

# CHANCE FOR NEPAL

## SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2020



Food parcels delivered by Mountain Heart Nepal

The last four months have been anxious and crazy for everyone!

CHANCE has been pivotal and quick to act in making a difference to many lives in Nepal in this time of urgency and crisis.

The country went into total lockdown on 24 March. At the time of writing, 17,000 cases of Covid-19 have been confirmed with 38 deaths. In the last week more than 500 new cases have been emerging daily and it is impossible to determine how many cases have gone undetected. A serious consequence of lockdown means daily migrant workers are earning no money. With no savings, this quickly turns into an emergency situation.

**no work = no money = no food = STARVATION**

The government has been slow to act, and when they have, it has been a case of too little, too slowly. 25% of Nepalis live under the poverty line and 62% of the employed daily workers have no jobs. Starvation has been and continues to be a critical issue during lockdown. With little in the way of meaningful testing targeting all 77 districts, it is only going to get worse. Communities are spreading the virus, and with the Indian border opening its gates for migrant workers to return to Nepal this will undoubtedly increase the rate of infections.

Another consequence of the pandemic, the Nepalese government expected 2,000,000 tourists during 2020 which would have generated around US\$ 2 billion. 7.9% of the GDP per year comes from the tourism industry. With the closure of the country, 100,000 Nepali people working in the trekking sector have lost their livelihoods.

Although Chance for Nepal are small, we feel that our efforts make a real impact and difference to the livelihood, health, education and well-being of the people we are helping.

On hearing the cry for help from our partners, we switched our efforts to funding relief food parcels for the starving families most in need.

***We received a terrific response to our SOS Food Parcel Relief Appeal which went out to our supporters and on our CHANCE Facebook page in April. At the time of writing, a staggering £11,339 has been donated . THANK YOU so much to everyone who donated to our appeal.***

We have sent over £14,500 to date to our four partner organisations, namely:

- **Shenpen (Rangjung Yeshe Shenpen)**
- **Grassroot Movement in Nepal (GMIN)**
- **Mountain Heart Nepal (MHN)**
- **Sapana Village Social Impact (SVSI in Chitwan)**

All of these partners have worked tirelessly to make up food parcels and distribute them to the most needy, in collaboration with the local ward office of each district. The areas covered are in the Kathmandu Valley, Bhaktapur, also Makwanpur and Nuwakot districts in the north and west and Dang in the far West. We also funded 3,547 hot meals with GMIN to migrant workers in the valley.



*MHN encountered landslides due to heavy rain on their epic 9-hour journey to Makwanpur to bring food relief*

Altogether, we funded upwards of 550 emergency food parcels, each designed to feed a family of 5 - thus feeding upwards of 2750 men, women and children for two weeks.

Each food parcel contained 25kg of rice, lentils, pulses, potatoes, flour, oil, salt and soap. Each organisation we supported made up their own food parcels, so the contents varied slightly - some added eggs or green vegetables, others potatoes, or a nutritional vitamin packed food supplement drink for children.

*Relief food parcel distribution from our partners on the ground*







*During the food parcel distribution and to the delight of many children, books from our 'Magic Read' programme with MHN were also given*



We also looked after our students – those who needed extra help for food.

We donated funds to Shenpen for the feeding the street dogs around Boudahanath who were also going hungry.

## Before Covid ... yes...there was a time...

### Education

All schools closed in March once the lockdown started. This meant our Tiffin meal programmes at MAV school in Kathmandu and Shree Secondary School in Chitwan are suspended until schools' resume. Shenpen redirected the funds CHANCE gives for the Tiffin at MAV to help some of the student's families during lockdown.

We have 23 students in schools, colleges and universities. Two graduate this year with Bachelor degrees, special congratulations to Sayun and Sonom. A proud moment for them, CHANCE and their sponsors who have seen them through from the beginning of their education!

**NEW** In January 2020 (This feels a long time ago!) - A new school wing of four classrooms for Shree Jivanjyoti Primary School which is located on the hilltop in Hasipur on the western side of Surkhet. This will be our 5<sup>th</sup> school building, supporting the brilliant organisation GMIN, this being their 44<sup>th</sup> school!

The school was established in 1987, made up of 3 blocks consisting of 10 classrooms.

The original structure was deemed unsafe and was knocked down and pushed back to allow more room for a playground.

The school will cost £8,750. Last year, Peter and Rosy Gent from London funded a new school wing at Sanney School which I visited last November. In January 2020 they supported us again with a donation of £5,500, (including gift aid). Back in October 2019, nine fantastic guys raised a magnificent £6,085 for CHANCE projects by trekking to Everest Base Camp. They are delighted to know that thanks to their tremendous efforts, we used £3,250 to make up the shortfall needed to complete the school building.

