



**BlinkNow®**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

---

## **2021**





# Contents

- 2 A Note From Our Founders
- 3 Program Updates
- 10 Financial Update
- 11 Board Members



## 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.





## A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDERS:

Maggie Doyne & Tope Malla

Dear Friends of BlinkNow,

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

Everything reflected in this report was made possible by our global family of supporters. In 2021, this included donors from 126 different countries, and not a day goes by that we are not overwhelmed with gratitude for every one of you. This past year you've sent kind notes and words of support, you've cheered on our children as we shared their stories on social media, and you've given generously to help support our work. Your donations have never meant more than they do now as we've had to find creative ways to continue supporting the children and families we serve, as well as parts of our larger Surhket community. Now more than ever, your donations mean meals on tables, books in hands, and children tucked in safely at night. Thank you so much for being a part of our success.

We must also recognize our incredible, dynamic team, who has stepped up in ways never imagined when we first heard whispers of a virus spreading across borders. We've always known our strength lies in our staff and our connection with our community, this year confirmed how true this is. The evidence can be seen across all areas of our programs.

From the Women's Center to our homes, to our school, to our Health & Wellness programs, to our sustainability initiatives, we're excited by the progress we've made this year. Together, we're building a better world for the children and women of Nepal, and we are so glad to be on this journey together with you.

Best wishes in 2022,  
Maggie & Tope



# HOME & FAMILY

Kopila Valley Children's Home provides a safe, fun, and loving home to over 30 children who have lost their family or their family's support. Our Big Sister's Home helps KVS youth girls who are specifically at risk of child marriage, trafficking, mental health issues, and physical or sexual abuse at home. We provide a safe living space and special psycho-social support.

This year, both homes focused on staying safe and healthy and providing support for distance learning during school closures. Our big sisters spent the year doing empowerment courses, counseling sessions, cooking delicious food, and enjoying sisterhood. At the children's home, staff worked hard to help our kids with their distance learning during the lockdown and school closure periods and we made upgrades to our space to provide creative ways to entertain our kids, like adding a new playground.

**34** 

children currently in  
our Children's Home

**6** 

new kids calling  
Kopila Valley  
"home"

**9** 

girls kept safe in our  
Big Sister's Home

**4** 

Big Sisters  
reunited with family

**9** 

home kids  
transitioned to  
independent living

**16** 

staff members  
surrounding our  
children with love

## SUCCESS FROM OUR HOME



### THE YOUNGEST CHILD

S, the youngest child at the home, was just two months old when she joined our family. She was born in Humla, a particularly remote area of western Nepal. Tragically, both her mother and elder brother died shortly after S's birth, in part due to a lack of access to health facilities. S's father had difficulty coping with two family deaths and became unable to care for her, so she was brought to the home. She is now almost two and is walking, talking, and thriving at the Children's Home.



### LOCKDOWN HIGHLIGHT

"We noticed that during lockdowns this year, the bonds between the kids strengthened, and they became more caring, helping each other out. The older ones, for example, took roles in helping the younger ones with homework and distance learning. They all really matured and got to know each other on a deeper level. We thought it would be really difficult, but surprisingly, this time the lockdown went by so quickly."

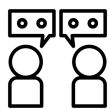
— Sachyam,  
Live-in Home Caregiver



### A'S STORY

When A. came to live at the Big Sister's Home, we learned of the unhealthy relationships in her family. She had a poor support circle and signs of depression. We worked with A., through counseling and empowerment sessions. Another team worked with the family. Seven months later, A. was reintegrated into her family. We see the relationships in her family are stronger, and A's behavior changed: she is focused on her studies and is positive about her life. She is now applying for nursing college.



**1,550****in-person clinic visits  
conducted this year****425****individual counseling  
sessions given****200+****home visits made by our  
Health & Wellness Team****180****food deliveries made**

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

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

In 2021 our health and wellness team undertook a huge role in safeguarding the physical and mental health of our students, staff members, and community amid the ongoing pandemic. The team made thousands of check-in calls, conducted hundreds of virtual counseling sessions, ran vaccine awareness campaigns, delivered food to families, and visited 40+ homes that needed support through family conflicts.



### VACCINES

Traditional beliefs and unfounded rumors about side effects contributed to vaccine hesitancy in the community. Our health team participated in awareness campaigns and helped reassure people about the importance and safety of the vaccine.

### GIVING BACK

In November, our health and wellness team ran a blood drive camp in partnership with the local Red Cross. Teachers, staff, and students all participated in the camp, and altogether 29 pints of blood were collected!



## FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Serving vulnerable populations means many of our students and their families face hardships at home. These include abandonment, terminal health issues, low economic status, trauma, substance abuse, and violence. Through our new Family Development Program, we assess family needs, create action plans, and find the right interventions to help the family move ahead. This year, 21 families were identified and participated in the program and 18 have already graduated and been phased out.



### GM'S STORY

Originally from Kalikot, recently divorced mother of three, GM lives in a rental flat in Surkhet. Two of her children attend KVS. When she first came under our care, she was suffering from depression and grappling with family and financial difficulties. Unable to hold a job, she spent her time hiding from the world in a dark room. Feeling helpless and out of options, she planned to take her children out of school and go to India. Under the FDP, our team made home visits and conducted both individual and family counseling sessions. We helped GM plan for the future. Her confidence grew with each step and she found a job in Kopila Valley Women's Center; a milestone to help stabilize her and her family. Now, her kids are still in school and she smiles a lot. She says these days, she feels happy and motivated.



# QUALITY EDUCATION



Kopila Valley School offers free high-quality education to disadvantaged 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. There are currently 410 students and 69 staff members.

Amid the lingering pandemic this year, KVS moved between in-person and distance learning. Equipped with lessons learned from last year, including an enhanced distance learning framework and strict safety-first reopening protocols in place, we were able to reach nearly all our students and teach 100% of the curriculum. What a success!



**61**

new students enrolled in kindergarten



**388**

students graduated to the next grade level



**100%**

of curriculum covered, despite the closures!



**25**

students admitted to class 11



**50+**

hours of teacher training delivered



**10**

topics covered in staff development training

## FOCUS ON DIGITAL LEARNING

Persistent school closures and the increasing global digital divide inspired us to develop our digital learning program. In July, we launched a pilot program; students and teachers of class 9 and 10 were each equipped with a device to use at school and at home. We also transitioned most of the secondary learning program to an online format during school closures, supplying students and teachers with devices and data packs to help them access the internet.



## EXPANDING THE MINDS OF OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF



### STUDENT STORY

"The pandemic time was very difficult for me. At school, I struggled with some major subjects so I attended classes in the learning lab. Then, due to school closures, I had to depend on distance learning packets to continue with my studies. It was very challenging. Sometimes I would call my teachers to get help in math and science. My learning lab teacher helped me with the learning packets. Though the school was closed, I learned a lot. Now the schools are open and I feel very happy to be back at school. I love to be in my regular class and in the learning lab. I want to improve. I like playing futsal and drawing."

— KS, age 10 Class 5 (Learning Lab Student)



### BUILDING SUPPORT

We know that students are more likely to be successful if they have support at home. Our intentionally-designed program for guardians of new students aims to develop these relationships and provide tools for creating positive home support. The program launched this year to new families and covered topics like promoting development and behavior through positive attention and play, effects of household violence and stress on child development, ways of decreasing parental stress and anger, empathetic communication skills, non-violent discipline strategies, family finances and budgeting, and nutrition and health.

For the first time, our annual teacher professional development course was launched virtually. Over 3 months, teachers received up to 50 hours of training providing a great opportunity to develop digital teaching and learning skills. Topics included project learning, place-based learning in math and science, gardening across the curriculum, new teacher induction, English speaking strategies, early childhood education and more.



### A TEACHER'S STORY

"I have been at KVS for three years. Before that, I worked at another school for 10 years. I thought I knew a lot about teaching. When I first came to KVS, I had a lot of challenges. I had no idea about computers, class management, lesson plans, or our students. English was so hard for me. But here there is lots of support and training for teachers, and slowly I have been working hard and improving. Now, I can understand English better and I am trying every day to practice speaking. I have been to the homes of my students and have developed deep knowledge about them. I know how to use Google classroom now and I am learning so much about sustainability. I'm proud to be part of KVS."


— Sagun Thapa, Teacher of grades 3, 4, 5 Science and Math




# CAREER READINESS & TRANSITIONS

Our Futures Program provides support and education to young adults who are nearing graduation until they are beyond post-secondary studies, helping them determine their onward path and next steps. We have a special Transition Program that supports children from the Home who are reaching adulthood and preparing to move out on their own.

Despite the closures and lockdowns, options for advanced study for KVS students have expanded in recent years, and we provide scholarships enabling our students to pursue their dreams in a variety of fields. This year, the Futures Program selected eight new Higher Education Fund recipients who are pursuing degrees in business, IT, and agriculture, and three students are studying hospitality. Most workshops this year shifted from physical to virtual and we turned internships and similar activities into research papers and projects.

