



ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2021 – JUNE 2022



FOUNDATION OF HOPE

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LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Through visuals and stories, we want to uncover the undeniable reality that it takes numerous parts working together for hope to take root.

At the heart of all the blueprints in this annual report, the thing that holds every project together, is the people. The foundation of hope is the incredible people of the Himalayas. From stories like Birendra determined to bring healthcare to more mountain villages, to the teachers Creating Hope for women and girls rescued out of the sex trade, to the resilient Maya who is dreaming big for her future. It is the people who are the building blocks and the foundation of the work. They are the resilient, strong, and persevering who are bringing transformation to communities. They are the future.

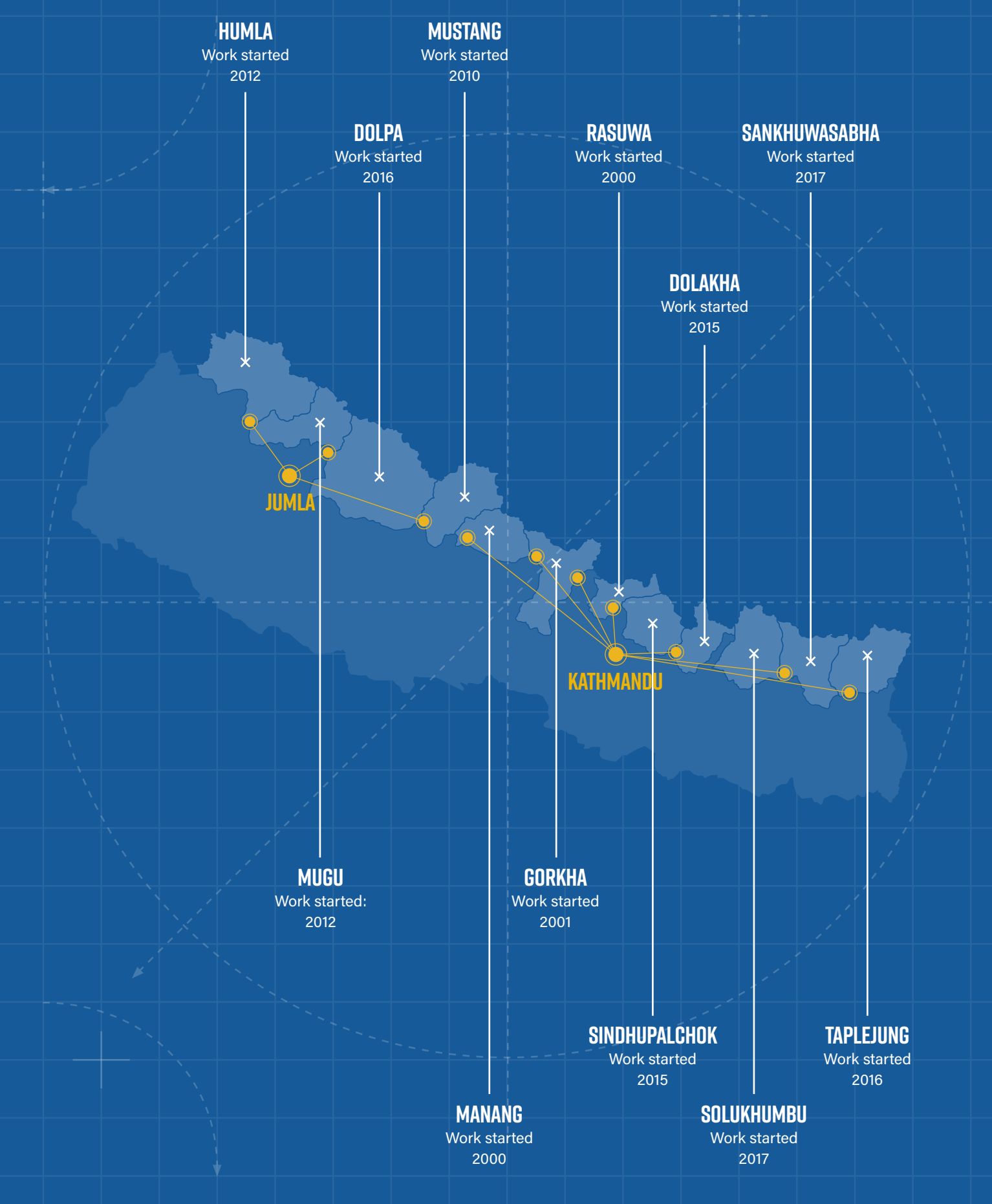
Within these pages, we have a number of significant announcements, like the discontinuation of HALO and Run4Hope. Despite these unforeseen changes, we have always known our work in the Himalayas would take unanticipated twists and turns. Over the last 22 years of being in this beautiful country, steadfast commitment, perseverance, and adaptability have been absolutely essential.