There are 244 students at the school which runs from nursery to Grade 8. The whole community is ready to participate and support by giving free labour and provisions and resources such as stone, wood and water to successfully complete this project. The ground cleared, the work force ready and willing and then.... Covid-19.... and now the monsoon!

The construction will start as soon as lockdown is lifted and it's safe to do so. It will be completed and fully operational this year.



*The original school wing which has been knocked down.*

**New** We also donated books and soft toys to Nema Academy, situated high in the mountains, a 6-hour drive from Kathmandu. The school was about to close but was rescued by Bimila who helps Shenpen, and her sister. A new school building is planned. I donated books from our 'Magic Read' programme with Mountain Heart Nepal for the 23 children at the school.



*Children from Nema Academy*

## **HEALTH – Siddhasthali Rural Community Hospital - Hetauda – update**

'The name Siddhasthali 'Siddha' means enlightenment and "thali" meaning a place in Sanskrit. Hence the hospital name 'Siddhasthali' means the place of enlightenment. The idea behind the word Siddhasthali is that whoever/professionals, who wish to become great among you and have a meaningful life 'enlighten' may wish to come and spend time and skill in this hospital.'

The new community 15-bed hospital has all the permissions needed to commence building and a ceremony took place in March, just before lockdown, with the Mayor laying the first foundation brick.

Then the migrant workers returned to India or their villages and the project is on hold until the lockdown is lifted and the workforce return. The monsoon will add to the delay. However, I attach a link to a short 3D video put together by Anil Gautam showing the hospital and garden. Once the construction starts the building will rise very quickly and we hope it will open and be fully operational by next Summer. I plan to be there!

We are funding all 15 beds for the community hospital with funds donated by Eddie Forrester, Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking, Jim McAllister, The Rivers Foundation, Malcolm Pride, Rosie and Peter Gent and CHANCE. We also hope to secure funding for 15 laptop computers. The hospital garden, designed by Andy Sturgeon Designs and in memory of Jenny Bradshaw (which you will have read about in my Annual Review of 2019), will be funded by Jenny's parents with matching funds from CHANCE.

We feel very much part of the fantastic vision of Dr Aban Gautam, the founder of Mountain Heart Nepal whose brainchild the new hospital is. Through his sheer grit, determination and clear vision, from the dirt will rise a community hospital of excellence to serve future generations under his leadership which will serve the community of Hetauda. Dr Gautam sets a true example of what can be achieved with motivation, commitment, passion and dedication.

You can view the Mountain Heart Nepal video here:  
<https://www.chancefornepal.org/mountain-heart-nepal/>



## Rabies vaccinations

Our support for **Sneha's Care** continued for another year. We donated £1,000 for 1000 rabies vaccinations which took place during May and June.



## Burns Violence Survivors – (BVS)

The nutritional food parcels and 'Goody Bags' for the Kanti Children's Hospital stopped during lockdown but from the end of June, BVS were once more allowed access to distribute the parcels and gift bags, much to the delight of the children and parents.

## Papa's Home

Just before lockdown, Lalit, the founder of Papa's Home, arranged for 10 of the 23 children to return to their villages as the government stated that no more than 20 people could live in any single dwelling. Papa's had 21, plus Lalit and his wife and three children, their cook and her child. Lalit tells me the children will return as soon as the schools reopen.

## Fundraisers – massive thanks to:

**Andy Noble** raised a fantastic £1,880 from dyeing his hair purple. His employers, Bioscript, matched the £880 Andy had raised from the workforce.

**Jane Edwards** raised £675 from **NOT** having a 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party and inviting her friends instead to donate to CHANCE what a brilliant idea!

**Ali Moore** who visited Nepal a couple of years ago and fell in love with the country and its people. Ali wanted to help with the food parcel relief and through Virgin Money Giving raised £407 (including gift aid).

Well done to everyone involved and huge appreciation.

We would be delighted to hear from anyone who may be able to fundraise for us. With large gatherings cancelled, marathons, quiz nights etc, it has been tough to raise funds for our projects.

We pray for Nepal's economy to pick up and the daily wage earners back in work, to put food on the table for their family. Tourism is the biggest income for Nepal and Covid-19 has depleted that by as much as 80% obviously making a huge impact on the economy.

The tragic loss of life, broken families, the economic and social hardship caused by a pandemic-driven lockdown will live long in our memories and those of future generations in Nepal, here and globally.

The incredible support we have received from friends and supporters of CHANCE has, without doubt, helped us save many lives and highlights that we are all in this together. Thank you from the bottom of my heart to everyone who has supported us, it has been very humbling.

It is with a very heavy heart that I have had to accept it will be irresponsible for me to visit our projects in Nepal this year at risk of catching Covid-19 or bringing it back to my family!

I hope I am able to report positive news in my Annual Review at the end of the year. Schools open, hospital built, Covid under control.....I pray!

May I wish all of you good health and keep safe.

*Barbara*