**95**   
post-secondary  
students utilizing  
loans or scholarships

**19**   
students studying  
with Higher  
Education Loans

**68**   
students studying on  
Futures Scholarships

**4**   
transitioned kids  
receiving home  
stipends

**13**   
students on full  
scholarship through  
Kopila-University  
partnerships

**25**   
new class 11 students  
for our +2  
management  
program

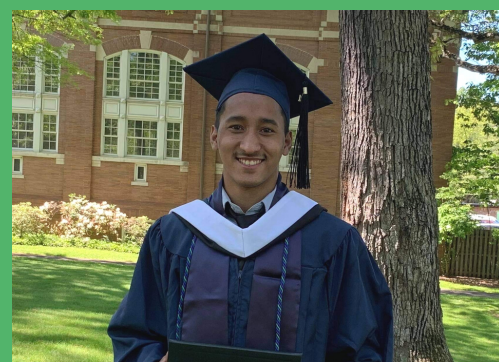
## GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS



### TAKING NEW PATHS

"Kopila Valley School has been like my home since I was 13. Last year, I graduated. It felt bittersweet to leave behind the school and head into a new city for higher studies. I'm pursuing a degree in hotel management. I see the hospitality sector as a way to help people create beautiful memories. The world is stressful enough as it is. So I wanted to study something that helps people relieve stress and recover their energy. More importantly, I wanted to make my grandparents happy. They tried their best not to make me feel my parents' absence. My memories of my grandparents are full of them feeding me delicious food. I want to repay them in the same way when I start my career in the hospitality industry. They will be the ones tasting the most delicious foods from my hands."

— Manju, KVS graduate, currently studying in Dang, Nepal



### JANAK'S STORY

#### THE HIGHER EDUCATION FUND

This past May, our first graduate received his diploma from a university abroad. Janak had received a full scholarship to study at Drew University in New Jersey, USA. The Futures Program helped with books, transportation, health insurance, and a small living stipend during his four years in school. He now has an internship in his field in the New York metro area sharpening his skills in finance and technology.



## EMPOWERMENT

**126** 

all-time graduates of  
weaving or beauty  
parlor training

**21** 

participants in our  
new electrician  
training program,  
including 3 women

**52** 

individual counseling  
sessions held

**8** 

workshops offered to  
our community

Kopila Valley Women's Center uplifts community members through personal empowerment sessions, vocational skills, entrepreneurial training, and business start-up funds. We offer a safe space to build community, complete training, conduct counseling, and develop business.

This year we formed new key partnerships, made check-in calls during lockdowns, dropped food at homes in need, and developed new programs targeting foundational skills and income generation. Our focus was on looking forward and mitigating the effects of the pandemic. We offered a new-this-year basic electrician course training, empowerment sessions, counseling, beauty parlor training, and literacy skill-building.

## EDUCATING & EMPOWERING THE WOMEN OF SURKHET

### FOUNDATIONAL SKILL BUILDING

With the goal of increasing the literacy rates within our local ward, we developed a literacy and financial management program targeted to female guardians of KVS students. Over 7–8 weeks, women with less than a 3rd-grade reading level learn basic Nepali reading and writing, numbers, and math. Twelve guardians participated this year and we hope to expand in the coming months.

#### GANGA'S STORY

I used to think “I am nothing” because I had never been to school. I faced a lot of challenges in my life. Fortunately, I got a job as kitchen staff at Kopila Valley nine years ago. While working, I wanted to read and write the names of the favorite foods of all the staff, but I couldn't. So when I got the chance, I enrolled in the adult literacy program. I learned to do so many things that I always wanted to do but couldn't. I am so happy that I can read and write basic Nepali words. I can write my name and sign confidently. Most importantly, I can read food menus, which was beyond my reach before.

— Ganga Tamata, Literacy Class Graduate



### BUSINESS START-UP FUND

We launched our first entrepreneurial business start-up fund this year and have already awarded funds to 8 recipients, all of whom have started their own businesses.



#### SAMINA'S STORY

“The skills, counseling service, and the money provided by Kopila Valley Women's Center have changed my life a lot. I used to think I could never be happy or earn anything. But I am happy and earning as well. Nowadays, many people come to me to convince me to get engaged in a women's group as they feel that I can do well in any type of work.”

