PEOPLE WHO MADE THIS MAGAZINE POSSIBLE

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THEORY OF CHANGE

Teach For Nepal is a movement of young leaders who seek to end education inequity in Nepal through direct service in classrooms and in long term by working in areas that drive structural change.

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When the admission announcement from the United World College was announced, one of our students Sita Maya Tamang also made it to the list. She was accepted to United World College in Germany. Padam Raj Awasthi, one of the Teach For Nepal Fellows who taught her, called me to share the news with utmost pride and joy. He said, “I hope you can see that our work is paying off and we are surely moving towards our dream and our vision.”

I am overwhelmed with so much gratitude and pride in the fact that I am part of this movement where teachers are happier for their student’s success than the students. I am grateful to be part of a movement where hundreds of youth like Padam strive forward with a strong sense of possibility for a change - a society where all children have equal opportunities and possibilities for success.

At this time, I would like to remember the last two years of Covid. It was a hard time for all of us. Some of us may prefer not to look back at the previous years and start anew with fresh energy and enthusiasm toward our goals. But I want to urge the importance of not forgetting. It is so so so important not to forget - the suffering, the learnings, and the bare truth of our unequal society that the pandemic unveiled.

The lockdown resulted in 95% of our students being without access to physical classes at their schools. Although 52% of the students had some kind of formal learning arrangement in their own homes, and 29% had access to long-distance organized learning arrangements. But only 12% of the total students had an opportunity for online access to learning. Out of the 12% who had access to online learning, only 5% amongst them were from an economically disadvantaged group.

These learning interruptions for numerous students were putting our students at risk of dropping out of school, being forced into child marriage or being sent abroad for high-risk jobs.

But the crisis in our public education is not just about the recent pandemic. We should not forget that this crisis in our public education is not limited to times of pandemics. 80% of the students still attend public school. When we look back at the year 2008, the data shows that out of 100 students enrolled in grade 1, only 10 students had been capable of successfully graduating from grade 10, the SLC, which now is referred to as SEE. Only about 25% of students from public schools were graduating from SLC at that time. With the new grading system in place, we see that students from public schools achieving GPAs of more than 1.6 are very limited in number.

As we move forward, it is important to not forget these harsh realities. However, it is also important to remember that a solution is possible.

During the time of Covid lockdown, when we were exploring various alternatives to aid the learning process of the students, I remember getting an interesting call from a reporter. With good intention, she asked, “Did you find something that works for students’ learning during this time?”

Note from the CEO
The question was, “Did you find the magic bullet?”

During the pandemic, everyone was eager to find the magic bullet that would work magically and turn things around. A lot of us looked at technology for solutions.

At Teach for Nepal, however, we learned that if there is any magic bullet it was our PEOPLE. That was it. Our magic bullet was the 7th Cohort and 8th Cohort of Fellows, and the staff who relentlessly worked to ensure that learning didn’t stop for our students. Our magic bullet is the preceding six cohort of Fellows who have continuously paved a path for gradual systemic change. Their leadership has carved this movement of education equality. And leadership is what Teach For Nepal continues to believe in. The crisis of public education is not simple and linear that can be resolved with one magic bullet solution or one policy reform or one big intervention. The problem is complex, it is systemic and involves multiple stakeholders. And thus the only hope we have is in the collective leadership of people who are committed to a long-term movement to bring gradual and systemic change across the education landscape.

It is important to remember the lessons of the past and it is important to retain a sense of possibility towards change.

It is possible for all students to reach their dreams. It is possible for successes like that of Sita Maya to not be examples but a norm for all boys and girls in public schools. It is possible for them to become responsible citizens who take responsibility for their own community’s welfare. It is possible for them to have a sense of possibility towards change.

The only question in front of us is "Knowing that there is no magic bullet and that change is going to demand our long-term commitment and leadership, what are we as individuals and as a collective willing to do to strengthen our public schools so all children can achieve excellent education and become ideal citizens and creators and leaders of a just and an equal nation?"
No teaching alternative can replace a teacher’s physical presence in the classroom. With this realization, when the second wave of the pandemic settled somewhat, TFN Fellows rejoined their placement communities. After having put relentless efforts into making distance learning possible for their students during the lockdown, the Fellows had more to do. There were excitement and fear in equal measures – the excitement of returning to the normal Fellowship routine and the fear that things might never return to normal again!

In Malta of Lalitpur, Sudarshan Gautam (2019) and Ojashwi KC (2019) went back to the community with the urgent mission to help their students catch up on what they had missed. Of the many items on their long to-do list, boosting their students’ morale, which seemed to have weakened during the pandemic, was their foremost priority. The application call for the Global Children’s Designathon 2021 came as the perfect opportunity. The Fellows got all their grade 7 students to participate in it.

While selecting the teams of students to participate in the competition, Sudarshan and Ojaswi challenged the age-long practice of handpicking a bunch of academically high-achieving students. Each team was composed of students with diverse academic and extracurricular records and they complemented each other very well in their strengths. The team of Dhanaraj, Bipana and Sujit reached the finals with their Solar Halo (plow) project. None of them were acclaimed high achievers by academic scores but they brought creativity, craftiness and presentation skills to their projects and outshone others.
solution, thanks to their problem-solving habit the club had already inculcated more students and Fellows from other schools. Research findings on the club’s Facebook page made them accessible to science topics. He posted snippets from these conversations and interesting medicinal herbs and traditional technologies. With his students unable to constantly engage in learning, they researched and presented findings on projects that were unique and innovative. His students were intrigued by the projects and Interviews, which could run even before the school reopened. These projects Under the club, he led numerous projects like “My Research and My workshop. Thanks to their hard work and preparation, the team won the competition against 242 other participating schools under the ‘Clean Energy and Climate’ category, securing a prestigious award. Winning, indeed, significantly boosts students’ confidence, and also further motivates the teachers who go the extra mile to ensure that their students win despite all odds.

Ganesh Basnet (2019), a second-year science fellow from Gimdi arrived at the community to find his school still shut and children at home dealing with limited access to learning. He could no longer afford to wait for the school to reopen. Hence, he revived the Steam Janak Student Club which he had helped his students found in his first year.

Under the club, he led numerous projects like ‘My Research and My Innovation,’ ‘My Research on Traditional Technology,’ and ‘Phone Call Science Interview,’ which could run even before the school reopened. These projects were unique and innovative. His students were intrigued by the projects and constantly engaged in learning. They researched and presented findings on medicinal herbs and traditional technologies. With his students unable to join him physically, Ganesh also conducted and recorded phone interviews on science topics. He posted snippets from these conversations and interesting research findings on the club’s Facebook page to make them accessible to more students and Fellows from other schools.

When school resumed, Ganesh found that his students were rarely using facemasks, but it didn’t take much for him or his students to come up with a solution, thanks to their problem-solving habit the club had already inculcated.
in them. They led another project where the students first built a prototype of a facemask using paper and later manufactured real wearable facemasks using local cloth available around them.

Alongside principles of design thinking, science, technology, and research methods, Ganesh’s students learned about the value of persistence through their activities at the club. He recollects, “My students’ sense of possibility now allows them to believe that even when it seems they have exhausted all the options, there might still be a way out.”

In Parsa, Abiral Niroula (2020) went to the community to make preparations to ensure the students never had to struggle due to limited distance learning opportunities if another lockdown were to be enforced. He came up with the idea of building ‘Expert Teams’ of students. The idea entails that in the absence of teachers, each team selects one chapter from the syllabus, learns everything it has to offer, and delivers the lessons to other students.

It, of course, came with its own challenges. As a first-year Fellow, Abiral was yet to build relationships with the students and win their trust. But delaying his mission was not a choice he had. With the support of his Co-Fellow, he persuaded the students to take on the challenge. With constant reinforcement, the students formed and started working as ‘Expert Teams.’ They joined after-school workshops to research the chapters they had been assigned, collect resources and create teaching materials. Abiral shares, “When tasked to lead in delivering the chapters, they started asking more questions than ever.”

Abiral added, “With my team of ‘experts,’ I was able to do more for my students when the second wave of the pandemic hit. The Expert Teams of students were more accessible to me than others and through them, I could reach the other students.”
In Talamarag, Sindhupalchowk Fellows Manila Hirachan (2020) and Binod Chimire (2020) were disheartened to see students lagging in confidence. The students believed that without sound academics, they would not achieve anything worthwhile in life.

Since the school reopened months after it was supposed to, the Fellows had a lot to cover from the syllabus. However, Manila and Binod found it pressing to work on the students’ mindsets and morale and convince them that their low grades would not be the end of the world.

