

FHC's motto is 'Empowerment through education' and while we show the way, our Hostel children embrace this philosophy whole-heartedly. These young lives have already experienced more hardship than our privileged backgrounds can contemplate. They know about disadvantage.

They also know how important education is to getting them beyond this disadvantage and into a life where they have choices and control over their destiny. School isn't confined to the classrooms. Back in the hostel beyond school, they continue their studies with the help of older students and our Hostel mother, Miss Paru.

This enthusiasm and the forged friendships from time together in the hostel will contribute significantly to a healthier, stronger community.



[DONATE/SPONSOR NOW](#)

FRIENDS OF HIMALAYAN CHILDREN (FHC) • Empowerment through education

PROGRESS



"Our volunteer administration ensures nearly 95% of funds raised go directly to supporting disadvantaged children in regional Nepal."

JUNE 2022

Nirmala Mijar



Nirmala Mijar is from Sindhukot, close to Batase village. She came to our Hostel in Grade 8 and has just finished Grade 10. She recently sat for her School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exams so she can go onto Higher Secondary School (Grade 11 and 12).

Nirmala's parents have separated and are too poor to care for, and educate, her so we invited her into the FHC Hostel. She works hard at school and around the hostel, helping the other kids with their study and keeping the Hostel clean and tidy. She also helps out on the farm.

Nirmala loves to sing and wants to become a school teacher in the future.

Learn about other Hostel students sitting for their SLC exams and what they want to do in the future. See page 4.

Int Women's Day



International Women's Day is celebrated around the world, including Nepal. Its mantra is to 'Celebrate women's achievement. Raise awareness against bias. Take action for equality.'

Nepal is traditionally a very patriarchal society, where men dominate and dictate societal rules. Especially in regional communities. Hopefully that will change and women will be given the respect that they deserve.

Our young girls are growing up with a better understanding of their strengths and their rights, and how they can access those rights. And a good education is key to giving them a voice.

Happy International Women's Day to you all.

The new weather-proof animal shelter



Recently we asked you for help to raise AUD\$3,500 to fund a new animal shed in Batase and you delivered! We easily raised that money and more so please accept our heart-felt appreciation.

The shed is now complete. The speed at which things happen in Nepal continues to amaze us here in Australia. We sent the call out for donations in early April. You responded instantly, money wired to Nepal and now it's finished by mid May!

Now we have an essential waterproof animal shed, which

will provide shelter for our buffalo, goats and chickens. The buffalo supplies milk for the children and manure for the fields. When the calves are old enough they are sold and from the most recent sale, FHC purchased six goats. Goats are walking currency in the mountains and are valued between \$70 to \$100 each.

The shed is located near the hostel, giving the children easy access to be involved in raising and caring for the animals. This project has also benefited the community, providing much needed cash work for the men of the region.

New computers thanks to Rotary Sunrise Cairns



In last September's newsletter we talked about a very generous grant of \$10,000 given to FHC by Rotary Club of Cairns Sunrise and Rotary International for the purchase of computers, and more, for the Batase school.

The money arrived and now the computers have been purchased and in place at the school. The location of the computers for now is temporary until the new dedicated computer room has finished construction. The grant

also includes funds to employ an IT teacher for 12 months and internet access. We welcome into the school the new IT teacher, Milan Tamang.

This is an enormous and essential addition to the school's teaching resources. This will give the final-year students access to skills that will be important to the next step in their lives.

We thank Rotary Club of Cairns Sunrise and Rotary International for their generous support.

Nepal education system explained

Nepalese education is based on the 10+2 system, whereby pupils study for a total of 12 years.

The different levels include:

- Primary Level (Grades 1-5)
- Lower Secondary (6-8)
- Secondary (9-10) concludes with the School Leaving Certificate (SLC)
- Higher Secondary (11-12).

If students aspire to study at university, they must complete their Grades 11 and 12 and to do that, they must sit for an exam in Grade 10 to achieve their SLC. With the SLC, they can go on to Higher

Secondary (also known as '+2'). For our Batase students to sit for their SLC, they must go to an exam centre in a neighbouring village called Gyalthum.

Higher Secondary is not available yet in Batase (FHC and the School Board are working hard on this), so if students achieve their SLC and choose to further their education, they must move to neighbouring Melamchi or Kathmandu.

Meet some of the students from FHC's Hostel, sitting for their SLC on page 4. With your help we will continue to support them through their final years.

The Batase School – 7 years on from the earthquake



2016



2022

On the 25th of April we celebrated ANZAC Day and the spirit that embodies our nation's resilience in times of war. It's an important date for Nepalese too but for very different reasons. Or perhaps there are similarities – war against nature.

