

Staff Profile: Man Bahadur Chhetri

Dedicated leader is known for his work supporting the freed Kamlari movement

Man Bahadur Chhetri's resume spans two decades and lists an impressive array of skills and expertise: teacher, adult literacy specialist, program coordinator and more. It should also include *abolitionist*.

As regional manager of NYF's acclaimed *Indentured Daughters Program* since 2003, Man Bahadur was a frontline leader in the rescue of more than 12,000 girls from the practice of indentured servitude known as Kamlari, which has now been officially banned by the government of Nepal.

Now he leads our new *Empowering Freed Kamlaris* program, which is helping these former child slaves build a brighter future by providing them education, counseling, leadership training, job skills and new opportunities.

"Man Bahadur is a legend in western Nepal, where all of the Kamlaris are from," says Som Paneru, President of NYF. "He is admired and respected by everyone who has worked with him. And as any of the young women leaders will tell you, his work is central to the success of the Freed Kamlari Development Forum."

After devastating floods washed over western Nepal in August, it was Man Bahadur who led NYF's relief efforts in the particularly hard hit districts of Banke, Bardiya and Dang, the area that is home to the thousands of former Kamlari girls served by NYF. His team was the



first to reach families made homeless by the floods, and he supervised the distribution of survival kits to 1,200 families.

Earlier in his career, Man Bahadur was a coordinator for the Deuki Community Development Project, which works to end the system of child temple prostitutes. He has also worked as a teacher, an adult literacy trainer for the Peace Corps, and an AIDS prevention coordinator.

We are grateful to have such a caring and committed colleague as Man Bahadur Chhetri!

Freedom Loan Fund a Success

Thank you! With your help, we raised \$25,616 in just one month for the Freedom Loan Fund Campaign.

Girls rescued from the Kamlari system of child slavery are now free, and they're becoming powerful young women who are starting their own businesses with help from a co-op loan program funded by NYF.

The freed Kamlaris have formed 37 business co-ops and have helped over 750 young women successfully launch their own businesses. Now, with your donations to the Freedom Loan Fund Campaign, another 70 former Kamlaris will have the opportunity to start a business and make a new life.

NYF President Som Paneru recently presented a check for 2.5 million (Nepal rupees, that is!) to representatives of the Freed Kamlari Development Forum, the NYF-sponsored organization that operates the business co-ops.



Your gifts make good things happen

All of the wonderful things that you'll read about in this newsletter are only possible because of the generous support of donors like you.

Whether it's \$10 or \$10,000, your gift will immediately go to work to improve the lives of the children in Nepal — so please give as generously as you can.

\$100 helps send a village child to preschool for a year.
\$260 helps save a child from dying of malnutrition.
\$750 puts a bright young adult in college for a year.
\$860 puts a girl freed from slavery into vocational training.
\$1,900 sponsors a child at J or K House for one year.

Please use the enclosed envelope or donate online at: www.nepalyouthfoundation.org

Thank you — *dhanyabad!*



3030 Bridgeway, Suite 202
Sausalito, CA 94965
T 415.331.8585
F 415.331.4027
E info@nepalyouthfoundation.org
nepalyouthfoundation.org

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The Kids That Inspire Me

Dear Friends,

You have heard me jabber on about all the extraordinary children we serve. I've often described their harrowing lives before they came to us — heartrending stories of neglect and abuse.

What I haven't talked about often enough is how they've turned out and how utterly satisfying it is to witness their transformation from homeless waifs to confident and successful young people.

Long after they have grown up and forged their own paths in the world, they come visit me in Kathmandu to talk about their lives and introduce me to their spouses and children. As I sit in my garden chatting away with these capable, self-reliant young adults, I think back to the time they first came into my life and I am filled with gratitude and awe at what these kids have become.

I only wish you could be there to enjoy these visits, so you could see how your generous gifts have helped these children grow into such fine adults. Let me tell you about a few of them.

Krishna grew up as an orphan, and we met on one of my early treks in Nepal. Even before we launched NYF, I gave him a college scholarship. Now in his 40s, Krishna has spent his entire career teaching at a school for handicapped children. He visits me regularly with his two brilliant sons who both attend engineering school.

Laxmi was a four-year-old beggar at a temple when we first found her a couple of decades ago. If we had not rescued her, there's a good chance she would have been trafficked years ago. But now she's a college graduate and teaches at a private school, and she just came to visit me recently with her husband and cute little baby.

Then there's Chhoki. When we first met, she was a wild-looking little six-year-old girl who lived in a tiny village high in the Himalayas where the local school only went to third grade. We educated her through high school, and she then received a full scholarship to a prestigious college in New Hampshire. Chhoki will soon earn her degree in environmental science and intends to return to Nepal to help improve conditions there.

And there's Nirmala, who was a blind girl from a poor, remote village. We brought her to Kathmandu and supported her from the first grade onward. Nirmala earned a Bachelor's degree from an American university and has become a passionate advocate for the disabled,



appearing on Nepali radio and TV numerous times. She represented Nepal at the Paralympics in Athens, worked for several years with the United Nations in Nepal, and is now the executive director of an NGO that promotes the rights of the disabled. The disabled population of Nepal suffers severe discrimination in all areas of society, and Nirmala intends to devote her life to eliminating those barriers.

Nothing in my life has given me more satisfaction than witnessing the revolutionary changes in the lives of these and thousands of other children — all of which is the direct result of your loyal support over the years.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Olga Murray
Founder and Honorary President

Scholarship Program Opens Doors for Students

For children born into poverty, education changes everything

For poor children in Nepal, education gives them something that no one in their family has ever had: an opportunity that can lift them out of poverty forever. That's why NYF's scholarship program is at the heart of our mission. From kindergarten to graduate school, we offer a variety of scholarships to meet each student's need, such as the three programs highlighted here.