They started by founding Eco-Club and STEM Club. For the first time, the clubs were composed of not just high achievers. Instead, the majority were ones who had been struggling academically. Just as their students slowly started building their confidence through the clubs, the Fellows found out about the School Innovation Challenge launched by WWF Nepal.

In the beginning, the students showed self-doubt and disinterest. However, with teamwork and a gradual increase in commitment, confidence and hard work, they produced a prototype of a dumping truck, a single vehicle capable of serving not just one but two functions. The prototype included the functions of a vacuum cleaner for cleaning school surroundings and a waste collector for managing trash from the Melamchi river. Their hard work paid off. They brought home the trophy that various schools across the nation had competed for.

From gradually gaining self-confidence to being able to think about the conservation of the beautiful Melamchi flowing by their school, the students now seem more ready to pursue what they are capable of. Skipping the important step of building student morale and simply enforcing the conventional system geared solely toward academic achievement were definitely not what Manila and Binod had joined the Fellowship for.
In Marshyangdi, Lamjung Ramhari Sapkota (2020) and Bharati Newar (2020) witnessed the reflection of a typical rural society in their classroom. The unhealthy economic divide and caste discrimination were nothing new for them to witness. However, the unreasonable level of segregation practiced in the classrooms, supposedly, to aid the academic progress of the students was unacceptable for them.

They had an extensive syllabus to cover in that exceptionally short academic year. Moreover, it was high time they introduced peer-learning between the high achievers and the strugglers. Borrowing from the experience of Fellow Sabina Bista from the neighboring school, Ramhari and Bharati adopted ‘Student Cluster Formation and Execution’ as a strategy to enhance the teaching-learning process among their students.

In the beginning, the students seemed unenthusiastic and even dismissive of the idea of cluster formation. Many students, especially the high achievers, expressed their dissatisfaction over the ‘random’ formation of the clusters irrespective of the students’ academic scores. In contrast, the ones who struggled in academics acted indifferent. The Fellows, however, managed to stick to their strategy and test it with a variety of propositions. The clusters were scored and ranked based on their joint performance as a team. After realizing that individual academic scores did not matter while in the clusters, the high achievers stopped protesting.

What started as a short-sighted drive to earn scores for a certain group of students and a subject of plain indifference for another, gradually became a thriving space for all to learn and co-learn. Along with the progress in academics, came more positive impacts like stable attendance and compassion for one another among the students.

The Fellows’ investment in students’ teamwork that embraces diversity today also means their students are more likely to mature into aware and responsible citizens tomorrow. Bharati and Ramhari are proud of their meaningful achievement.

The pandemic might have come with its own challenges and it is still difficult to imagine schools returning to fully normal operations anytime soon. However, with such resolute and dedicated teachers, our vision for our students will be still achievable one Fellow, one student and one classroom at a time. One day, indeed, all children in Nepal will have access to excellent education.
The COVID-19 pandemic has had a strong impact on almost every aspect of society. During the pandemic, Health services, schools and colleges faced unprecedented difficulties. The government’s decision to close schools affected everyone in the education sector. Even in the face of such adversities, Teach For Nepal Fellows embraced the challenge to ensure that their students’ learning did not stop.

Over the last year, we shared stories of Fellows who went the extra mile. Following are more of more stories of Fellows who went beyond their classroom duties, pushed boundaries and redefined what it means to be a teacher.

In Focus

SHREYA THAPA, JYOTSANA PRAJAPATI, TAS GURUNG, ALISH GURUNG, AASHUTOSH PARAJULI AND BISHWAS REGMI
In Lamjung, among the placement communities, the Dordi village is located farthest from the urban centers and is the remotest village in terms of the telecom network. Shreya Thapa (2019), Jyotsana Prajapati (2020) and Tas Gurung (2019), TFN Fellows in Dordi of Lamjung, took the lead to ensure that their students’ active learning was kept alive with their project ‘Drishya Sikai: Education through Pendrive.’

Shreya recalls, “We conducted a series of surveys to determine the accessibility and availability of laptops, TVs, mobile phones and pen drives during the first phase.” After multiple discussions and a few design-thinking sessions, the team agreed that the best fit for Dordi would be the ‘Pendrive Project.’

Explaining the project, Jyotsana shares, “The idea was to prepare teaching materials and distribute content to the students using a pendrive. For this project, local teachers would work as resource persons downloading content via school computers and handing out pen drives to the students as their primary responsibility.”

With the pendrives, the students could study from the comfort and safety of their homes by plugging their pen drives into their television and watching the video contents made available by the Fellows and teachers. They could also review the lessons until they completely grasped them. Learning continued even when the world remained hostage to the pandemic.

Tas, the third group member elaborated, “We did have another option – the radio. However, two-way student-teacher interaction, which is crucial to the efficacy of the teaching-learning process, would largely be missing in the radio medium. Furthermore, lessons could only be broadcasted once, offering students no chance to recap and review. Without regular checks for students’ understanding, radio lessons would become a mere formality.”

Dordi and Cluster Prarambha

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Dordi and Cluster Prarambha
They collaborated with the local RJ Navaraj Ghimire – a friend and colleague, who helped them with the plan of broadcasting an education program on Tulsipur FM. The FM’s reach according to the station is about 300,000 regular listeners, among which almost four thousand students have been estimated to have benefited from the radio program. Understanding the medium’s limitations, the Fellows also engaged in student follow-ups using phones. Students reported that they were listening to the program and they engaged positively with learning check questions Fellows directly asked them.

“We had some audio lessons in hand from prior experience which we were able to use. With this effort, we improved our skills in creating engaging audio content,” shares Aashutosh. He recounts, “While creating mathematics content for the radio program, I was always doubtful if the students were listening to the radio program. Even during in-person classes, students tend to find Mathematics boring.” This time around, he had already met the students and had been able to form a bond in a short time, also allowing him.

More than 300 kilometers away in Dang, Fellows Alish Rai (2020) and Aashutosh Parajuli (2020) reached their placement school when the government announced the abatement of the second wave of the pandemic. The Fellows had resolved to make sure their student’s learning didn’t stop. They had been active members of Teach For Nepal’s radio teaching program during the first lockdown.

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to understand the students. He added, “They find it boring because they are not taught in a relatable way. I incorporated stories to make the lessons fun and relatable. The popular story of Einstein’s struggle as a child was one such story. I wanted to inspire them.”

As for Alish Gurung, he wanted to focus more on the upcoming SEE. His English lessons were more exam-centric. He stated, “This would not have been possible without the support of Mr. Navaraj Ghimire. He was our lead to the station. He helped us air the episodes.”

CUG SIM for phones for working groups provided by the local government further allowed us to reach students more effectively. Both agreed, “Having access to the CUG allowed us to freely reach out to our students. We followed up with as many students as possible after each lesson. Thus, we were able to bridge the student-teacher interaction gap to an extent.”

Bishwas Regmi (2020)’s time as a science Fellow in Shree Nawajagaran High School, Kutechaur was nearing its end. With only a few months left in the second year of his Fellowship, he was having a tough time deciding what to do next. The friends who had joined along with him were moving on, but he wasn’t quite ready. He felt that leaving would be unfair to the students and himself. “I haven’t done all I can,” he recalls telling himself. Much of what he wanted to do had been hampered by the pandemic. His students needed him. “I was not happy that the SEE Exams had to be canceled and replaced by internal evaluation only. It was my exam too. I wanted to be tested fairly through the regular system and see the outcome of the efforts I put on my students.”

He, therefore, decided to contribute one more year of his youth to the shared dream of excellent education for all children in Nepal. Bishwas is one of the very few Fellows each year who apply and are offered the opportunity to serve an additional year beyond the two-year contract for the Fellowship.
Having witnessed the harsh realities of the state of education in public schools in rural Nepal, Teach For Nepal Alumni Samden Sherpa (2013), Niharika Mainali (2015) and Dependra KC (2016) wished to continue working to improve the Nepali education system. Their Fellowship revealed to them the challenges and limitations faced by the vast majority of students in rural areas and they wanted to help. These youths, in their own capacities, continued to work to achieve the goal of providing access to excellent education to all children in Nepal. They still share this dream today as Teach for Nepal Alumni.

Samden Sherpa, a First Cohort Alumnus, has been working as the Education Development Manager at Classroom in the Clouds, a non-profit organization working to ensure quality education for students in the rural Himalayan district of Solukhumbu. During his time as a Fellow, he witnessed the harsh realities of the students in Ikudol, Lalitpur, a village some 20 kilometers from Kathmandu. This reminded Sherpa of his own village and his early childhood. It reminded him of how he and his friends were forced to leave their village and go to Kathmandu for better education.

