



**BlinkNow®**



# 2020

ANNUAL  
REPORT



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## OUR MISSION

Changing the world by empowering Nepal's children. We do this by providing quality education, a safe environment, and through inspiring others.

## OUR VISION

A world where every child is safe, educated, and loved.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe that if given the proper tools and initiatives, people and communities anywhere in the world can be raised out of poverty.

*Photo Credit: Molly Hailey*





**A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDERS:**  
**MAGGIE DOYNE & TOPE MALLA**

Dear Friends of BlinkNow,

Welcome to the premiere edition of our BlinkNow annual report. Thank you for being on this journey with us, for your care, your love, and the incredible impact you've helped us make. Your dedication to empowering the children and women of Nepal is inspiring.

Thank you for your commitment throughout this unbearable year and for recognizing the toll this global pandemic took on the children, women and families we serve. You were there as we had to provide for our community in ways we never have before. Pivoting to distance learning without the luxury of the internet or tablets, creating emergency food banks to serve thousands of people, and taking the helm of a migrant crisis—none of this would have been possible without our family of global supporters. There were sleepless nights, constant changing of plans, and it felt like each challenge was followed by another. But through it all, we remained united, always remembering that we are stronger together, and we made it through.

While Tope and I take so much pride in being the founders of BlinkNow, and are often seen as the faces of our organization, I am even more proud of the incredible team we have built in Nepal and around the world. This team of nearly 120 amazing people put in countless hours and passion for our programs to make true community change possible. What started as the dream of just the two people has evolved into so much more. A shared dream and vision of a world where every child is safe and educated and loved. You are a part of this too.

From the Women's Center, to our safe homes, to our school, to our Health & Wellness programs, and sustainability initiatives. You'll see a reflection of our tireless team and the strength of our global family throughout this report.

Best wishes in months ahead,

Maggie & Tope



# COVID-19 RESPONSE

## MIGRANT LABOR SUPPORT

At the start of the pandemic, over 500,000 migrant workers returned to Karnali after being displaced from their jobs. Upon arrival, these weary travelers were held in rudimentary quarantine camps without access to food or water. One of our proudest accomplishments last year was quick mobilization of food, water, medical equipment, and other essential supplies. Through partnerships locally and abroad, we served 26,189 migrants.



## GUARDIAN SUPPORT

As the volume of returnees decreased, our team focused our efforts on our community's immediate needs. After an extended lockdown, many people were out of work and unable to provide food for their families. We launched a first-ever Kopila Food Bank and provided 2-week bundles of rice, dal, salt, oil, spices, and veggies to those in need.



**42,989+** pounds of rice and lentils distributed to 342 Kopila families



**23,000+** hot nutritious meals served at migrant labor camps



**78,786** in-kind items given to migrant laborors including 37,325 masks



**18,868+** calls made to monitor mental health, physical health, economic conditions, and educational progress





## HOME & FAMILY

Our children's home provides a safe, fun, and loving home for 40+ children who have lost their family or their family's support.

This year we celebrated a big family reunion as many of our young adults returned home to quarantine. Our days consisted of remote learning, music and art classes, tuition support, dance, and satsang. We welcomed a new infant to the family. We also congratulated 7 of our home kids who completed upper secondary education. One enrolled in the prestigious Indian Army and the others are now pursuing further education.



**468** extra tutoring hours given to our home kids



**7** Kopila kids enrolled in upper secondary school



**2** kids safely reconnected with root families



### SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS

D has been living in the Netherlands since September, after being selected to participate in a global education program. This past year we have seen his capabilities soar as he adjusts to life outside of Surkhet, makes new friends, finds new learning paths, and discovers opportunities for his future. He was also chosen to participate in a sustainable development summer internship program in Germany. D, we are so proud of you!



# QUALITY EDUCATION



The Kopila Valley School offers free high-quality education to needy students. Distinct from many schools in Nepal, KVS offers the best education in the area through comprehensive and ongoing training of local teachers, a commitment to literacy, an innovative place-based active learning program, and a leading-edge, sustainable “green” school campus.

**COVID-19 closures and restrictions required innovating the way we teach.** With less than 20% of our students having access to a computer or internet, we needed to get creative. Through specially-designed printed learning materials, we were able to cover 100% of the curriculum for the vast majority of our pupils, doing our part to ensure no student was left behind. Our materials integrated teaching techniques for all types of learners.



**85%** all-time graduation rate, a striking improvement from neighboring schools



**90%** of students received all learning packets



**51** hours of advanced-skills training for teachers given



## HEALTH & WELLNESS

Our health and wellness clinic provides basic education and preventive and primary care to the students and community. The clinic offers immunizations, proper nutrition, clean water stations, dental hygiene, vitamin administration, and regular de-parasitizing.

