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**Spring 2021**

My dear friends and NYF supporters,

What a long, strange year it's been!

March 11th marks a full year since I left Kathmandu because of the pandemic. I departed with a heavy heart, worried about the children and all my friends, just as I had following the earthquake in 2015.

But this time, I need not have worried. In fact, this spring the NYF Family has a great deal to celebrate!

Our staff in Nepal has taken superb care of our children. Olgapuri has been on complete lockdown all year, and not a single child or staff member there has contracted the virus. We are proud that Olgapuri is almost self-sufficient when it comes to food supplies. We have cows to provide fresh milk, chickens for meat and eggs, and every inch of open land not devoted to recreation is used to grow organic vegetables – the mainstay of the Nepali diet. Recently, we have added several greenhouses, which will enable us to sell excess produce for the support of Olgapuri.

Beyond Olgapuri, **we have provided thousands of children with pandemic-safe learning alternatives and kept hundreds of children and families nourished through emergency outreach programs.** We have supported first responders and local nonprofits with psychological support and practical training from Ankur Counseling Center. And we have kept our promises to the children already in our care.

Scholarship recipients from kindergarten through medical school have weathered the pandemic with strength and determination, with some reaching incredible milestones during the crisis! For example, Som tells me **Bishnu Chaudhary just passed the bar exam, becoming the first Freed Kamlari\* (bonded child servant) to become a lawyer.**

Since her rescue from indentured servitude in 2004, Bishnu has worked tirelessly to advance

through school, and became a passionate, outspoken leader in opposing the kamlari practice. **Her aim as a lawyer is to advocate for girls and women in all aspects of the law** – a tall order in Nepal, where paternalism still reigns supreme.

Bishnu is just the first. Up next is Urmila, the leader and heroine of the anti-kamlari movement, who was indentured at the age of six and did not begin school until she was 18, against the advice of almost everybody. **She is in her second year of law school and intends to work to advance human rights, particularly women's rights,** after graduation.



*Congratulations, Bishnu, on becoming the first Freed Kamlari lawyer!*

Dear friends, I love sharing these stories with you because it is your generosity that has made these dazzling outcomes possible. **Each of these successes has been supported through the outpouring of steadfast and enthusiastic love from the NYF Family.** Our global team is truly humbled by the kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity we have seen over the past year as you have remembered the children of Nepal throughout this unprecedented health and economic crisis. **Thank you for fueling this amazing journey!**

With love and gratitude,

Olga Murray  
Founder and Honorary President

*\*To learn more about the Freed Kamlaris, please visit <https://www.nepalyouthfoundation.org/maghe-sankranti-2021-study/>*

# Lockdown Inspires New Project for Young Women

One year ago, just before the pandemic began, NYF was working to engage more women in our vocational education programs. We had seen that most of the young people interested in coming to Olgapuri Vocational School were young men—no matter how hard we tried to encourage young women to apply.

We reached out to families and learned that many young women were anxious about living near a big city like Kathmandu. Others insisted that even if they learned the skills offered—carpentry, plumbing, welding, and electrical—the pervasive culture of workplace sexism in Nepal would ensure they never truly advanced in a career. To these young women, the risks associated with these career goals were simply too great.

As we worked to design an enriched program especially for them, the pandemic arrived. Olgapuri Vocational School was forced to shut its doors until further notice.

That is when **the pandemic forced us to look at the problem differently.**



*Greenhouses like these are relatively inexpensive to build and maintain, and can provide an enormous economic benefit to women in rural communities.*

During the lockdown, a generous donor helped us begin building a beautiful group of greenhouses on the Olgapuri grounds. As I oversaw the progress, I wondered—**could we design a pandemic-safe vocational education program for young women that could bring greenhouse technology and training to their villages?**

**This is how the new SAAET Project was born.** Saaet means “an auspicious moment of starting a new journey” – and it stands for **Sustainable Agricultural and Entrepreneur Training.**



*Greenhouse farming increases the amount of annual growth a family can achieve on limited farmland. It also lowers the amount of labor required.*

Starting this spring, our greenhouse trainer will travel to rural villages to quarantine and then provide hands-on training to classes of 20 young women each. **Students will learn the basics of organic farming, nursery techniques, construction and use of plastic greenhouse and drip irrigation, budgeting, bookkeeping, and more.** By the end of the training, each woman will be prepared to manage her own greenhouse—feeding herself and her family with nutrient-rich vegetables, and often making extra income, even during a crisis.