With patience at the center, we are adapting our structures and operations to ensure the ongoing programming for our five core issues. As we continue to work in the midst of all these changes, we move forward knowing the core foundation of hope is the Nepali people. They are the ones who are ultimately carrying this work forward and it is them that we want to highlight and celebrate in this year's report. While we look toward the future, our belief has always been—and is even now being reaffirmed—that the Nepali people are the foundation for carrying hope to the mountain child.

Blessings,
The MountainChild Team

“WE MOVE FORWARD
KNOWING THE CORE
FOUNDATION OF HOPE
IS THE NEPALI
PEOPLE”





BIG PICTURE

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS SERVED
4,575

OUR MISSION

MountainChild derives its values from a biblical worldview and exists for the purpose of raising awareness, resources, and financial aid for humanitarian work carried out amongst impoverished children and their villages throughout the Himalayas.

WHO WE ARE

MountainChild focuses its efforts towards the most remote Himalayan communities having the least access to necessities, which makes them extremely vulnerable to poverty and exploitation. Through carrying out development work among these people, we aim to stop the cycle of suffering and enable the mountain child to become a carrier of hope to their people.

OUR BEGINNINGS

In 2000, a small team trekking through the Himalayas stumbled across a group of young children being escorted out of the mountains by two adult men. Their worst fears were realized when the two men spoke openly of their plans to sell the children into the booming, still-present, sex trade industry of South Asia. The shock and grief experienced in this moment spurred a band of us into action to get organized and make plans for how a small group of people could make a significant impact. Today, we have helped mobilize thousands from nations across the world into the enormous task of carrying hope to the mountain child.



NUMBER OF DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
8,685

BIRENDRA A LASTING LEGACY

He made sure the medicines were sealed and packed, the windows were shut, and the examination table in its place. Soaking up one last look around the wooden-paneled office in which he'd spent countless hours of his life, he locked the door and walked out to face his new future.

This was Birendra's last memory at the Ghap Health Post, a small building situated in Ghap village, one of the most remote areas in the majestic Himalayas. Birendra had worked day and night at the health post for seven years, attending to patients from all over the surrounding mountains. He treated hundreds of cases, bound dozens of wounds, saw babies delivered, and even saved some lives during his time at the post. When a case was serious enough, Birendra had even gone so far as to carry patients in his arms for hours downhill to reach the main bazaar to be properly treated. For the Ghap community, the health post and its watchman, Birendra, were their lifeline.

Birendra had heard about MountainChild and the work we do in the Himalayas through a mutual friend. When we approached him with an opportunity to work in a remote health post, he didn't hesitate. So in 2016, with a heart to serve, he packed his bags and made the long journey from Kathmandu to remote, Northern Gorkha. He started from scratch — arranging medicines on the shelves of freshly built walls, placing the surgical table in its corner, and fitting his desk where he would sit for hours examining patients and getting to know the community.

The first year was the hardest. Being in a new place and a new environment, Birendra had to make many adjustments and work to earn the locals' trust. But it didn't take long as the Ghap Health Post became a new hope for the community who used to have to walk for hours to reach medical care. After that first year, he became a vital part of their community.

"They treated me like I was a part of their family. The young, the old, everyone shared their support and love. I was extremely happy there," Birendra shared.

But even after rapport with the Ghap community was established, there was still more work to be done. Birendra and MountainChild worked closely for many years to reach not only Ghap, but many surrounding communities. The more people we helped, the more need we encountered.

Birendra had made a significant impact on the community and had built a standard of care for the health post that would long outlast him. But to do more, he needed to make some strategic moves.