On that day in 2015, the Himalayas shifted and Nepal shook. The centre of the earthquake was several hundred kilometres west of Kathmandu in the Ghorka Region but the effects were devastating to the entire eastern half of Nepal. To the world, Kathmandu was the visible victim because of the dramatic vision of crumbling buildings readily available to the news networks but it was the villages in the regions that suffered the most. Part of the reason for this was because of their remoteness and fragile accesses. Mountainous roads were easily blocked or swept away, making contact with these villages very difficult.

The world responded and money and supplies flooded in but poor access to the villages in the regions crippled assistance. Services that were desperately needed weren't available. Many lives were lost. Many valuable members of the community gone forever.

I can remember passing through the village of Chisopani, not far from Batase, exactly one year later. The devastation was still obvious as damaged buildings remained as they were. Cruel stories prevailed. We learned that four health workers, one doctor and three nurses, lost their lives here as their hotel collapsed on top of them. They were underneath organising their duties for the day when the building dropped on them. The rest of the building remained intact. If they had of been on any of the floors above, they would have survived. Four lives that would have essentially contributed to the saving of lives were lost.

Batase was not spared. It suffered too. Buildings crumbled, the school completely collapsed and lives were lost. Amber Tamang, Som's brother, was an important member of the community in Batase and was FHC's manager of operations in Nepal. He was killed by a landslide while riding

his motorbike to Kathmandu. The new, larger Hostel that FHC built to replace its old one was rendered completely unlivable.

This tragedy could have been worse. The quake struck midday on a Saturday, which meant the school was empty and most people were out working in the fields. Loss of life was minimal but children were orphaned or partly orphaned and in need of special help. FHC welcomed many into our hostel. The charity was quick to supply all students with a school backpack with learning and basic hygiene supplies.

The community rallied. For the sake of the children the school had to be rebuilt quickly and so it was, timber and corrugated iron replaced the crumbled rock walls. A healthy social structure was reintroduced into the lives of the children and the community, and the children's education continued. FHC rebuilt the Hostel. Today the hostel cares for 46 disadvantaged children.

That was seven years ago. Financial help is finally coming through from the government. Caritas Internationalis (a Catholic international charity organization) has rebuilt the school into a modern, earthquake-resistant facility. The government is adding new classrooms and FHC is giving land and funding to provide more facilities and teachers.

The school has grown remarkably so that now it can take students through to Grade 10. For students to continue their education to Grade 12, they must move to a bigger centre such as Melamchi or Kathmandu. FHC and the School Board are currently working hard to include Grade 11-12 at Batase.

This will make the school in this village an important centre for education in this region. As well as donating land, FHC is funding two new teaching positions specialising in Mathematics and IT. The future is looking very bright for the school in Batase, which means our kids will continue to have access to strong educational resources. And supporting our kids through their educational journey is only possible with your continued help.

Going onto Grade 11 & 12



Sujan has gathered FHC-sponsored students together for a meeting to discuss their further education. They are going on to study Grade 11 and 12 but to do this they must move to the township of Melamchi.

Sujan is explaining to them what life will be like in Melamchi and at their new school. He will also be asking them about their future aims and explain to them the support they will be receiving from FHC to reach those goals.

Congratulations Batase School



Inter-school rivalry is on show and the competition is very hot!

Congratulations to all of the students from the Batase School for your outstanding performances, both outside and in the classrooms.

This inter-school program was organised by the local Melamchi municipality and included all students in Grade 1 to 12 from the schools within the region. The program included competitions in volleyball and many other disciplines.



We are very proud of the Batase School. The students performed way above their weight, winning the boys and girls volleyball trophies. Gold for both the boys and girls teams. The boys competed against five other school teams and the girls had to battle it out with two other local schools.

Batase also did well in the debating, quiz competition, essay writing and public speaking.

This school competition is a yearly event.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Thanks Howard



Thank you Howard Smith of Edge Hill for this massive collection of 10-cent bottles and tins. Your contribution has an impact on the lives of our kids in Nepal. It allows us to purchase food and other items for the children in the hostel.

This collection is in addition to many other collections from our friends of FHC and amounts to thousands of dollars raised. We're so grateful to everyone who is supporting us in this way. Your contribution means a lot. If you would like to contribute in this way, visit the last page of this newsletter to learn how.

Or you can take your containers to one of the 'Containers for Change' depots and use our code C10010512 to direct money to FHC.

Thanks Boonah (SE Qld)



Peter Trehearn and his friends in Boonah continue to support FHC by collecting eligible containers for the 'Containers for Change' project. Boonah is a stronghold of adventure activity and many people there have been to Nepal and are happy to support FHC.