During his Fellowship, Sherpa wished he could apply what he had been doing in Ikudol to his own village. Sherpa explained, "I wanted to give back to my community. The best way to give back was to ensure that other parents did not have to leave their locality the way my parents did for better educational prospects for their children.” So when Classroom in the Clouds offered him the role of Education Development Manager with the opportunity to work closely with his community, he gladly accepted it. Since then, he has been planning and executing the activities of Classroom in the Clouds in villages in Solukhumbu including his own.

Teach for Nepal Alumni in Education Leadership

Beyond the classrooms | कक्षाकोठा बाहिरी जीला वक्तौद्य

IN FOCUS

SAM DEN SHERPA, NIHARIKA MAIVALI, DEPENDRA KC
Classroom in the Clouds has three major avenues. It builds school-related infrastructure, fulfills teacher shortages and provides teacher training to primary-grade teachers in public schools in Solukhumbu. Classroom in the Clouds supports 11 schools and sponsors 20 primary-grade teachers to these schools.

Sherpa has been working since 2015 to help the women in his community realize their full potential and to establish them as role models for the upcoming generations. Sherpa elaborates:

“We focus on women empowerment. All of our sponsored teachers are women. In a patriarchal society, where men are more powerful and dominant, we want to establish that as teachers, women can be equally or even more competent than the dominant male presence in the schools. We want to change the narrative.”

Niharika Mainali, a Third Cohort Alumna, was an English teacher in Dhanusha. She was full of hope and excitement at the prospect of helping students fulfill their potential and get good grades. The reality, however, was beyond her imagination. She recounts,

We were supposed to get the students up to speed on the curriculum. The primary objective was to improve their academic performance. Completing the 10th grade SLC was the focus. However, I struggled a lot. Some students in Grade 9 and 10 could not even recite the alphabet.

She recognized the need for earlier interventions. Only once the students could read, could they build their comprehension skills. After that, she would be able to teach them communication skills. Only then, would she be able to help them write essays and stories.

In the absence of such foundational skills in students, Mainali didn’t feel like she had achieved much during her Fellowship. She shares that she was extremely dissatisfied with her performance as a teacher, “I wish I could have done more.”

Niharika मैनाली, (तिरंगो राज्यको) पूर्व मेला) विशेषज्ञ विभाग के। विद्यार्थियों को अभ्यास शामिल र उनमा रहने हो गरेको अथा प्राय सानो महत्व गर्न सक्नेको हुने भएको हुन्। विशेषज्ञ उडको अनौसंहित शैक्षिक उपलब्धिका साधन जाने हुने हो, तर केवल 10 को एकल शरीर पढने गर्न प्राचीन उड़ेको हो। वे, मैले घर बातमा गर्न पान्। केही 9 र 10 मा पनि अखाल पढन नयाँ विद्यार्थी विभाग हुन्।

वर्तमान क्राइटरिया देखि उनलाई विश्वास दुर्भाग्य निर्धारित गर्नु पर्दछ, अर्हिन्ने हारी पढन। विद्यार्थीहरूलाई अपनी पढाई गणिन बाट हुन भए र उनले उनका प्रारंभ शहर सानो सहकर नगर महत्व हुन । नयाँ प्रयास नयेका उनका समाप्त कृतिका साधन सानो सहकर नगर महत्व हुन । विद्यार्थी र कलाकार लगै भए र गर्न सक्नेको हुन्।

विद्यार्थीहरूलाई भाषा काठामो नैनिक अध्याय पठाउनु भएको कारण मैनाली आफ्नो देखि विद्यार्थीहरूलाई स्मार्क र चेन्नी गर्न भएको जस्तो लोगो लागिन। तिरंगो मोहिनी नैनिक अध्याय आफ्नो अनुभव र भाषाई सम्बन्धित कारण अभ्यासको लागै आफ्नो फैशनीनालाई स्मार्क र चेन्नी गर्न भएको जस्तो लोगो लागिन।
In 2018, a year after the end of the Fellowship, her woes gave birth to Changing Stories Nepal (CSNepal), an organization which works with primary school children whose academic achievements are below their grade levels. CSNepal mobilizes young Fellows to allow students lagging behind to catch up within a short time through after-school classes. Mainali shares, “10 days of Fellow training followed by 90 hours each of Nepali and Mathematics after-school classes has yielded amazing results. With just a hundred and eighty hours of dedicated teaching time, students who couldn’t read letters or identify numbers have now been able to read short stories and perform divisions.”

CSNepal currently works in Tulsipur and Hetauda in collaboration with the respective municipalities. After testing the students across the municipality, the 15 lowest-performing students from each school are assigned to one CSNepal Fellow for the foundational literacy and numeracy skill development course. In each project cycle, CSNepal trains up to 20 youths from the community who cater to 300 lowest-performing students.

Dependra KC from the Fourth Cohort had studied in a private school in Birgunj. Yet, when he came to Kathmandu post SLC, he felt the divide between himself and his friends who had done their schooling in private schools in the valley. Furthermore, in his Fellowship, he realized that the quality gap between private and public schools was even more significant. It was clear to him that his students, other than a few outliers, would not be able to compete with those from the private schools. Without major interventions, he could not imagine his students accessing equal opportunities as those from private schools in the valley. His students were at a huge and unfair disadvantage.

He recalls trying to inspire his students to dream big and reminding them, “If you want to reach somewhere, you will have to work three times as hard. It’s unfair, but such is the reality of our country.”
KC wanted to do what he could to end educational inequity. After the Fellowship, he partnered with Bibek Kapali, one of his friends from the Cohort, to open Dostel Living Learning Centre, a residential learning space for SEE (10th grade) graduates.

Composed of two words — dost meaning “friend” in Nepali and el meaning “helping hand” in Persian, Dostel now caters to students from public schools across Nepal who come to Kathmandu in the pursuit of higher education. It strives to offer a much more wholesome and engaging environment for them than what a regular hostel in Kathmandu provides. KC shares, “We provide guidance and mentorship and prepare students for life after high school. We try to reduce the gaps between our students and those from private schools through remedial classes and interest and skill-based training such as theater courses, writing workshops, etc.”

However, KC’s journey with Dostel has not been smooth sailing. The Learning Centre was forced into closure during the COVID-19 pandemic as the country went into a lockdown. “Unable to bear the rent and operation costs, I relocated the equipment, furniture and all other resources to my house. It was a difficult time. I could not decide whether or not to continue with Dostel.”

Even amid these uncertainties, Dostel supported its students who stayed back in their villages during the pandemic. KC asserts, “We didn’t want the students to drop out. We remained in constant contact with them. We also tried to engage them in various art projects during this time.”

As the pandemic restrictions were eased and the schools reopened, KC had a decision to make. He could not decide whether to direct his career on a different path or to reopen Dostel. He was at a crossroads until one night when he recalled, “All the promises I had made to my students during the Fellowship, the dreams I had for Dostel came flashing back to me. It was then that I decided, even if I had to do it alone, I will.” In February of 2021, he reopened Dostel. As schools and colleges resumed, Dostel soon ran at full capacity. Currently, it caters to 22 students from across the country.

Although excellence in teaching should be at the heart of all quality education interventions, we need leaders, creators and curators of change in other areas too, to revamp the system and reinforce its transformation. Sherpa, Mainali and KC might no longer be working directly in classrooms as teachers themselves, but they are zealously immersed in the quest to end educational inequity in the country. They, along with other TFN Alumni, continue to inspire their students, the next generation of TFN Fellows and leaders with their relentless efforts.
When the pandemic hit, Ravi Maharjan (2013), a TFN Alumnus and currently a Mathematics teacher at Panchakanya Secondary School, did not know how to continue his students’ learning. Although all schools were closed at first, private schools and schools with access to technology and funding soon jump-started their online classes. However, this was not the case for Ravi and his students. For him, the economic status of his underprivileged students and under-trained staff at the government school became barriers to taking learning online during the pandemic. Unfazed, Ravi decided to take the initiative to make online learning possible for his students. As an ICT member at Budhanilkantha Municipality and having undergone training there as a representative of his school, Ravi felt responsible. He started helping teachers and staff in his school to gain knowledge on digital learning, as well as on using emails and Microsoft Word so that online classes could be kicked off.

Pandemic was an eye opener for many teachers as virtual classes became key to continuing learning for students around the world. Many teachers in his school struggled with the technicalities of digital learning. However, resorting to blaming the system or the situation was not an option for Ravi. He shares that the 21st century teachers should keep looking for new ways to do their job and impart quality education.

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TFN ALUMNI IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

IN FOCUS
RAVI MAHARJAN, SRISTI SHRESTHA

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always wanted to work in the education sector and his Fellowship experience reinforced that intention.