In 2020, our team of seasoned experts in social work, counseling, and healthcare led COVID-19 efforts by caring for the unique physical and emotional needs of our students, families, and staff. This team laboriously tracked, assessed, and addressed a wide array of needs such as food support and grief processing. Through check-in calls and support of our teachers, we achieved our goal of keeping our community relatively safe.



**890** virtual  
counseling  
sessions



**536** diagnoses  
and clinical issues  
treated



**57** outside  
referrals to partner  
health specialists



**41** home visits  
to provide psycho-  
social support



### THE VALUE OF CHECK-INS

During a teacher check-in call, B, a class 4 student, shared that he was experiencing frequent headaches, vomiting, and sometimes partial unconsciousness. The teacher quickly informed the Health and Wellness team, who assessed that a home visit was impossible due to B's rural location in a distant village. Instead, we referred the family to a proper treatment center to help his condition, which was rapidly becoming a serious concern. We arranged transportation and reimbursed the medical costs to ensure neither prohibited treatment. B underwent several blood tests, a CT scan, and neurological consultation, which pointed to a severe case of meningitis. After a week of treatment, B regained consciousness and started to eat. He is now fully recovered and back to studying. We send our deepest thanks to all the doctors and staff members who supported B's recovery.

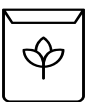


# SUSTAINABILITY



Environmental sustainability is deeply integrated into all that we do. By becoming the first green school in Nepal, we inspire students to be environmentally conscious, grow food that promotes soil health and nutrition, and advance conservation and environmental dialogue.

This year we focused on deepening our thought leadership in sustainability and eco-schooling. We formed our very first alliance of several Nepal-based partners whose missions align with our desire to expand environmental education in Nepal. Leveraging partnerships, we exposed our students to the global and local context of environmental protection. We also trained our local farming groups on traditional, environmentally-friendly practices.



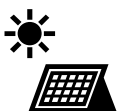
**254** seed packets were distributed for home gardens



**28** farmers are connected to our farmer's guarantee group



**60** hours of student training opportunities



**7.5** megawatt-hour solar electricity produced, enough to fuel +2,400 homes/hr

**CULTIVATING CHANGE** “Cultivating Pathways for Sustainability was an amazing experience and I feel grateful towards Shelburne Farms for providing this opportunity. I enjoyed discussing sustainability with people around the world. I got to understand SDGs in our local context... During the project research phase, I found a lot of human and environmental problems in my community and I got to know how important it is to take care of our environmental health even for our own health as well. This one year program made me realize that I as an individual too can contribute for global sustainability by working from my own school and the community.”

-J., Class 10



## CAREER READINESS



Our Futures Program provides support and education to young adults who have graduated from KVS, helping them determine their onward path. We support students with services until one year post bachelor's degree (where applicable).

This year we continued providing personal development, networking opportunities, scholarships, and guidance services despite physical closure. The 27 new 10th grade KVS graduates received scholarships to +2/vocational programs specializing in areas like pharmacy, nursing, hotel management, agriculture, and dance. Our 12th graders eagerly awaited their board exam results to determine next steps for their university enrollment.

**EMPOWERING NEW VOICES** A. studies film-making in Kathmandu. He hopes to make documentaries that highlight Nepal's social issues. "Through my documentaries, I want to give voice to those who can't speak up. I want to raise awareness on social issues that not many people speak about. I was lucky to get an education, but many other children are not... I want to support other children like myself, so they don't miss out on life." Along with his studies, A. currently works as a Production Assistant in a Nepali film company, gaining valuable experience in the craft of filmmaking.



**162** active program participants



**100%** of 10th grade KVS graduates started upper secondary



**74** students received upper secondary scholarships



**20** personal growth workshops



# EMPOWERMENT



The Women's Center uplifts community members through personal empowerment, vocational skills and entrepreneurial training. We currently offer a safe space to build community with each other, complete training, obtain counseling, and develop business acumen.

We started the year graduating 30 women in our vocational programs and 44 in business courses. Just as we were preparing to start two new advanced trainings, the impending pandemic hit, closing the center for the season. Our team pivoted to remote check-in calls and counseling. All our graduates had access to the Kopila Valley food bank, which ultimately served 27 families during the heart of the lockdown.

**ECONOMIC FREEDOM** M. recently graduated from our 6-month beauty parlor training. Since M. became a mom at 18, it was important to her to continue to learn, support her family, and remain active in the community. After the program M. shared, "I used to feel stressed due to my problems before but I am now empowered to solve them. I have the skills to speak confidently, and make supportive friends." After graduating, M. started her own profitable beauty parlor where she can continually pay back her business loan and earn respect from her family.