— Samina, Women's Center Graduate & 2021 Fund Recipient



# SUSTAINABILITY



**26**

**fruit and vegetable varieties grown on our organic farm**



**300,000**

**liters of rainwater collected and recycled for irrigation, drinking, and washing**



**109**

**animals on our school farm**



**21**

**local farmers participating in our PGS system**

As one of our organizational values, environmental sustainability is deeply integrated into all that we do. Some of our sustainability initiatives include a place-based science and environmental learning program, an organic garden that supplies healthy food to our school lunch program, a rainwater harvesting and recycling program, and our state-of-the-art “green” school campus. We inspire students to be environmentally conscious and encourage environmental dialogue and innovation.

This year, our team strengthened our commitment to being a green school and organization. We developed connections within our community through a locally-focused quality assurance system, training local farmers in organic farming practices. We focused on training staff, program leaders, and teachers in sustainability values, setting the foundations for future programming; while continuing to improve sustainability education in our school. We used seed packets to educate students on life cycles, plants, and nutrition at home during school closures. We also restarted our very popular environmental ambassadors club!

## SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE

With a goal to share our knowledge and spread best practices, we held a 3-day training on organic permaculture for 20 local small-holder farmers. Months later, most were successfully using the mulching, composting, and crop rotation learned.

## STUDENTS STEPPING UP

"I used to see the Sustainability Ambassadors at our school doing different environment-related activities and I dreamed of being in the club too. So when my class was asked if any of us were interested, I immediately raised my hand. We had an orientation and discussed the activities. Having a chance to speak and share ideas was the best thing. Sunita Miss gave sessions on sustainability and we learned so many things, including the systems at our school. We also visited the landfill site of Birendranagar. This club has been the best thing this year for me and I am hoping to explore more."

— Sita, age 11 Class 6.

Jr Sustainability Ambassadors Club Member

## GARDENING FOR THE PLANET

Designed to offer all students hands-on opportunities to connect with nature, our gardening curriculum launched in July. Among other topics, students learn about seeds, plants and animals in our community, garden ecosystems, mushroom farming, and beekeeping. KVS students have a blast learning about the environment in a practical way.

## STAFF IN ACTION

"I am passionate about environmental sustainability and I always wanted to join a team that was creating a real impact. I joined Kopila just before the pandemic, which created a challenge. It was hard to make progress and I was frustrated because I had so many plans. Community outreach, networking, and collaborations were all put on hold. As the COVID situation eased, my work became much more satisfying. I have been able to work with students on place-based learning, with teachers on sustainability training, with the community on regenerative agriculture, and with farmers on waste management. Plus so much more. I have gained the confidence to lead projects and I'm proud of our results. If you are open to learning and exploring, nothing can stop you."