The Teach For Nepal Fellowship gave him the opportunity to observe and understand the contexts and challenges of the education system. For him, a teacher signifies “a leader, who should have a deepened appreciation, understanding and connection with students and their lives. Being a teacher is not only about teaching contents, but also helping students understand their community. Classroom teaching must connect with their daily lives, culture and community.” He has been teaching as a Mathematics and Science Teacher at Panchakanya Secondary School in Budhanilkantha, Kathmandu since 2077 BS.

Similar to Ravi, Sristi Shrestha (2015), serving as the Vice-Principal of Bloom Nepal School since the beginning of 2078 BS, also struggled with teaching during the lockdown. Four days after she undertook her role as the Vice-Principal, the lockdown began. Lockdown meant that students were confined within the walls of their home and their learning completely stopped. To begin online classes became quite a challenge for both her students and teachers who did not have any experience with online teaching and learning. As a student of online classes herself in her graduate studies, Sristi knew about different online tools. So she decided to put this knowledge into use for her teachers and students at Bloom Nepal.

Although online classes began, Sristi and her teachers knew that just teaching the syllabus would not be very effective or enjoyable. So, they decided to hold extracurricular activities online as well. Students’ interaction and attentiveness to classes increased as they held activities like debate sessions, CV writing sessions and even a talent show. Students performed in front of the camera at home. Being able to bring small changes like this for her students and her organization is the reason she loves her job. Sristi says, “During the pandemic, I was able to give a platform to all students, create opportunities for them and ensure sustainability of the organization.”

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mean just being confined to the school, but also continuing to become a part of those who continue to teach, choosing to continue teaching does not have to be the true meaning of a teacher. Now, a teacher means much more to her — they hold the potential to create platforms, solutions and limitless opportunities to help students learn.

Her students were not her only focus. Her Fellowship made her aware that teachers’ well-being is crucial for quality in the classroom. At Bloom Nepal School, every morning as the teachers gathered for an online meeting to start their day from home, she started with gratitude sessions and feeling checks for her teachers. She believes that teachers’ well-being is as important as the well-being of students and can directly impact the quality of classes.

After her Fellowship, she realized her potential to connect with students and help them learn. She believes, “In the education sector, we can directly make an impact on someone’s life, and I felt like I could make that impact. The education sector could give me the chance to pave the way for opportunities for students.” For now, Sristi’s priority is to help students create their own future. She believes that teachers’ priority should be to understand the needs of their students rather than imposing their own perceptions and knowledge.

Fellows of Teach For Nepal hold the opportunity and responsibility of becoming a teacher for two years at a school in a community they may never have seen before. The Fellowship allows all they can to their students and their learning. They are motivated by those little moments of accomplishments like when the students are able to finally question the teachers or when they act proud of their own achievements.

For Fellows, does the role as a teacher end with Fellowship as they pack their bags and bid goodbye to the community they called home for two years? For many Alumni like Ravi and Sristi, the journey does not end. It means continuing impact in the education sector inside and outside the school. For those who continue to teach, choosing to continue teaching does not have to mean just being confined to the school, but also continuing to become a part of the system and serving as a role model inspiring broader change. After all, the change we imagine won’t be possible without hard and consistent work put into the mission day in and out from both inside and outside the system.
Since 2018, Surya Nepal, as a part of its corporate social responsibility, has partnered with Teach For Nepal to improve the quality of public education in Parsa and Tanahun. Most of the farmers and low-income earning workers of our country are in these regions. Thus, investment in ensuring quality education seemed the most effective way to build a socially and economically thriving community for the stakeholders. Surya Nepal believes that education ensures a gradual and sustainable transformation for communities, and ensures a better future. For this, a partnership with Teach For Nepal, as Surya Nepal puts it, became a natural fit.

Surya Nepal's business strategy is driven by a strong belief that its prosperity depends on the prosperity of the nation at large. Teach For Nepal is a movement of outstanding youth leaders who believe that their progress is not enough until our society-at-large becomes more equitable and just. This shared philosophy became a strong common ground for Teach For Nepal and Surya Nepal to embrace the partnership.

Surya Nepal is the largest donor to Teach For Nepal in terms of its annual contribution. This partnership has enabled us to work with 8 schools and impact the lives of 3000 students annually.

Here are some of our exchanges with Mr. Ravi Kumar Rayavaram, Managing Director of Surya Nepal Pvt. Limited on their overall CSR strategy, governing beliefs and values, and reflection on their partnership with Teach For Nepal.
What is the value and belief that drives corporate social responsibility at SNPL?

SNPL being a responsible corporate citizen emphasizes on contributing toward building the social, economical and environmental capital of the nation. We believe that our businesses cannot succeed if the communities around us fail. For us, CSR is not just for the sake of adhering to the statutes. It governs how we do our business, how we support communities around us, how we create value for our stakeholders, and how we give back to our community. We are driven by the belief that we possess the capacity to run and support sustainable programs, which can create a significant impact thereby generating and improving livelihoods of disadvantaged sections of the society. SNPL, as a part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) takes up projects that are scalable, replicable and sustainable with a multiplier impact on larger population especially at grassroot level.

We have manufacturing facilities in Simara of Bara district, Serater of Tanahun district and Biratnagar of Morang district and we have a distribution network across Nepal. Since our establishment, we have always been dedicated to giving back to the communities around us and nation at large in a way that creates a long-term impact. Our business strategy is to create enduring value for all our stakeholders.

SNPL has been one of the major contributors during the COVID-19 pandemic. While stepping forward to assist in emergencies like this, you have been very consistent about what you are trying to achieve with your CSR. What is the vision behind such a thoroughly planned CSR strategy?

Again, we have always prioritized building the nation and creating a long-term and sustainable impact. This is one reason, we have always given more importance to the initiatives that have a long-term impact on the communities and nation, and that create value within the country. Our collaboration with Teach For Nepal is one of such initiatives as quality education is the basis for bringing long-term positive impact on the people, community, and the nation.

All our actions are guided by the philosophy of benefitting the community. So we have designed our CSR framework in such a way that we build an ecosystem where the communities within our operating areas, especially the farmers, get the same opportunities to pursue a better quality of life just as an individual in an urban setting would be able to.

Having a defined framework helps us make better decisions concerning how we want to contribute in alignment with the impact we are aiming for.

Apart from supporting communities through our continuous programs organized over the period, SNPL also feels it is important to assist the government and society at large during times of need. It is due to the same philosophy, SNPL has contributed for the nation and communities during Covid-19 pandemic and other disasters. To be specific, some of the activities SNPL has performed during those times are contribution of NRs. 1 crore to support communities and the nation.

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We have always been very proactive when it comes to assisting in times of emergencies, be it an earthquake, floods or COVID-19 recently. We have also actively given to various local infrastructural development like building roads, school buildings, etc. in the immediate vicinities of our operating locations. However, we do feel that having a defined framework for CSR has allowed us to be consistent with our effort and in alignment with our mission and vision. This is necessary if we want to leave a meaningful impact on what we are trying to do.

How important do you think is for corporates to find a balance between long-term and short-term initiatives when it comes to their CSR activities?

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SNPL carries out CSR under various platforms like Surya Nepal-Asha, Suswasthya and Prakriti. What is the main idea behind each of these platforms and how is SNPL creating an impact within the community?

As I mentioned earlier, SNPL, as a part of its Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, has taken up projects through which it creates a multiplier impact at large and focuses on doing same in compliance with applicable regulations. The main objective for creating these platforms is to focus our activities in certain specific areas in line with national priorities and create larger impact.

The objective of SNPL Asha is to empower communities and assist disadvantaged and marginalized group of people by creating avenues to support their livelihoods. SNPL supports farmers from rural areas through various activities like assistance in initiatives that lead to increased farm productivity like the construction of vermicompost pits to increase productivity and promote sustainable agriculture practices, sub-soiling for improving quality of soil, intervention in dairy development, etc. These initiatives help in increasing the income and also in diversifying sources of income of rural families. We have been able to support 4000+ households through various activities over the period.

The other key activity under this platform is in the area of education. SNPL has been supporting 8 public schools in Parsa and Tanahun district under partnership with TFN towards improving the quality of education in these schools.

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SNPL Suswasthya focuses on helping communities in the area of health. Recent initiatives under SNPL Suswasthya have been more focused towards the government and local communities manage the Covid-19 pandemic. We have also been taking initiatives to equip health institutions in the immediate vicinities of our operating locations with Medical ambulances.

SNPL believes environment conservation is a key area where a private organization needs to contribute. The objective of this platform is to assist the local communities and relevant stakeholders for achieving environmentally sustainable development. Under this platform, SNPL provides assistance towards initiatives like tree plantation, Mountain Clean-Up Campaign, public sanitation, etc.

