits

HEALTHCARE

GIRLS' & WOMEN'S MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Although the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to postpone our in-person trainings for 2020, CCF was able to distribute over 500 menstrual pad kits – our highest number to date! This ensured access to high quality, reusable menstrual products to those in lockdown as well as continued employment for our Nepali partners.

CCF's Menstrual Pad Project (MPP) is a mix of three approaches:

1. CCF trains and pays a fair wage to low-income women to sew reusable menstrual pad kits for CCF distribution.
2. CCF funds and facilitates the distribution of these kits to women in need.
3. CCF funds informational menstrual education programs led by trained Nepali women to discuss menstruation, sanitation, environmental issues, and breaking cultural taboos. Participants in these programs each receive a reusable menstrual pad kit provided by CCF.



CCF Menstrual pad kits contain

- 3 Shields (2 day, 1 night)
- 5 Liners
- 1 Soap
- 2 Underwear
- Carrying bag
- Use and care instructions



HEALTHCARE: MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

CCF MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

MANAGER: *Kesang Yudron*

CCF Board members, Denise Attwood and Ric Conner, have worked with Kesang's family in Nepal since before Kesang was born. In 2017, Kesang started volunteering with CCF's work in Menstrual Hygiene Education and in 2019 became CCF's Volunteer Menstrual Hygiene Program Manager in Nepal.

2020 and COVID-19 changed CCF's and Kesang's focus but not our impact. Kesang identified that women and girls under lockdown, especially those who had lost work, needed but could not afford menstrual hygiene supplies. In response, she took the lead in facilitating the distribution of over 500 CCF kits to women in need.

In normal times, as Program Manager, Kesang oversees the Menstrual pad workshop, facilitates trainings, and evaluates applicants who want Menstrual Hygiene Management training. In 2019 & 2020 she has been instrumental in leading a team to develop CCF's comprehensive MHM training manual for rural, non-literate girls and women. This resource will be completed and ready for distribution in 2021.



HEALTHCARE: MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

CCF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANUAL

In 2018 CCF funded the education of 508 (mostly rural) women in menstrual hygiene and trained 27 leaders. What became apparent after these trainings was that those being taught wanted a resource guide on menstruation that they could keep, reference, and share with others. After looking for a resource appropriate for all ages, CCF realized that any available were far too academic, boring, and not appropriate for the rural, smart-but-mostly-illiterate women being taught. In the spring of 2019, Kesang, CCF's Menstrual Hygiene Program Manager in Nepal, proposed that CCF fund the creation of a mini manual with engaging materials and lots of good, Nepal-centric pictures. A manual written in simple village Nepali that provided accurate information that would compliment our MHM trainings. Since this type of material didn't seem to exist, or at least wasn't available to us, we decided to create it and make it available to anyone who wanted to use it. As MHM Program Manager Kesang Yudron put it:

“the manual is a labor of love for all Nepali women who want to talk & learn more about their periods.”

Kesang gathered a Nepali team, including writers, a graphic designer, illustrator, menstrual hygiene expert, and translator and started in. By December of 2020 it was nearing completion and has been reviewed by rural women and CCF's Menstrual Hygiene Committee members. Kesang's goal of developing a useful, easily understood educational tool for girls and women of all ages and educational backgrounds will be ready for use in 2021!



WHAT'S IN THE MINI MANUAL?

- Basic biology & anatomy
- What is menstruation (illustrated)
- Health and hygiene during menstruation
- What problems can occur and when to go to a doctor
- Nepali cultural menstrual restrictions and taboos
- Menstrual products available to make or in the market
- Lots of illustrations

HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Education

1. Menstrual Kit Creation & Women's Economic Empowerment

In 2020, CCF granted \$3,400 to pay for the sewing and construction of 400 reusable menstrual hygiene kits. Sewing these pads provided vital full-time work for one woman during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Each kit includes: 3 shields (2 day, 1 night), 5 liners, 2 pairs of underwear, 1 soap, a carrying bag, and use and care instructions. CCF funded the menstrual kit workshop and training in 2018.

Due to COVID-19 CCF had to suspend our Menstrual Hygiene Trainings but we continued to fund the production of reusable menstrual kits to distribute to girls and women who needed them during the pandemic lockdown.



HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Education

2. Impact of Menstrual Kit Distribution during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 lockdown, many basic necessities were unattainable for low-income families. In addition to the usual staples of food and cooking oil, for many this included menstrual hygiene supplies. Working in partnership with other organizations on the ground, CCF was able to distribute over 500 of our menstrual hygiene kits along with masks and other daily necessities. This outreach was targeted at underserved Muslim and Madeshi communities in Nepalgunj and the Kathmandu Valley.



Menstrual Kit Distribution in Nepalgunj

– Fatima Foundation

- 300 girls & women benefitted
- 300 kits distributed
- 1 day program on COVID hygiene and use and care of kits



Menstrual Kit Distribution in the Kathmandu Valley

– Hiteri Foundation

- 200 girls & women benefitted
- 200 kits distributed
- Verbal instruction on use and care to all who received the kits

3. Menstrual Education Programs



In 2020 the Fatima foundation received 300 menstrual kits from CCF. They distributed these to low-income girls and women in Nepalgunj. Along with the kits the recipients received a one-day training on COVID-19 prevention along with the use and care of their new menstrual kits. This training helped provide some important basic information, and we hope to return again to this community with more thorough training after the pandemic.

2021 GOALS – THE YEAR AHEAD

GOAL	ACTIVITIES
<p>Monitor and provide assistance for emergencies that arise</p>	<p>CCF will support its partners should any unexpected emergencies develop. As COVID-19 spreads and mutates, we will support people as our Nepali contacts advise and in accordance with our mission.</p>
<p>Sustainably cultivate and grow the menstrual pad project</p>	<p>CCF will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to fully employ at least one female tailor to create menstrual pad kits. ● Fund new menstrual hygiene trainings in both urban and rural Nepal. ● Distribute the newly completed menstrual hygiene manual to workshop participants. ● Distribute additional kits as needed along with MHM training.
<p>Support girls' education in urban and rural Nepal</p>	<p>CCF will fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$14,400 for stipends for 120+ students in the Power of 5 Child Education Program at ACP. ● \$10,600 needed for the final installment of the future sustainability of the program. ● \$2,000 for the three merit and need based girl college scholars at ACP. ● \$2,000 for half of the salary of the Administrative Assistant for the educational programs. ● Seek to support like-minded women's leadership programs offering complementary work.
<p>Support the Baseri Clinic</p>	<p>CCF will continue to fund the salaries for the three women staff members and ensure the clinic itself is adequately maintained, and prepared for future pandemic-related challenges.</p>



“CCF lives in the world of possibilities and our lasting impact happens \$10 at a time. We believe if each of us gives a little it’s no longer pocket change but global change. Join us. We are nimble and effective. From start to finish our projects are Nepali-led and inspired and we get things done!”

— CCF Board

***This is an incredible journey and we need your help.
Whether your contribution is large or small, it all makes a difference.***

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WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Not everyone can make a financial contribution and we appreciate any help you can offer. If you would like to be involved with CCF and any of our programs, please contact CCF Vice President Cameron Conner at 509-710-6759.

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(509) 710-6754

Thank You!

On behalf of all of us at CCF, we would like to thank each of you for the incredible support you have shown us and our friends in Nepal over the years.

The road has been shaky and uncertain, yet you have endured the ride alongside us with unbelievable generosity and compassion. It is due to this strength of community and remarkable network of conscious connections that we are truly excited to see what the future holds.

www.consciousconnectionsfoundation.org