"I didn't want to leave the health post and the people who live there. I made friends for life. But I knew there was a different calling for me."



After seven years working at the Ghap Health Post, he packed up again and headed back to Kathmandu where it all began.

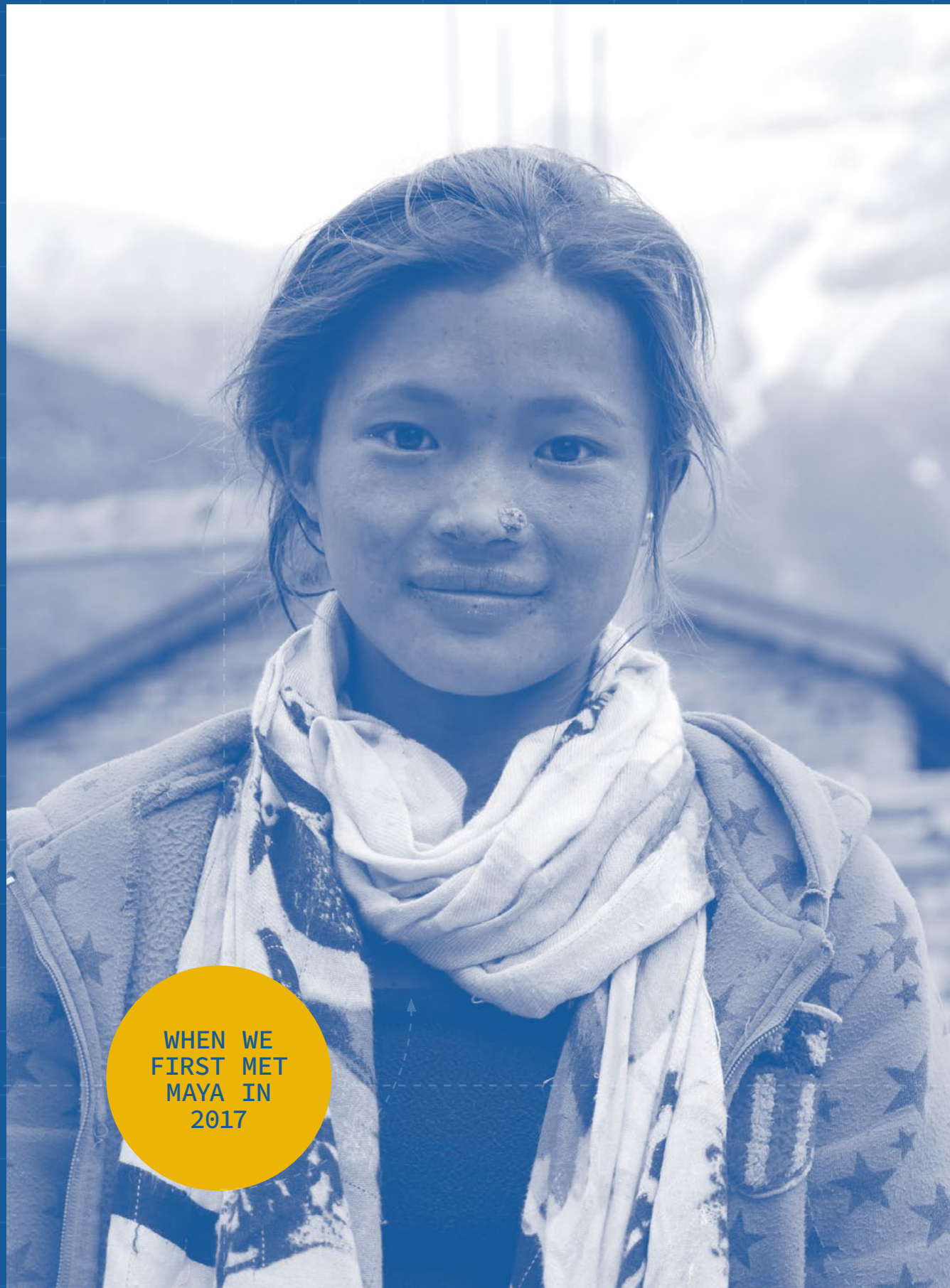
Birendra now serves as a Health Officer where his primary responsibility is overseeing the set up of new health posts in the remote Himalayas, leading people who were just like him when he began his time in Ghap. With his guidance, and a team he can depend on, the brand new health posts in the villages of Jagat and Lhokpa in Northern Gorkha are running at full speed and the team is preparing for a new project in the coming year.