We have also been supporting various local schools with infrastructures, Teach For Nepal’s vision to end educational inequity between the public and private education system by placing the Fellows in public schools of remote areas. Teach For Nepal’s vision to end educational inequity between the public and private education system by placing the Fellows in public schools of remote areas.

SNPL is supporting eight public schools located at Parsa and Tanahun by placement of three Fellows in each school. We have been able to create a direct impact in 2000+ students of that area and we have been able to equip all the placement schools in Tanahun with computers which have allowed us to give where there is a need. We have been able to contribute. The objective of this platform is to assist the local communities and relevant stakeholders for achieving environmentally sustainable development.

TFN Schools as “Centres of Excellence” that train teachers from other schools and create larger impact. For example, we may explore converting existing TFN Schools as “Centres of Excellence” that train teachers from other schools and create larger impact. For example, we may explore converting existing Fellows. We would want to work with TFN to make this model more scalable under SNPL Suswasthya. For Nepal Fellows bring in their teaching expertise and commitment for children in rural communities.

Contribution to the rural community has always been a priority as we are deeply connected with the farmers. Public schools in Nepal are way behind in terms of infrastructure as well quality of instruction. While we have also been supporting rural children with infrastructures, such as tree plantation, Mountain Clean-Up Campaign, public sanitation, etc.

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Lastly, how could we make this collaboration better?

Why did you choose to partner with Teach For Nepal?

How has your experience been with this partnership?
Teach For Nepal Fellows have made an outstanding contribution to enhancing quality of education at public schools across seven districts of Nepal. However, the movement would not have reached its momentum without local partners and community leaders lending a hand as allies. Among them School Principals have played a critical role by creating and facilitating an environment where Fellows can feel supported in their efforts for the school and the community. Recently, Teach For Nepal engaged in a conversation with the Principal of Terse Secondary School, Sindhupalchok a partner school of TFN since 2014, to reflect on what it has meant for him to work together with Teach For Nepal and its Fellows. Below, we share some highlights:

Teach For Nepal and this school have been long-term collaborators, what are some changes that this collaboration has brought?

In a relatively rural area like ours, the school system faces a plethora of problems. Every year we are short-staffed. The lack of quality English, Science and Mathematics teachers makes the management of classes extremely difficult. Our collaboration with Teach For Nepal has helped us solve this
problem to a certain extent. The presence of Teach For Nepal Fellows in our school has aided in the learning of our students and has also boosted their creativity. The Fellows are not merely teaching the students but they have contributed to the holistic development of the school.

Despite the diversity among Fellows, they have certain common traits. The Fellows are energetic and they rigorously plan their lessons and activities. The Fellows do not limit the instruction to the syllabus and prescribed textbooks; this differentiates the Fellows from other teachers. The Fellows have the zeal and willpower to get into action and ensure that their students have the best opportunities.

Since you have seen several Fellows teach at Terse Secondary School. What is the impact of having trained and capable teachers on the students?

Teaching is an art. Just being a knowledgeable teacher is not enough. TFN Fellows come from diverse academic backgrounds beyond the education field bringing broader knowledge, which makes content delivery even stronger. Their training influences their ability to transfer their knowledge to their students. Furthermore, the Fellows have a planned way of teaching in their classrooms. They bring in study materials and introduce innovative ways of teaching and learning. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why the students gel with the Fellows well as they create very engaging learning environment in their class. Having trained teachers in the classroom positively impacts the environment of the whole school and Teach For Nepal Fellows make living examples of this.

How can a competent and leading administration work in the face of natural calamities and epidemics with the community? How do you please reflect on the state of the school during the Melamchi floods and the current situation of the school?

In the last two years, the school’s educational activities have been adversely affected by COVID-19. During the first wave of COVID-19, the school adopted alternative measures of facilitating learning such as community learning centers, distance correspondence based learning facilitation and online teaching and learning in the upper classes. These efforts received positive support from all teachers, parents and the community. Also, during the flood, some of the structures of the school were washed away. But from the very next day, planning and shramadaan started. We started receiving immediate financial and material support from community members and various organizations within the country and abroad. The school has been utilizing the assistance received by prioritizing conservation and classroom management. Trust of the community members can be gained if the assistance received is used in a meaningful way. With encouragement from the community, we were able to reduce damages. We have learned that if we work with the community by understanding their expectations, we can achieve success in our work and enhance mutual trust.
Fellows are not just teaching in schools, they are also an integral part of the community. In your experience here, how did the Teach For Nepal Fellows cooperate with the administration in case of natural calamities like the Melamchi floods in the school?

During the pandemic and Melamchi floods, I was surprised to see that Teach For Nepal Fellows were more active than the local teachers. In fact, during the pandemic, Fellows kept in touch with their students through phone calls and ensured that the students were active in distance learning. In addition to the work directed by the school administration, they were also working on other activities that they felt were necessary. During those times they worked well beyond their responsibilities.

Similarly, due to the Melamchi floods in June 2021, some structures of the school were washed away and the school was at high risk. The need for participation of the community in the protection of the school and the management of the classroom was noted and a campaign was also launched to mobilize support through the Teach For Nepal Fellows in collaboration with the school administration. The school received financial assistance of Rs. 150,000 thousand through the campaign. After the situation was under control, local teachers and the Fellows equally contributed to creating a comfortable environment to resume regular school activities. They acted with the same level of ownership as the locals in re-establishing a comfortable environment for regular learning at the school.

You have shared about the Fellows’ active participation during times of crisis. Beyond the crises, what changes have you observed in the community after the arrival of Teach For Nepal Fellows?

TFN Fellows are active in thematic teaching as well as in the creative development of the students. Their role is also significant in administrative facilitation. In the context of our school, the school has got many opportunities through our collaboration with the Fellows. Students have ample opportunities. Fellows have led various creative activities including community-level learning facilitation, practical skill development activities for students, STEAM lab management, activities related to information technology, career exposure visits for students, and workshops for art, drama and acting. Overall, their persistent work to develop student’s creative abilities and improve their learning achievement is very important.

As you have been working as the Principal at a community school, you have the experience of working at the grassroots. Whose role and responsibility do you think is it to improve the educational quality of community schools?

In my opinion, quality education means that the student being able to choose the right path in the future. This requires competence in both theoretical knowledge and practical. Everyone has a role to play in the development of educational quality. I believe that parents, teachers, local government and students have a major role to play to improve the quality of community schools. Movements like Teach For Nepal play a crucial role in improving the state of community schools.
Teach For Nepal Fellows, over the years have initiated various projects and introduced new teaching methods to the classroom. What do you think should be done to make the teaching-learning and other projects started by the Fellows sustainable?

Fellows from Teach for Nepal are usually placed at schools for two years. Some of the projects and campaigns started by Fellows should continue even after they leave. The school should create an environment to continue those projects and local teachers should step up and take ownership for the continuation of these projects. It is also the responsibility of the school to continue and improve the teaching and learning systems to aid in the learning of the students. For that, I think although the Fellows are replaced, their campaigns and projects should continue sustainably. Ensuring continuation has to be a major responsibility of the school administration and management.

The school here has reached this stage even after dealing with a big flood. What kind of education plans have been made to improve the quality of education in the coming days and to awaken hope among students?

The earthquake destroyed the physical infrastructure back in 2015; the reconstruction took two years and was completed in 2017. We were impacted by COVID-19 in 2020 and the floods in 2021. The last seven years have been a challenging time for the school. However, there was no other alternative to facing the situation and hoping for the best outcome. We are still bearing the brunt. However, we have made plans to minimize the damage in education system caused by such incidents. Our first task on the list is to increase the number of school days, according to which the annual leave has now been reduced to 15 days.

We are at the end of this interview, do you have any final thoughts?

Teach For Nepal needs to further expand to more rural schools. The government also needs to formulate a policy to mobilize any person interested in teaching in schools if they come with the necessary trainings. Last but not the least, I would like to share that I do hope Teach For Nepal can continue its partnership with our school.
For a bus ride from Kathmandu to Ashrang, Southern Lalitpur, the distance is approximately 63 km. However, with poorly maintained buses that run on a treacherous dirt road, it takes almost a staggering full day to reach there. Despite these exhausting rough rides, our LDCs (Leadership Development Coordinators) are determined to conduct their Cluster Meet the very next day. With the setting sun, the Cluster Leads are ready to welcome all the Fellows.