College Scholarships lead to lifelong success

As young child, Santosh Basnet never dreamed of going to college. "When I was nine, I was living in the streets and washing dishes for about a dollar per month," he says of his life prior to coming to live at J House. "Thanks to NYF, I was able to earn a BA and then go on to earn my MBA. Whatever I have achieved and whatever I am now, I owe to Olga and NYF."

Thanks to our caring donors, NYF provided 268 students with college scholarships last year, more than half of them girls. They study in universities in Kathmandu and colleges in rural Nepal and major in a variety of fields — everything from forestry, to computer technology, to medicine.

Our college scholarship program gives priority to girls, the disabled, and children of low-caste families, since these groups are particularly disadvantaged in Nepali society.



Education opens new worlds for disabled students

Traditionally, disabled children in Nepal are seen as a burden at best. Many believe the disabled are punishment for the

"past sins" of the family. Whatever the reason, disabled children have few options in Nepal. Only 30% of them are educated, while the rest are relegated to barren lives, unable to read, write or earn a living.

But when we see disabled children, we see future teachers, lawyers, nonprofit executives and more — because those are the kinds of careers that graduates of NYF's Disabled Scholarships are now enjoying. Education has transformed their lives, and their success is helping to change attitudes throughout Nepali culture.

With the support of donors around the world, NYF has served hundreds of disabled children since 1990, providing scholarships for 110 students in the past year alone. Whether they are blind or deaf, or are dealing with other conditions such as cerebral palsy, our staff finds the best opportunities for each student. If they can enter a regular school or college, we enroll them there. For other students, the best place is a special school program that brings them hope and independence.

Kinship Care keeps children with loving families

Many children in Nepal have no parents to care for them, but they do have grandparents or aunts and uncles who love them and would take them in if only they could afford the cost of raising a child.



That's why we developed the Kinship Care scholarship program. If we know there are loving family members who will care for the child, then we pay all of the child's educational costs and living expenses, including medical care. To prevent any potential conflicts, we sometimes pay for the education of other children in the household.

It's a win-win for the child and the family. Children stay in their communities and enjoy the warmth of their family while receiving a quality education. Families get the support they need to care for their children. And ultimately, the success of the children helps to lift the entire family out of poverty.

Ashok is one of our Kinship Care success stories. He was born to a Dalit family and was abandoned by his parents when he was a small child, but our social workers arranged for Ashok to live with his aunt. We're proud to announce that Ashok recently passed his 10th grade exams and is now attending college.

Proving the Strength of the NYF Community

Flood Relief Campaign shows what our donors, staff and volunteers can do

Dear Friends,

I will never forget waking up on the morning of August 15 and learning that western Nepal had been hit by devastating floods after several days of severe Monsoon storms. The initial reports from the Red Cross said that over 100 people had died, at least 150 were missing, and nearly 7,000 homes had been completely destroyed.

News of a disaster is always disturbing, but this was especially heartbreaking because three of the districts that were affected (Bardiya, Dang and Banke) are home to many of our NYF participants and staff, including thousands of the girls we have rescued from Kamlari.

But even in the midst of this tragedy, something wonderful happened. The amazing community of NYF donors, staff and local volunteers here in Nepal immediately pulled together and launched a highly effective *Flood Relief Campaign*.

First, our staff in the area talked with people in the community and determined that NYF could use its resources and connections to provide a rapid response. Then we reached out to our supporters around the world, and in just over one week our Flood Relief Campaign raised over \$32,000.

Within days of the flooding, NYF staff and local volunteers began distributing food and survival kits packed with essential items: tents, sleeping mats, blankets, pots and pans, utensils and more. We also provided some funding to help families begin to rebuild their homes.

Our distribution was organized in coordination with representatives from the Red Cross and the local government, which provided security to ensure the process was safe and fair.



For such a small organization, NYF has had a huge impact. By the third week of our campaign we had provided critically needed supplies to 1,200 families.

How did we do it? The same way we do all of our work. Our staff worked closely with people in the community to identify needs and develop solutions that really work. We collaborated with allies we have developed among government officials and nonprofit partners. And we also called upon you, our caring donors around the world, and you supplied the funding that helped the people in need.

It is so encouraging to see what a strong organization we have built together. I hope you know how much we appreciate your continued partnership and support.

With best regards,

Som Paneru
President, Nepal Youth Foundation

Charity Navigator and GreatNonprofits

NYF earns top honors once again for accountability and performance

For the eighth consecutive year, *Charity Navigator* has awarded Nepal Youth Foundation its highest 4-star rating for financial accountability and transparency. We are particularly honored because fewer than 1% of charities evaluated earn eight consecutive 4-star ratings. It's an important measure of our efficient use of our donors' gifts. You can get complete information and read our profile at www.charitynavigator.org.

And for the third consecutive year, our supporters have helped us earn five-stars and a spot on the "Top-Rated" list at *GreatNonprofits*, the leading online "consumer review" site for charity organizations. Thank you!

Here is a recent GreatNonprofits review from Julia Sweet, a donor who uses the online name "Fitnessmom":

"My 82-year-old mother and I went to Nepal for a month-long trek and to celebrate Mother's Day in the Himalayas. While there, we connected with NYF. We saw their

facilities (Nutrition, Boys and Girls Homes) and met the staff and children. How wonderfully amazing! The love and care the children receive is beyond words. I wish I could post my photos! There is so much goodness generated through their programs. The culture of the people is embraced, not overlooked. The love between kids and staff is so apparent... We were so impressed we would like to build a school with NYF once my children graduate and we are able."

You'll find dozens of reviews from donors and volunteers on our profile page. Just go to www.greatnonprofits.org and search for Nepal Youth Foundation.