"There is still so much to be done. Many Himalayan communities lack basic healthcare and my hope is to reach as many as I can." Birendra says.

From a small village post to a significant place of influence, Birendra's heart will always be in the Himalayas. He still receives calls from the Ghap village, his friends, the young and the old, missing his presence. But this reality is in fact what spurs him on. From arranging a health post on his own to assisting his current team to set up new health posts throughout the Himalayas, Birendra's commitment to the mountains and his compassion for the people who live there motivated him to expand his work. He hopes to see healthcare in the mountains move from a privilege to a basic human right.



"THEY TREATED ME LIKE I WAS A PART OF THEIR FAMILY"



WHEN WE
FIRST MET
MAYA IN
2017

PERSONAL IMPACT STORIES

MAYA HOPE IN HARD PLACES

She has the same joyful smile and the same glittering, hopeful eyes that she did five years ago when she took a brave step onto a helicopter, flying away from the life she knew and the only home she had. While she is still the same joyful, hopeful girl, life and home are different now.



You wouldn't expect a smile or eyes like that from a girl of her circumstances. She was happy even though she had spent her days surviving dangerous, demanding, odds-and-ends jobs since she was eleven years old.

She was hopeful even though she had been left without parents, without a family to help her or guide her.

She was joyful even though she needed to hide her hands and feet from the elements, from wondering eyes because of the skin deteriorating disease she didn't have medicine or treatment for.

MountainChild first met Maya in 2017 when the Health Airlift Operation (HALO) was just taking off. On a preliminary visit to the Gorkha district of the Himalayas, a young, 15-year-old girl stood out on a construction site. Using rudimentary tools and far from adequate protective gear, Maya was busy breaking up rocks to fill a foundation for a new building.

But even then her joy was undeniable. She didn't ask for more, for better, or for easier...she just did what she had to do and she did it with a smile on her face and with joy in her heart. These would become the building blocks of Maya's future.

It is what drew us to her and what will carry her through into every new season she faces.

That week five years ago in Gorkha, Maya flew down to Kathmandu in one of the first-ever HALO flights to receive treatment for her hands and feet. Not only this, but Maya also found a home with a loving family in the city as well as a home with the MountainChild community. She started studying, something she hadn't been able to do...ever. She started making friends and living the childhood she had missed out on since she was eleven.

Today, Maya carries out her days spreading hope to everyone she encounters.

Her story alone does the job, but she takes it even further by investing deeply in the lives of others, being intentional to let them know their worth and the hope their future can have. She partners with Create Hope, an art class for victimized youth and women, helping to run classes and connect with students. When an individual with a difficult past meets Maya, they're met with someone who understands, someone who has conquered her circumstances, and someone who can show how they too can rise to a future of hope.

Maya has made strides in her education. Now nearing high school level credentials, she sees the immense value in school, studying, and learning about the world around her. She hopes to become a teacher herself after she finishes her studies so that she can continue to spread the hope that she found — the hope that found her.

There is no doubt that Maya will continue to do great things and touch many lives.

She's a girl who rose above her hardships, who harnessed hope and carried it with her all along her broken path right into her bright and tenacious future.

PROJECT IMPACT STORIES

HEALTH

WRAPPING UP HALO

Through our Health Air Lift Operation program (HALO), hope traveled to the furthest corners of the Himalayas. However, due to circumstances outside of our control, HALO has been unable to operate for several months and consequently, we had to discontinue the program this year. With its closing, we wanted to take this opportunity to give you an inside look into the operations and celebrate the stories of the lives rescued and communities served over the years.