Cluster Meet is a space where Fellows working in geographic proximity come together once in two to three months, listen to each other and find ways to support each other. Cluster Meet is designed with much compassion, empathy and perseverance to bring all Fellows together to build a team and create a support system for each other. Held five times around the year, these Meets allow Fellows and other team members to come together to rest, rejuvenate and reinforce the movement’s value system and hold each other accountable for their commitments to the Student Vision.

The next morning, benches are set up with Fellows’ name cards, blank paper and colored pens. The room is filled with motivating words, quotes and activity charts to fill in. While the LDC is doing the final setup check, the sound of laughter and jokes being cracked up somewhere in the distance can be heard.

The first typical task for Fellows once they show up is sharing about their fears and hopes from their Fellowship journey, which they do through various forms of words, art and other tools.

Despite the long walk and sweat, Fellows bring to the location learning and
Stories from their students and communities. For Fellows and LDCs this comes as a festivity of learning and sharing that happens every 30-50 days across the seven districts where TFN Fellows work.

Fellows share their experiences and feelings regarding their journey with an open heart. Upon sharing and learning such stories and experiences, the cluster members get to reflect on matters presented through different perspectives. Furthermore, personal story sharing brings the Fellows together and strengthens the cluster as a team.

Sessions that we as LDCs design are based on what we observed during our prior classroom visits, many of which are explicitly requested by Fellows. Cluster Meet is curated into a space where Fellows can strengthen their classroom practices by not only brainstorming ideas within subject groups, but also by challenging each other towards greater possibility and excellence. In the process of learning exchange, they also exchange various innovative ideas and solutions inspired by their journey.

Alongside emphasizing the importance of classroom teaching and community partnership, at Cluster Meets, Fellows have the chance to reevaluate what being a leader in the classroom can look like. They also find time and resources to prepare themselves for their upcoming trimester and leave for their respective placement schools with new perspectives, new learning and new hopes. The journey of Fellowship is not an easy one. In this, Cluster Meet has evolved to become one of TFN’s innovations that stand as key to Fellows’ retention and success, as well as to their continued commitment to students’ future.
Group photo with 'Gratitude and Shout-out' pasted on chart paper before departure back to placement schools from Cluster Meeting.

'Gratitude and Shout-out' has become our ritual every time Fellows gather in groups. This ritual adds positive reinforcement to what Fellows and TFN staff do on an everyday basis, and allows Fellows to feel appreciated and recognized for their hard work. This is an act of intentionally shifting focus to what Fellows are thankful for and recognizing those who have demonstrated 'Core Values' of TFN at specific timings and places during the previous quarter.

English Fellows presenting about the challenges in their classroom and school, and possible solutions to overcome them.

Fellows in each subject group gather together during the Cluster Meet in order to share the best practices and challenges in their classroom. Broader discussion and brainstorming at Cluster Meet allows them to find possible solutions. This help Fellows to see problems from different perspectives and visualize solutions.

Punam Gurung, an English Fellow shares her Fellowship experience in the time of the Covid-19 crisis elaborating on her challenges and success stories. During Cluster Meets, such sharing allows Fellows to see greater possibility and to strengthen their sense of urgency towards change.

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Fellows Explaining Community Mapping

Community mapping, also known as asset mapping, is the process of integrating community members in identifying the assets and opportunities in their neighborhood, and developing a picture of what it is like to live there. Community mapping allows Fellows to learn about the infrastructure of the community and natural resources that strengthen the community, and understand where their students come from. When this is done with the community members, this process helps to reveal very specific and helpful details and data that could be otherwise hard to reach. During the Covid-19 pandemic, information collected from Community Mapping previously conducted by the Fellows was specifically helpful in planning for TFN’s community visits and guiding further action.

Cluster Meet held at Bahundada school organized by the Fellows of Shree Chandrodaya High School.

This is the space where all Fellows of all schools in a cluster come together to reflect on their journey and to discuss potential solutions to the problems they are facing. It is a time they spend together for refreshment and celebration of their work back in their classrooms and communities.

Fellows from Shree Mahendradev Secondary School at Taranche of Lamjung explaining their Community Mapping with their identification of cultural and economic aspects.
First online Cluster Meet before going back to the community: During the Covid-19 lockdown, when Fellows had to stay back in their houses, it was a difficult period of not being able to reach their students despite experimenting various mediums. However, Fellows continued to strive and thrive with each other during those times by connecting with each other through various means. They came together in clusters using virtual platforms and brainstormed possible actions they could take to help minimize the adverse impact of the pandemic on students' education.

Team building activities are carried out to strengthen the cluster. This helps in enhancing communication, planning skills, engagement and participation. Alongside serving as energizers, these activities allow individuals to connect with each other in a different atmosphere and see each other in a new light.
COHORT 2021

37 FELLOWS | 7 DISTRICTS | 54 SCHOOLS

BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF FELLOWS TO 107

Only xx% of those who applied for the Fellowship made it to become Fellows, reflecting its highly selective nature.

100% have significant leadership experience from diverse areas
58% studied science, technology, or engineering at university
32% studied abroad for undergraduate and graduate degree

FELLOWS

ENGLISH (13)
MATHS (13)
SCIENCE (11)
ANNUAL REPORT 20/21

FACULTY

<table>
<thead>
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<th>STEM</th>
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<td>SOCIAL SCIENCE</td>
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<td>BUSINESS STUDIES</td>
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<td>HOSPITALITY</td>
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GENDER

51.4% FEMALE COHORTS

ETHNICITY

| JANAJATI | 15 |
| MADHESI/THARU | 5 |
| KHAS/ARYA | 17 |

FACULTY

| STEM | 21 |
| SOCIAL SCIENCE | 8 |
| BUSINESS STUDIES | 7 |
| HOSPITALITY | 1 |

GENDER

51.4% FEMALE COHORTS

ETHNICITY

| JANAJATI | 15 |
| MADHESI/THARU | 5 |
| KHAS/ARYA | 17 |
We announced opening of our fellowship program on November 25, 2020 and ended the final application on Jan 15. During this period we received an overwhelming response from 2700+ individuals who registered through our website. Among them 797 applied for the Fellowship.

REGISTRATIONS: 2,728
APPLICATIONS: 797
FELLOWS GRADUATES: 37
टिच फर नेपाल र२०७८ कोहोर्ट

हामीले २०७८ साल असार १७ मा फेलोशिपको स्नातकोत्तर लागि सङ्कल्प गर्नुभएको थियो। फेलोशिपको स्नातकोत्तर २०७४ संस्करण २४ सामी विद्यार्थी जस्तै सामायक भयो, त्यस्तो हामीले जनाई रहेको भएको फेलोशिपको नाम वर्ग र भने १६ तार्किक बीमारी बढी स्वास्थ्य प्रदान गर्नुभएको थियो।

कूल वर्ग संख्या

२,७२५

कूल आवेदन संख्या

३७

छनौट भएका प्रशासनी
LEARNING INSTITUTE

Teach For Nepal’s Learning Institute (LI) is an intensive six weeks long residential training that covers sessions on lesson planning, classroom management, community relations and much more.

First day of the 2021 Learning Institute, where all the probable Fellows print their first step towards Teach For Nepal Movement.

2018 Teach For Nepal Alumni Rajendra Deshar, School Leader at Collaborative Schools Network (CSN) sharing his Fellowship journey with the newest cohort. Deshar joined CSN soon after completing his Fellowship.
Part of their learning, Fellows are asked to perform different tasks to make them understand the values of Teach For Nepal. During the task, Fellows are expected to perform their designated task making sure they do not compromise anything concerning values. In this particular task the prospective Fellows were tasked with raising funds.

Teach For Nepal CEO and Co-founder Swastika Shrestha welcoming and introducing Teach For Nepal Movement to the prospective Fellows on the second day of the Institute.
SHRAMADANA

Shramadana is one of the events during the Learning Institute, where Fellows are given first hand experience of staying, learning and living within the community. This is the first time when Fellows get in touch with students, community and school to get along and build the necessary infrastructures or help in labor intended work in one of the TFN placed schools. This year the Shramadana was organized in Parsa at ... Where the Teach For Nepal community along with school and community colored the school's wall and repaired the garden area.

As part of the safety and security of participating students and other community members along with Fellows, a health desk was set up at the entry point of school for basic health check.

The task this year was to paint entire school’s wall. For this the very first step was to clean up the dirt and leftover of sticky chartpapers. Amrita along with her friends took charge of the task.

As soon as the cleanup task was done, the other team members started painting the walls.