— Sunita Bhandari, Sustainability Coordinator



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

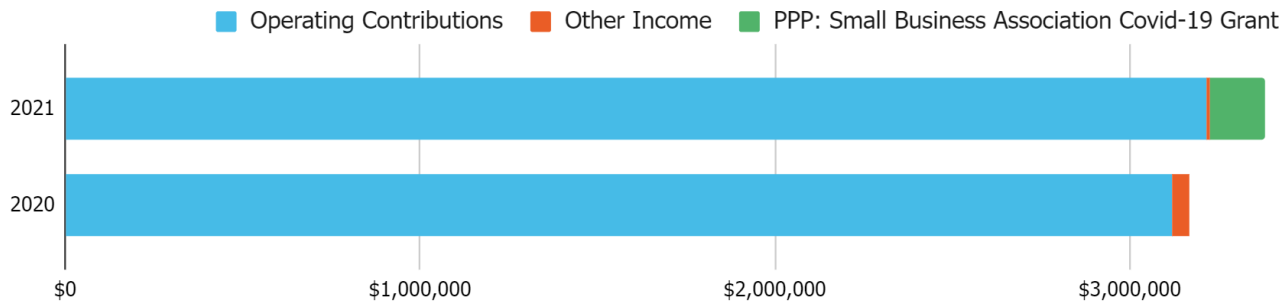
## 2021 REVENUE\*

Operating Contributions: \$3,216,300

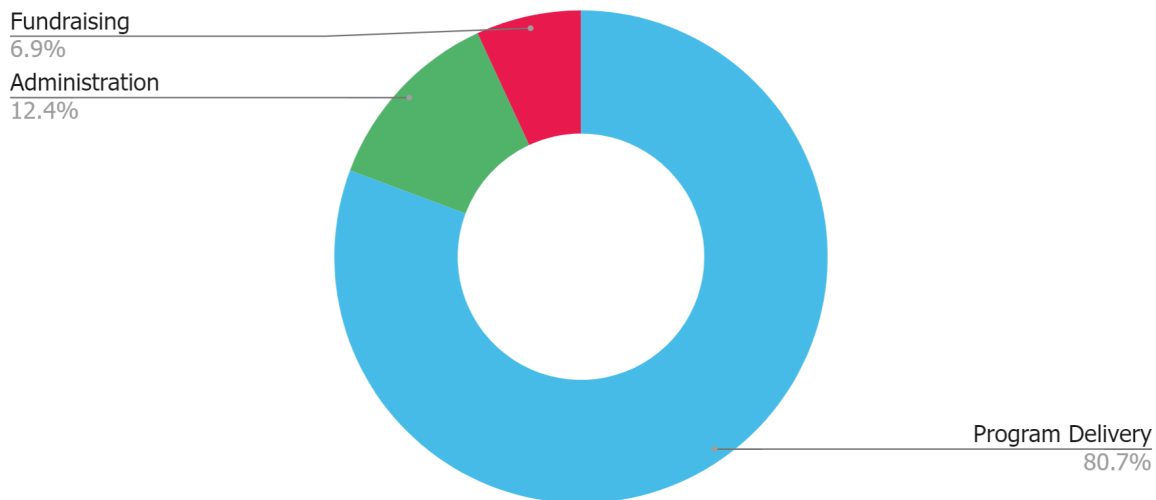
Other Income: \$9,000

PPP: Small Business Association Covid-19 Grant: \$158,300

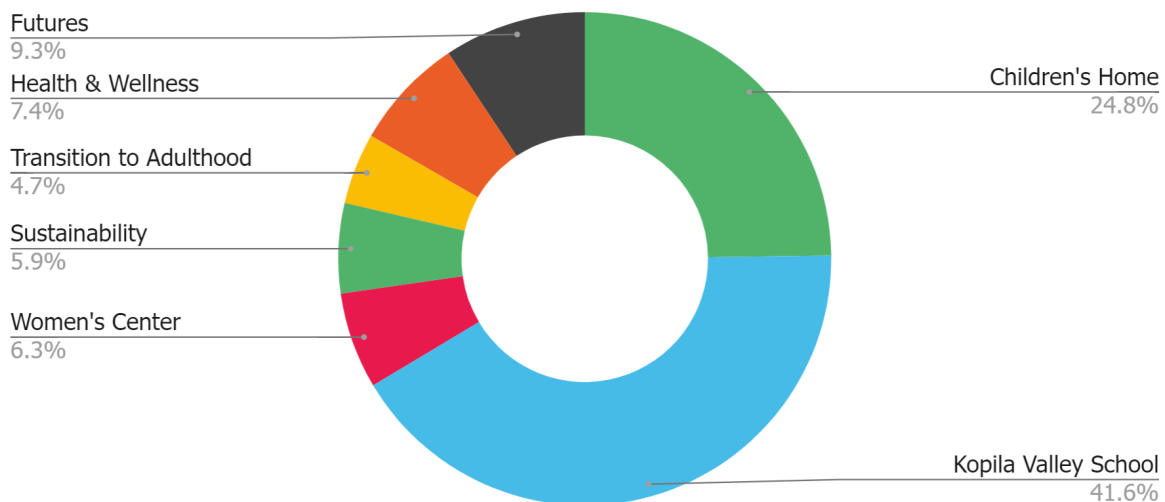
## YEAR-TO-YEAR REVENUE COMPARISON



## 2021 SPENDING BREAKDOWN



## 2021 PROGRAM SERVICES BREAKDOWN



\*The 2021 Audit is in progress and Audited Financial Statements will be available mid-2022.



# THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 BOARD MEMBERS

Maggie Doyne  
Chief Executive Officer

Robert Vogel  
Chair

David Sager  
Vice Chair

Claudia Mott  
Treasurer

Melissa Brown MD  
Secretary

Jeff DiLollo  
Education Committee Chair

Libby DeLana  
Member

Andy Furlong  
Member

William Bartzak  
Member

Leslie Shaw  
Member

Jagdish Upadhyay  
Member

Steven Buffone  
Member



BlinkNow Foundation, 35 Knox Hill Road, Morristown, NJ 07960, EIN # 26-0819262



 @BlinkNowOrg

 @BlinkNow.org

 @BlinkNow

 @the-blinknow-foundation

 [info@www.blinknow.org](mailto:info@www.blinknow.org)