- BEGAN IN **2017**
- SERVED **108** PATIENTS
- 24** HOURS A DAY
7 DAYS A WEEK
- \$3500**
= COST OF 1 HALO RESCUE

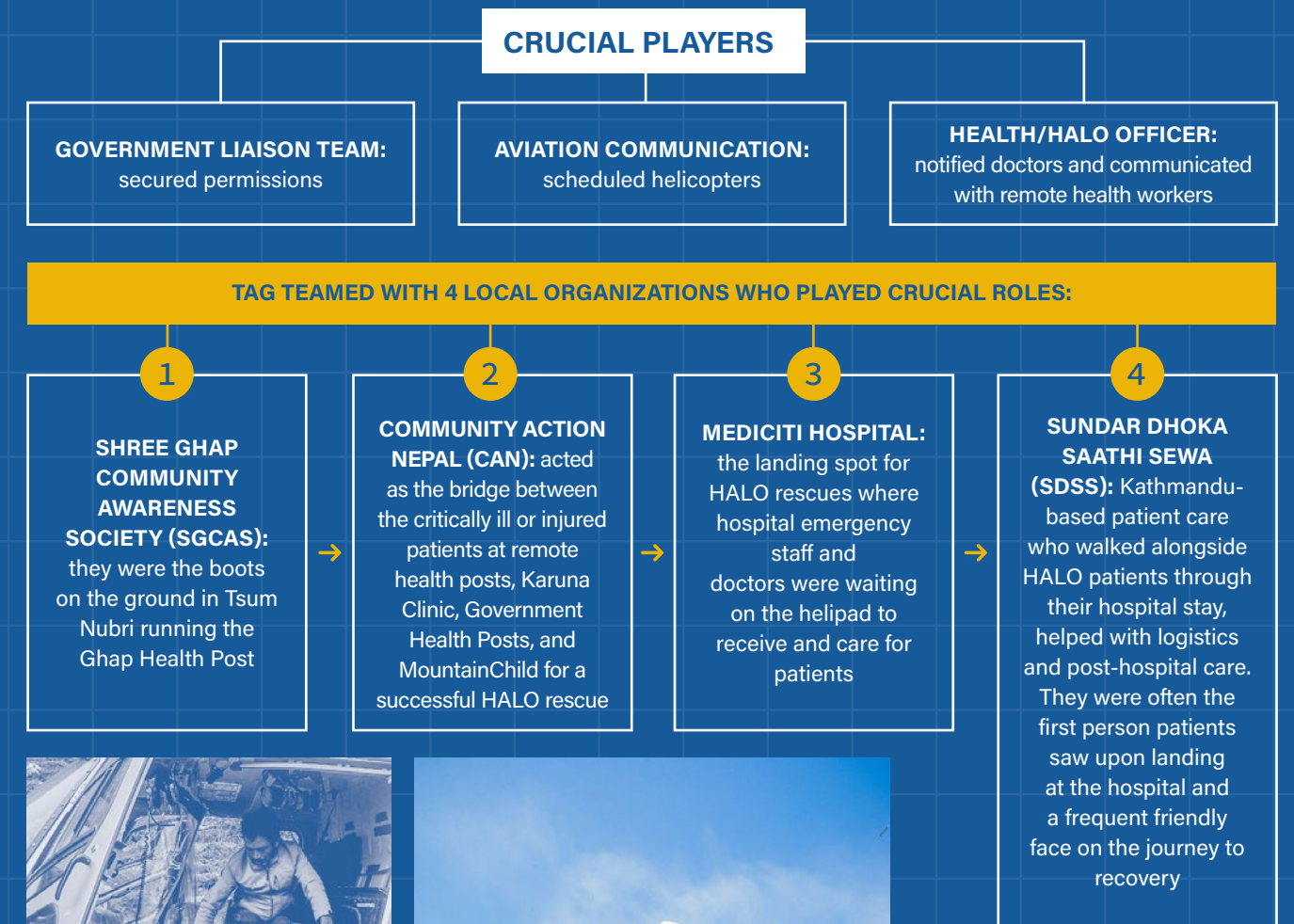
TRIBUTE TO BIKASH ADHIKARI



We lost an incredible friend and brilliant, passionate leader this last year due to a long struggle with COVID and complications that came from it. Bikash, the founder of SDSS, played an integral role in our HALO operations. He coordinated and managed navigators, who were the friendly faces greeting patients on arrival at the hospital in Kathmandu. His gentle and gracious demeanor brought great calm and reassurance to patients as the SDSS team helped in all the logistics of their stay at the hospital. Bikash cheered them on, celebrating their recovery and eventual release from the hospital to travel back to their villages. We dearly miss this beloved brother!