Teach For Nepal’s Chief of Staff Krishna Kumar KC orienting the Fellows and staffs about the task, Fellows’ respective team roles and other logistics.
On Sunday, the entire village of Panchgawa was very festive. Holi, the festival of colors that marks the coming of spring is one of the major festivals here. The shops were selling shades of red, yellow, green, and blue powders that, on the full moon day, friends and family put on each other. Shops were getting ready with sweets and cold drinks that are expected to sell out quickly as everyone with their clothes, hairs, and faces dyed in different colors take on the streets greeting neighbors and friends as well as strangers.

However, that day, Deep Narayan Adarsha High Secondary school was festive for a different reason.

Shiv Nath Chaudhary Tharu, Head Teacher of Deep Narayan School, woke up at around 4 am and started calling the preparation team for the day. Paints were being brought from the nearby town, brushes were being prepared and all the supplies for lunch was being delivered along with huge pot and pans to cook for about a hundred people who were going to be in the school that day.

“We might need to hurry as the team that is responsible for preparing breakfast is on their way to the school canteen.” Sipping a cup of tea and grabbing two pieces of biscuit, Shiv Nath sir runs towards his school which is about 10 minutes walk from his home.

“49 years ago this school was built through Shramadana and I am so happy that after all these years we’re coming together again for Shramadana”, rejoices Mr. Chaudhary.

A human chain of students and Fellows working together to redo the garden space for assembly. In most of the Shramadana, human chain has been a repeated method of accelerating the work speed. Human chain as well reiterates the idea – if we come together and do things as a team, every difficult target can be met.

In the midst of all this hustle and bustle, he shares: “We had primary school in our village but we needed to extend it to secondary school. There wasn’t a single secondary school anywhere in the area. So four elder members of the community reached out to a local businessman - Mr. Deep Narayan, who was convinced about the need for a secondary school. He decided to contribute five hundred thousand rupees and entrusted the community to take full responsibility for constructing and operating the school.”

The members of the community contributed several acres of land to meet the government requirement. People from five different villages came together to help build the school. People got the ground ready for construction, dug the foundation, built the pillars and the walls. Some got wood from the jungle and each household gave their bullock carts to transport the woods from the jungle to the school. Windows and doors were built and beds for the hostel were made out of those wood.

At the foundation, built the pillars and the walls. Some got wood from the jungle to help build the school. People got the ground ready for construction, dug the foundation, built the pillars and the walls. Some got wood from the jungle and each household gave their bullock carts to transport the woods from the jungle to the school. Windows and doors were built and beds for the hostel were made out of those wood.

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Initially, the school was designed with a tile roof as was common in the houses at that time. However, considering the trouble of maintenance of these kinds of roofs, the community decided to make a concrete roof. So wooden planks were laid on the roof and plastered with cement. And that is how the school came into being.

Today the school teaches up to higher secondary level and has also started diploma course for Civil Engineering. Boys and girls, some of whom are first in their generation to complete high school, study engineering in this school which is right in their village.

For many, especially girls, leaving their village to pursue higher education would have not been an option.

Every year, during the Learning Institute of the new cohort of Fellows, Shramadana has become an indispensable part of our learning.

So at the dawn of Sunday morning, about a hundred people were gathered around the school. Walls were being cleaned, paints were being prepared, brushes were being arranged. The new 9th cohort of TFN Fellows and staff along with students, teachers, and members of the community were scrubbing the walls, washing them, and then painting them in bright yellow.

"It is as if everything magically changed in a blink of an eye," said the principal with a huge smile looking at how quickly the entire front face of the schools had been painted.

In the Kitchen, a group of local community members and teachers started preparing lunch for all those who had come to volunteer. Some were cleaning the ground. Some were passing out water to the workers. People moved around from one task to another doing what needed to be done.

This is how village communities in Nepal had thrived for centuries. Whenever water fountains had to be built, roads had to be paved, public sheds for travelers had to be constructed, or irrigation canals had to be dug, people came together and contributed their labor for the collective good.

Another team got involved in cleaning up classroom spaces. As students and schools mostly work around classroom walls, this team thought the necessity to take the lead and beautify the space while others were painting the outer walls of the school.

Another major goal of Shramadana is to make the students and local community take the ownership of their schools. Parents, students and other neighboring community members are as well invited to join the Shramadana so that together we can make a beautiful school for everyone.
This Shramadana — the gift of labor, was a way of community living. Those who could give land gave land, others gave money. But if there was one thing that everyone could give, it was time and labor. These practices have slowly died away. But nevertheless, there is a growing realization towards the importance of reviving this sense of agency within the community for our own development.

At the end of the day, everyone came together to dance and celebrate what we had been able to accomplish together. Delicious rice pudding and chickpeas prepared by teachers and villagers were served. Everyone danced. Everyone went around putting colorful powders on each others’ faces. There was laughter. There was a joy.

We knew that the colors on our faces and our clothes will wash away. But as we all looked around the new colors in the school, we knew this was going to stay. This school carries a legacy. And every day, as we would look at the walls, we would be reminded of that legacy and all the wondrous that is possible if all of us just came together.
A group photo after the completion of Shramadana in Panchagawa, Parsa. A total of 200 plus community members, prospective Fellows and other stakeholders actively participated during the Shramadana. A celebration event is conducted right after and the day after was an auspicious holi Purnima.
Schools in Nepal reopened from Mid August of 2020 with scenes of joy, relief and anxiety. This was the first time, schools have been closed for more than half year because of the pandemic. With much chaos, nervousness schools were opened, along with that Fellows traveled back to their second home – their communities. Not sure if the students would return, Fellows took their chances and from the very first day, started their work. Here are some of the highlights from their classrooms and the community.

Nilam (Parsa) started taking extra classes early morning at her home to recover the learning loss.

Abiral (Parsa) revived his practical classes and made his students participate in various competitions.

Jenisha (Lamjung) accelerated his ‘learning by doing’ philosophy and enabled his laboratory soon after reaching the school.
Nimmi (Sindhupalchowk) recalibrated her after class reflection sessions which helped her bring back her students to the classroom.

Karishma (Lamjung) along with her co-Fellow conducted an exhibition in school so that students returned to classrooms happily.

Home visit and travels began among Fellows of Panchpokhari, Sindhupalchowk.
Laxmi (Parsa) resumed her after school sports activities with her students so that they quickly catch up as to where they had left in terms of building relationship and their syllabus.

Bishwas (Dang) started innovating new games and activities to involve his students in the first leg in rebuilding the long lost connection with his community. Later he continued with his innovative approaches in teaching.

Ritesh (Dhanusa) intensified his preparatory classes for SEE.
Sarala (Sindhupalchowk) started running sessions for young boys and girls to educate them about health, hygiene, and campaigned to educate young girls about early child marriage.

Students in Dang got first hand copy of student’s workbook which was prepared by one of the clusters during COVID lockdown.
Teach For Nepal organizes Mini Learning Institute (MiLI) - four days gathering (quarterly) to bring together all the Fellows to enhance their personal and professional growth with training from in-house Training and Support team along with timely visit of resource persons from various organizations. For Fellows, this is an opportunity to share their challenges, learnings and portray detailed understanding of their respective schools and communities. MiLI as well helps both the teams and Fellows to incubate ideas needed in changing the context of leadership.
Highlights of Teach For Nepal Stepping In event where Fellows’ and their family members get an opportunity to meet with Teach For Nepal Community for the first time, including board members and alumni member. This is also an event where families are oriented about Fellow’s journey for the next two years. During the event they get to hear from Teach For Nepal’s supporters and stakeholders and board members about the larger Teach For Nepal movement.

Professor Laxman Gnawali, parent of TFN 2020 Fellow Prashant Gnawali, sharing his son’s story of landing into Teach For Nepal and his personal experience regarding the Fellowship.

Suraj Parajuli, Teach For Nepal Alumni taught student from Lalitpur shares his experience of being inside alum’s classroom and how that had changed his perspective about teaching and learning process. He is currently doing his Bachelor in Health Care Management at Nobel College.

Teach For Nepal Alumni Padam Raj Awasthi (2016), Ujjwal Koirala (2015), Preeti Shrestha (2015) during a panel discussion where they shared their learning and experiences from their Fellowship. The panel was moderated by TFN Alumni Drishya Curung (2014)
Keynote speaker and TFN Leadership Council Member Professor Kedar Bhakta Mathema, inspiring 2021 Fellows. Later he participated in a round table discussion with Fellows’ family members and friends.

Prospective 2021 Fellows being facilitated at the event. Soon after the Stepping-in event, the prospective Fellows enter the Learning Institute.

TFN Cohort 2015 Alumni sharing a frame together. Events like these are a great opportunity for Alumni to come together, share their current engagements and motivate the newer cohort.
This year due to COVID restrictions Annual Event was cancelled due to which alumni induction for 2018 cohort was done separately where the newest cohort of Alumni were induced to the larger Teach For Nepal Movement. The ceremony was organized to celebrate and appreciate their two years of effort in the community. With the new addition of new Alumni, Teach For Nepal now has 311 Alumni from the first to seventh cohort.