The Collector only comes to Boonah from Beaudesert on a Monday so Peter has to time his returns for Monday morning only. We are very appreciative of this contribution from our FHC outpost.

HNY Nepal – 2079



On 2nd of April this year, Nepal celebrated the first day of 2079 as per the Nepalese Hindu calendar system.

Nepal follows the ancient Hindu Calendar called Bikram Sambat (or Vikram Samvat). Because this calendar follows the sun and moon, its translation onto the Gregorian calendar is not static. Consequently their New Year can vary between our March or April. This year it is 2 April.

But why 2079 when the Gregorian Calendar is 2022?

The Nepal calendar was introduced by King Vikramaditya in 57BC to celebrate victory over the Sakas (an invading group of nomadic Iranian peoples). As our calendar starts with the birth of Christ (2,022 years ago), the Nepal calendar started 57 years prior (2,079 years ago).

Nepal travel UPDATE

Nepal is open for business!

Last news letter we talked about travel to Nepal and what is required. Circumstances are changing so here is an update.

1. **Visas** – all visas are multi entry, meaning you can leave Nepal and return on the one visa. Visa's are available on arrival (by air or overland) or you can pre-plan (<https://www.immigration.gov.np/page/visa-on-arrival>). Another useful website: <https://visaguide.world/asia/nepal-visa/> If getting a visa-on-arrival, they happily accept US dollars (US\$30 for 15 days; US\$50/30; US\$125/90)

2. **Covid rules** (to exit Australia and enter Nepal) – rules and regulations for travel to Nepal are changing rapidly as the Covid pandemic situation improves. As of writing, **fully-vaccinated travellers are NOT required to have a PCR test** done to either leave Australia or arrive in Nepal. Those without the vaccination certificate have to present a negative result from a PCR test taken within 48 hours of travel to Nepal. <https://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/destinations/asia/nepal>



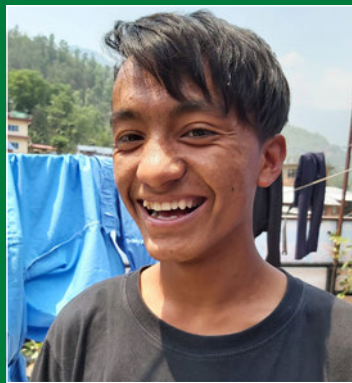
Sunil Tamang

Sunil is one of the most talented and inspirational kids from our hostel. He is from Helambhu-5, in Labagau region. It takes about four hours to walk from there to Batase.

Sunil came to FHC's Hostel in 2016 with his younger sister, Samjhana, because after losing their father, their mother remarried and moved away. Now, Sunil too is sitting for his SLC.

Sunil aspires to go onto university and become a doctor. He loves essay writing, public speaking, football and volleyball.

We wish Sunil the very best with his SLC exams so he can make his dreams come true.



Som Bahadur Tamang

Som is from Batase village. He came to FHC's hostel in 2016 with his brother and sister. His parents separated and found it difficult to care for all of the children so FHC is helping support Som and his siblings with their education. Now Som is sitting for his SLC exam so he can go onto Higher Secondary School.

Som wants to become a trekking guide in the future. He loves poem writing, public speaking, running, volleyball and football.

We wish Som the best with his exams so he can go on and reach his dreams.



Sharmila Tamang

Sharmila is from Chhajogau village in Helambhu region. She has been with us at the Hostel for 10 years, coming here in Grade 1. She is from a large family with one sister and five brothers. Her parents couldn't afford to keep her and provide an education so FHC invited her into the Hostel.

Sharmila has a strong work ethic. She volunteers at the Hostel helping the younger kids with their study. She also helps on the farm and helps with keeping the Hostel clean and tidy. She loves dancing and singing and aspires to become an English teacher.

Good luck with the exams Sharmila.



Pasang Tamang

Pasang Tamang is from Kalleri village, nextdoor to Batase. He came to the FHC Hostel in 2016 after his mother passed away. She was badly injured in the earthquake and without proper medical assistance, died after some time. A very stressful time for the family. His father worked abroad and when he returned, remarried. Pasang has three sisters also being cared for in our Hostel. A brother and another sister are living with an uncle.

With your support Pasang has now finished Grade 10 and is sitting his SLC exams to go onto further study. He loves to play volleyball and football, and wants to join the Nepalese Army in the future. We know he will be a good leader.



Biraj Tamang

Biraj is from Urlenj village. He came to FHC's Hostel in 2016 and is now sitting for his SLC.