HALO WAS NEPAL'S FIRST EVER AIR EVACUATION SERVICE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO REACH THE MOST CRITICAL, MARGINALIZED, AND REMOTE VILLAGERS OF THE HIMALAYAS.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the HALO phone was on. Two of our team members took turns carrying it around, on call at all times. Emergency didn't sleep and at any hour, tragedy could strike deep in the Himalayas. When the HALO phone rang, it was all hands on deck.



This was the work of HALO. Every part moved simultaneously and rapidly to ensure a successful rescue. The task of saving lives is heavy. It's tedious and expensive and often seems impossible. But HALO provided an essential service to these remote places and was critical to the lives of many who call the Himalayas home.



ANTI-TRAFFICKING

A ROOM OF HOPE

From its foundation, the Create Hope art class program has sought to encourage victims and potential victims of trafficking, filling their hearts with hope once again.

In Nepal, women and children have always been more vulnerable to trafficking and abuse. Centuries-old stigmas label victims as outcasts, casting a shadow on those who have been rescued. Their identities are oppressed and their voices muted.

When students come to Create Hope they are told a different story, one of hope and worth. And it starts the moment they walk into the room.

All are welcome to the art room. It is a place without judgment, where students are able to freely share their struggles and thoughts. Bimala Magar, the art teacher, embraces everyone and exudes a welcoming warmth. For every lesson, each student gets a blank canvas and some basic instructions. With every class centering around hope, artists learn to see their worth.

This year, four new safe homes joined Create Hope and are sending their residents to classes, and the program saw 37 new graduates. Not only this, but Create Hope has extended its program to offer adult literacy classes as well. Rescued victims of abuse and trafficking, who never received the opportunity to read and write, now have a chance to learn. Many have made great progress and have started to write in basic Nepali.

Things can change and empowerment can happen when a room is designed with hope in mind.

▲ Their hands create beautiful artwork. The canvas provides space to express their thoughts and feelings. The markers, pens, and paintbrushes were the tools they used to draw stories.

▼ The students hear words of affirmation from their art teacher.



▲ Their growth and achievement are celebrated at graduation. Their future is bright.



▼ Plexi glass is strong against winds and the sloped ceiling combats heavy rainfall.



A GREENHOUSE ON A HILL

Littered all along the hills and mountains of Nepal's vast Himalayan countryside are all types of greenhouses, rudimentary and state-of-the-art alike.

For centuries, agrarian communities in the remote mountains and outer lying hills have sought to make the most of their landscape and improve their farming abilities. Progress through innovation, though, has been slow. Our team hoped to speed things up and inspire new, inventive ideas among the communities of the Nuwakot District.

In mountain communities, people live off of what the land can give. Our hope with building this greenhouse was to showcase the diverse possibilities that can come from a carefully curated ground.

To do that, the team had to manage getting pre-built, plexiglass greenhouse walls, as well as tools and other materials, from the city to the mountains. Over five days, seven men dug roots into the Syapurbesi village and through sweat and grit, brought the new greenhouse to life. The unique structure and inner assembly makes this greenhouse stand out among others. Raised beds mean less work and more produce. Plexiglass walls and a sloped ceiling mean durability and ability to withstand harsh weather. And the maximization of the space means it is well thought out and easy to care for.

Some months later, the hard work paid off. Villagers are enjoying fruit and vegetables they've never tasted before and a whole new way to do what they have done for generations.



▶ Raised plant beds make it easier on the body to work and care for.





▲ Mamata Reading Zone distributes books and stationery to children whose parents are in prison.

BOOK HEAVEN IN MAMATA

Nepal is a fast growing country. Buildings, roads, and cities are erupting all over the place. It's hard to go anywhere in the country without running into a construction site or a brick factory churning out the demands of a developing nation.

▼ The library also provides activities such as storytelling, crafts and puppet shows for the students.