ALUMNI INDUCTION (2018 ALUMNI INDUCTION)

Swastika Shrestha, CEO of Teach For Nepal inspiring and welcoming Cohort 6 to the larger TFN Movement.

TFN Alumni Kamal and Bikash presenting one of the Alumni pathways — Education Leadership to the participants. During the induction all the Alumni were divided into Teach For Nepal’s five different alumni pathways and asked to present their understanding and what each pathways meant for each alumni.

Teach For Nepal Sixth Cohort after the induction.
Newly inducted TFN Alumni being felicitated by CEO Swastika Shrestha for successfully completing the Fellowship and joining the larger Alumni movement.

TFN Alumni Prashuma Rai giving a farewell speech summarizing her journey and Cohort’s journey of the Fellowship.

Kritesh, Mingma (Sixth cohort) along with Ravi from First Cohort presented a musical instrumental piece to end the Alumni Induction event.

A group picture with a newly inducted Alumni. Each Cohort is handed over TFN Alumni T-shirt after successfully completing the Fellowship. The T-shirt reads “I changed the numbers.”

TFN Fellows 2018-2020, Pranaya, Subina and Chetan after the induction event.
FELLOWS FROM 2013 TO 2020

'B13


'B14


'B15


'B16


'B17


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<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
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<th>PREVIOUS YEAR AMOUNT (NPR)</th>
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<td>Co-Funding (TFN Core Project Income)</td>
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<td>Total (A)</td>
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<td>(B)</td>
<td>Expenses</td>
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<td>Total (B)</td>
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<td>Balance of Income Over Expenditure (A-B)</td>
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*Audited by CA Anil Joshi, Partner of Kuber & Co. Chartered Accountants
Audited on September 17, 2021*
THE BOARD AND LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Kiran Nepal  Juna Mathema  Rajan Shrestha  Jagadish Bhattarai  Rameshore Khanal
Amina Singh  Bhusan Tuladhar  Bina Jha  Sristi Shrestha  Swastika Shrestha
Shisir Khanal  Krishna Kumar KC  Mana Prasad Wagley  Reshu Aryal  Bhola Paswan
Radha Krishna Shrestha  Sudeep  Roshana Subba  Mahesh Swar  Kedar Bhakta Mathema
Shekhar Golchha  Gagan Thapa  Anil Keshary Shah
# TEACH FOR NEPAL STAFFS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swastika Shrestha</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krishna Kumar K.C.</td>
<td>Chief of Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shailendra Jha</td>
<td>Recruitment and Selection Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vickrant Gurung</td>
<td>Director of Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ram Keshar Thapa</td>
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<td>Anu Karki</td>
<td>Selection Coordinator</td>
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<td>Ashrina Ranjit</td>
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<td>Saurav Regmi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruma Maharjan</td>
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<td>Khika Prasad Nepal</td>
<td>Community Affairs Manager (CAM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kishor Subedi</td>
<td>Community Affairs Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pravesh Bhandari</td>
<td>Director of Schools and Community, Impact and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jalan Maharjan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jayanti Lama</td>
<td>English Teachers Trainer and Impact Manager</td>
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<td>Hom Bahadur Thapa</td>
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<td>Pratik Ghimire</td>
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<td>Madhav Prasad Devkota</td>
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<td>Bishal Neupane</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sujina Shakya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Chaudhary</td>
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<td>Anuja Koirala</td>
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<td>Prajwal Khadka</td>
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<td>Lochan Paudel</td>
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<td>Ava Parajuli</td>
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<td>Shrijana Dhital</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amir Khokali Shrestha</td>
<td>Office Assistant</td>
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TEACH FOR NEPAL

PARTNER SCHOOLS

Melamchi Municipality, Sindhupalchok
- Shree Batase Secondary School, Batase
- Shree Indreshwari Secondary School, Melamchi
- Shree Kalika Chetana Secondary School, Phataksheela
- Shree Mahankali Secondary School, Bansbari
- Shree Terese Secondary School, Talamarang
- Shree Thulothakani Secondary School, Thakani
- Shree Sitaladevi Secondary School, Shikharpur

Bagmati Rural Municipality, Lalitpur
- Shree Bidhyadishwari Secondary School, Asrang
- Shree Chandeshwari Secondary School, Simle
- Shree Janajagriti Secondary School, Ikudol
- Shree Janak Secondary School, Gimdi-Katuwa
- Shree Kalidevi Secondary School, Malta
- Shree Narayani Secondary School, Gimdi

Dordi Rural Municipality, Lamjung
- Shree Amarjyoti Basic School, Simi
- Shree Chaitanyoday Secondary School, Nauthar
- Shree Dhoodeni Basic School, Saranchok
- Shree Jejven Amar Basic School, Lapsibot
- Shree Bhagawansri Basic School, Kirtipur
- Shree Saraswati Mohan Basic School, Thapalhet
- Shree Srijaneshheel Basic School, Sandikhola

Konjyosom Rural Municipality, Lalitpur
- Shree Baghbhairab Secondary School, Chaughare

Myagde Rural Municipality, Tanahun
- Shree Ratna Secondary School, Manpang

Chautara Sangachowk Gadhi Municipality Sindhupalchowk
- Shree Ramdevi Secondary School, Jalkeni

Shuklagandaki Municipality, Tanahun
- Shree Janakalyan Secondary School, Belchautara
- Shree Saraswati Namuna Secondary School, Khairentar

Marsyangdi Rural Municipality, Lamjung
- Shree Chandroday Secondary School, Bahundanda
- Shree Gramkalyan Secondary School, Nyaun
- Shree Gram Michindradev Secondary School, Chermu
- Shree Mahendradev Secondary School, Taranche
- Shree Prabhat Shantiupurwa Secondary School, Badagaon
- Shree Prem Milaan Secondary School, Chhapra
- Shree Tribhuvan Secondary School, Chanpokhara

Paterwa Sugauli Rural Municipality, Parsa
- Nepal Rashtriya Secondary School, Nichuta

Sakhuwa parsauani Rural Municipality, Parsa
- Shree Dipnarayan Adarsh Secondary School, Sripur

Panchpokharithangpal Rural Municipality, Sindhupalchowk
- Shree Bhim Vidhyashram Secondary School, Banshark
- Shree Bhotoandevi Secondary School, Bhotoan
- Shree Bhotoanamlang Secondary School, Bhotoanamlang
- Shree Chilaun Chen Secondary School, Manekha
- Shree Langarche Secondary School, Langarche
- Shree Raithane Secondary School, Raithane
- Shree Satkanyamati Secondary School, Gunsa

Mithilabihari Municipality, Dhanusha
- Shree Ja. Ra. Secondary School, Parshuramtalau
- Shree Janta Secondary School, Kajara Ramaul
- Shree Mithila Basic School, Kachuri
- Shree Rashtriya Secondary School, Laliya
- Shree Secondary School, Mithileshwar Mahuwa

Indrawati Rural Municipality, Sindhupalchowk
- Shree Bhimeshwari Secondary School, Bhimtar
- Shree Kamaladevi Secondary School, Aanpchaur
- Shree Nawalpur Secondary School, Nawalpur
- Shree Satidevi Secondary School, Bargaon
- Shree Simhamati Secondary School, Kunchok
- Shree Simpaleshwari Secondary School, Simpal Kavre
- Sipa Tindhara Janata Secondary School, Bhotisipa

Jira Bhawani Rural Municipality, Parsa
- Nepal Rashtriya Secondary School, Sevdwa

Thori Rural Municipality, Parsa
- Gyan Batika Secondary School, Subarnapur
- Shree Secondary School, Bijayabasti, Bijayabasti

Tulsipur Sub Metropolitan City, Dang
- Shree Ambeshwari Secondary School, Ambapur
- Shree Janajagriti Secondary School, Putabangoan
- Shree Janajyoti Secondary School, Tuhiyajyupur
- Shree Nawajagar Secondary School, Kutechaun
- Shree Saraswati Secondary School, Damargaon
- Shree Secondary School, Balapur
- Shree Secondary School, Kalakhola
- Shree Secondary School, Bhinitisakram
- Shree Secondary School, Doghare
- Shree Secondary School, Pratapkot
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- Melamchi Municipality Sindhupalchowk
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- With Teach For Nepal, you also get the exposure to join the global network with similar movements in 55 other countries. This network opens up a wide range of opportunities and possibilities for career growth and advancement. As network partners, a number of prestigious US universities recognize Teach For Nepal Fellows.

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