Including the start-up materials for each girl's fully-functional greenhouse, the project's cost per village is \$7,500. **In our first year, we hope to bring the SAAET Project to five villages—or 100 young female entrepreneurs.**

I am so grateful for the loving support that has made this project possible during an unprecedented crisis. Your gifts are helping Nepalese young people build towards better health and brighter futures.

Dhanyabad!  
Som Paneru, President

## COVID Vaccines Arrive in Nepal!

Nepal has successfully secured COVID vaccines through donations from neighboring countries and is administering them to high-risk groups and essential service providers!

All NYF staff members at the Nutritional Rehabilitation Home and the New Life center have received the vaccine, and the staff at Olgapuri Children's Village are in the process of receiving it.

We will continue the Lito for Life program until this nutritional support is no longer needed in hard-hit communities. But except for Olgapuri



*In early February 2021, our Nutritional Rehabilitation Home staff members display their new COVID vaccine cards.*

Vocational School (which will require extra safety measures), all of our programs have cautiously resumed operations!

## Our U.S. Office is Moving!

Our U.S. team is excited to announce that we're moving from our Sausalito office to a beautiful space in San Francisco! Here's our new address, effective immediately:

**Nepal Youth Foundation  
1016 Lincoln Blvd, Suite 222  
San Francisco, CA 94129**

Please update your records and discard any old donation envelopes with our old address attached to ensure any mail reaches us successfully!



The new office, at the Tides Convergence, is part of a collaborative workspace owned by a nonprofit and reserved especially for nonprofits. A major perk is lower rent, which will allow us to stretch each thoughtful gift further than ever to support **Health, Shelter, Freedom, and**

**Education** for the children we serve!

NYF's U.S. team is looking forward to the day when we leave COVID behind. We're so excited to welcome partners, donors, friends, and other members of the NYF Family to our new home!

## Olgapuri's Culture of Growth & Self-Sufficiency

NYF President Som Paneru grew up on a family farm in Nepal's Gorkha District. Farm life taught him valuable life lessons about personal responsibility, teamwork, decision-making, risk-taking, and resourcefulness. Som hopes to share these lessons with the children at Olgapuri through the small organic farm located on the enclosed grounds.



*Crops on the Olgapuri farm include lettuce, green leafy vegetables, pumpkin shoots, eggplants, cauliflower, cilantro, and flowers.*

The Olgapuri farm is home to 19 cows and 129 chickens, so the milk and eggs consumed on the enclosed campus are all produced on-site. Nutritious vegetables are grown here, too, using

organic farming methods, and a brand-new row of greenhouses are helping to significantly expand growing options. Food not used by the children and staff can be sold at local markets, and Som hopes one day the farm will help make Olgapuri entirely self-sufficient.

Olgapuri children are not required to work on the farm, but they are certainly encouraged to connect with nature by doing so. Many of the children prefer not to participate, but a small group have formed a gardening club. The remaining work is done by staff members.



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Tanishi, age 9, grows healthier by the day at NYF's Nutritional Rehabilitation Home. Your generous gift helps cautiously reopen these life-saving resources in 2021!



## Founder's Day 2021

Please join us on Zoom for this *free* event

Thursday, June 3rd

6:30 pm PDT

To attend, please register at

<https://nyf.news/foundersday2021>

or call us, 415-331-8585

There are so many creative ways to ensure your #LoveWorks! Here are just a few:

- ♥ Join our **Legacy Circle** by including NYF in your will
- ♥ Ask your employer if they have an **Employer Matching Gifts** program - many do!
- ♥ If you shop through Amazon.com, make your purchases through **AmazonSmile** and select Nepal Youth Foundation
- ♥ Connect through the joy of giving by organizing a **virtual fundraiser** with your friends and family
- ♥ Share your favorite NYF blog post on social media and use the hashtag **#LoveWorks** - find great stories at [nepalyouthfoundation.org/newsroom/blog/](http://nepalyouthfoundation.org/newsroom/blog/)
- ♥ **Questions**, please call our U.S. Executive Director, Eric Talbert, 415-331-8585 or email us at [info@nepalyouthfoundation.org](mailto:info@nepalyouthfoundation.org)