**4** shops and at home businesses launched by alumni



**44** women graduated from business or vocational training



**92** women pre-registered for our new literacy training program



**3** community research & needs assessments



## SAFE HOUSING



The Big Sister's Home supports select KVS youth girls who are at-risk for child marriage, trafficking, and physical or sexual abuse at home. These girls have faced many challenges and need special psycho-social support.

Our focus this year was staying safe! We kept our home open to continue to provide a positive living environment. Our big sisters spent the year participating in empowerment courses and online classes, cooking delicious foods, and strengthening their sisterhood. While we enforced strict lockdown policies, we ensured communication with family and outsiders as appropriate through the year and continued our counseling sessions virtually.

**BUILDING DREAMS** “BSH is a happy place for me, it has been the greatest opportunity to change my life. After I got enrolled here, I got to know myself. Unknowingly, I was improving myself; I improved my grades, my behavior and the way I used to see the world. The life skill development workshops and counseling sessions have taught me social skills, anger and stress management, and how to live in a community/family in peace. My family, who used to scold me all the time, are proud of me and that is the greatest achievement of my life. If I wasn't at BSH, I would have married by now. But today I have a dream, the dream of being a Nurse; I am confident that I can fulfill my dream.” - E., Class 10



**2** sisters were reunited with their immediate family



**2** new sisters were welcomed into our home



**17** young women supported over time



**10** empowerment workshops conducted



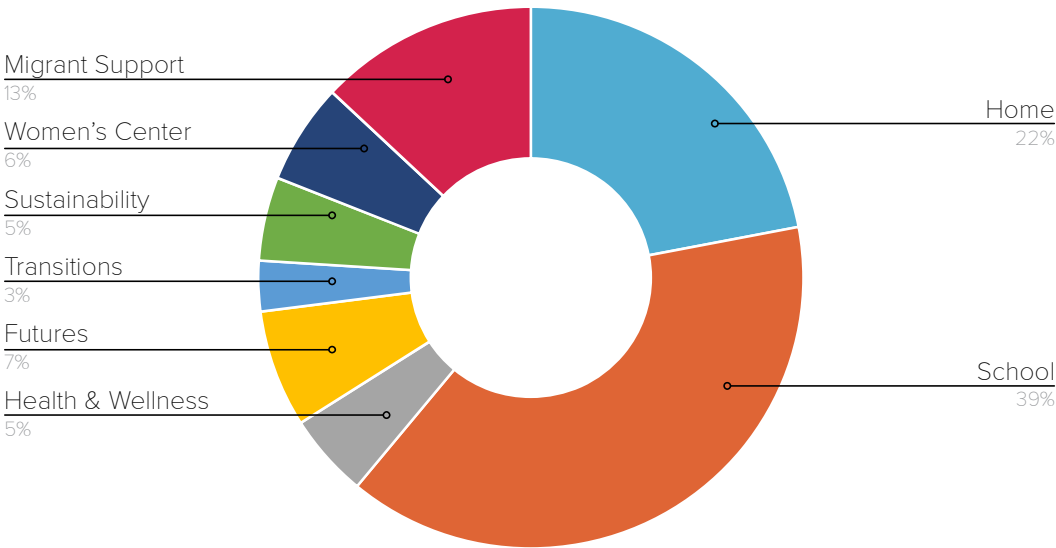
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

*“We’d like to share our deepest gratitude to our donors. Your dedication afforded us the opportunity to continue to provide program support, provide extra support for our community, and keep 100% of staff employed through the pandemic.” - Accounting and Program Teams*

## OPERATING EXPENSES (in thousands)

Program Services	\$1,898
General & Administrative	380
Fundraising	144
<u>Total Operating Expenses</u>	<u>\$2,422</u>

## PROGRAM SERVICES SPENDING BREAKDOWN



## A special thanks for our 2020 board members:

**Maggie Doyne**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Robert Vogel**  
Chair

**Claudia Mott**  
Treasurer

**David Sager**  
Vice Chair

**Melissa Brown MD**  
Secretary

**Andy Furlong**  
Member

**Eileen Manning Quick**  
Member

**Jagdish Upadhyay**  
Member

**Jeff DiLollo**  
Member

**Leslie Shaw**  
Member

**Libby DeLana**  
Member

**Steven Buffone**  
Member

**William Bartzak**  
Member



“IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, WE CAN  
ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

- Maggie Doyne, Co-founder



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