ANTI CHILD LABOR

Industrialization comes at a cost however. At building sites and factories it is not uncommon to see a few young boys and girls schlepping concrete strapped to their backs up rudely built stairs or working nearly barefoot in burning hot factories.

Child labor laws don't hold up to desperation, and far too often poverty demands that children in Nepal forgo education and find the first job they can.

Mamata Reading Zone, a non-profit organization, opened with the hope to combat this reality. In addition to their vision of providing a library to community children and schools in Nepal, every week the team visits a local brick factory. They provide a variety of classes and books to children whose parents are working in the harsh factory conditions, offering them opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have.

Mamata Reading Zone's journey began with opening one library in the Kathmandu Valley, but they don't intend to stop there. Through activity based arts and crafts, book distribution in rough places, and libraries in strategic areas, they plan to reach six different districts of the country where hope is needed the most within five years.

This is the kind of hope we believe in and love to partner with: a hope that is raised not just in the present, but one that impacts the future!



SECOND HOME

Life in the Himalayas, beautiful as they are, is difficult and isolated from necessities and facilities, education being one of them. It is rare for the locals in remote areas to attend proper school. Young children are either left at home to play without proper adult guidance or taken along to their parents' work in the fields.

▲ NLC premises

▼ Classroom instruction

In 2019, Nubri Learning Center (NLC) opened with a mission to carry hope through early education. Three campuses located in different remote villages operate kindergarten and preschool classes as well as adult literacy and vocational training. NLC has become a second home for many local children. Their parents can rest easy knowing they spend their days learning, playing, and living their childhood to the fullest. Not only this, but focusing on early childhood education gives kids a hunger for school and a desire to learn.

Over the last couple of years, the NLC has been unable to operate in full swing due to COVID-19 lockdowns. Regardless of the intractable situation we faced, we are happy to share that over 40 children attended kindergarten classes regularly after the school reopened. Among them, ten children, all 5-years-old, graduated from the NLC and were ready to join primary school. We are proud to see children grow and improve so much right up until they graduate. Many are fluent in Nepali and English alongside their local, cultural dialect. Similarly, adult literacy students progressed in both the Nepali and English language. This year, the NLC also enjoyed the produce of their experimental greenhouse built one year ago.

For its three-year existence, the NLC has seen a significant impact on every community of which they are a part. And this is just the beginning. There are plans in place to reach even further and build another NLC campus in a neighboring village, offering hope to an entirely new group of people and strengthening the foundation for education in the Himalayas.



16
17

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL DETAILS

TOTAL INCOME \$2,178,365

TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,223,229

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

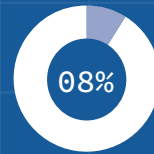
PROGRAM \$1,678,568



ADMIN \$366,530



FUNDRAISING \$178,131



VOLUNTEER IMPACT

TOTAL HOURS
246.75

32
VOLUNTEERS

88
SHIFTS

TOTAL MONETARY
VALUE GIVEN
\$7,390.16

HOPE RAISED: LOOKING BACK AT SEVEN YEARS

Since 2015, Run4Hope has provided an incredible platform to raise both awareness and resources for MountainChild's five core issues: Health, Trafficking, Education, Child Labor, and the Environment. We are so thankful for the more than 3,300 runners who raised more than \$320,000 to galvanize much-needed support for remote villages in Nepal!

Pulling off the Run4Hope event with excellence required a tremendous amount of time, energy, and involvement from our staff and volunteers, and as we look towards the future, our desire is to devote more of our time and effort to directly serving those in the Himalayas. With this in mind, **we have decided to discontinue our annual Run4Hope.** While it's difficult to discontinue this event that we enjoyed together, we are excited to take this next step in our journey as we believe this will allow us to focus on the people of the Himalayas more strategically.

3,328
PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTING
ALL 50 STATES AND OVER
26 COUNTRIES



271
VOLUNTEERS



184
SPONSORS



\$325,916
RAISED



1000's
OF LIVES IMPACTED



JOIN ELEVATE

Elevate is a community of people who are passionate about doing something big in the Himalayas from right where they are. For \$29 a month, these monthly supporters empower ongoing work to provide education, clean water, health care, and programs that protect the most vulnerable to trafficking and child labor.

mountainchild.org/elevate

FOLLOW ALONG



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