Biraj sadly lost his father in the earthquake. His mother remarried and deserted him so FHC took him into their Hostel to board and educate him. He is part of our family now. And now he is on the verge of going onto Higher Secondary School. We are very proud of Biraj. He loves reading and writing and he also plays volleyball. He is very good student and wants to become a farmer and teacher in his village.

All the best Biraj. We wish for your dream to come true and to become a good leader for your community.



Mingmar Lama

Mingmar from Chitre village in Helambhu region and has been staying with us here in FHC's hostel for 10 years. She came to us in Grade 1.

Mingmar never knew her mother, losing her at a very early age. Her father remarried and moved away to another district for work so she came to live with us at the Hostel.

Now with your support, she is sitting for her SLC so she can go onto Higher Secondary School.

She is a disciplined student and very supportive of the other children in the Hostel. She has a talent for painting and drawing. Her dream is to become a teacher.

We wish you the best Mingmar.



Akriti Tamang

Akriti is from Katunje village near Batase. Akriti came to our hostel in 2016 after she lost her father at the age of 7 years and her mother was too unwell to care for her. Akrita's two sisters also live with us at the hostel. Now, she is sitting for her SLC to go onto higher education.

Akriti loves dancing and is very good at public speaking. She hopes to become a leader in her community and work for the government in the future. She wants to advance gender equality in Nepal and improve the lives of women, especially opportunities for young girls. She understands and appreciates the opportunity she has been given by FHC.

Good luck Akriti.



Sangam Tamang

Sangam is from Helambhu. He came to our FHC Hostel five years ago and has now finished his Grade 10. He is sitting for his SLC exam to go onto Grade 11 and 12.

Sangam's parents separated and his father remarried and deserted the family. His mother is too ill to support him so we invited him into the Hostel.

He loves sports and is a dedicated student, working hard with his studies.

We wish Sangam all the best with the SLC exams and his future career ambitions.



HOW CAN I HELP?

There are many useful ways you can contribute to our cause.

BECOME A MEMBER



For just \$10/year you can become a member of Friends of Himalayan Children.

You will be added to our email database and notified of up-coming FHC activities and events. Members get a 10% discount. And you will receive a quarterly news letter

with all of the latest news about what has been happening in Batase and beyond. You can join online at:

www.f-hc.org/support/become-a-member

FHC DONATION TINS



Do you know of a high pedestrian-traffic venue (ie. café, bakery, corner shop, butchery) that would be willing to have one of our charity tins displayed on their counter?

If so, please contact Jonathan on 0414 281 196

If the tin is lost or stolen, the venue will have no liability whatsoever.

We can also supply a chain and attach the tin to the counter.

FUNDRAISING IDEAS?

We have nearly 600 people who are paid up members or who donate regularly to FHC.

If you have any ideas for a fundraiser, however small, please email Tim Trehearn at: donations@f-hc.org

If you would like to give a talk about FHC to work colleagues or friends, please let us know and we can supply pull-up banners and advertising materials.

Every cent counts and we are responding to more and more needy children in Batase Village.

RECYCLING FOR FHC



Most soft drink cans, plastic bottles, beer bottles and cans, juice poppers, and even Yakult bottles are redeemable. Just look for '10c' printed on the label.

You can take your redeemable containers to any recycling centre in Queensland and the code **C10010512** will direct the money straight to FHC.

Big thank you to the Brisbane recyclers who are already directing refunds to FHC.

Or get your collection to us and we can process them:

- **REDLYNCH:** call/text Jonathan – 0414 281 196; or email pascacleayton@gmail.com with your address for pickup; or drop them off in front of their garage door at 29 Eugenia Cres, Redlynch; or
- **EDGE HILL:** call/text Di Andrews – 0408 180 201, or drop them off at 8 Fleming St, Edge hill; or
- **CARAVONICA:** call/text your location to Annett Musumeci – 0434 702 126 and she can collect; or
- **FRESHWATER:** call/text Maureen Cameron – 0407 737 337, or deliver to 16 Merrybrook Street, Freshwater.
- **ATHERTON:** call/text Mary Frances – 0400 607 323, or deliver to 3B Crisp Close, Atherton.

WANT TO BE A COLLECTOR TOO? email info@f-hc.org

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION



Support a child in Batase

www.f-hc.org/sponsor

FOR JUST \$30 PER MONTH

you can provide essential support for a child to be able to succeed at school to Year 10, while living at home.

You can make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION



Sponsor a child in FHC Hostel

www.f-hc.org/sponsor

FOR JUST \$50 PER MONTH

you can guarantee a child a place in school and the support needed to help the child in our Batase Hostel succeed to Year 10.

You can make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION



Sponsor a youth in Kathmandu

www.f-hc.org/sponsor

FOR JUST \$150 PER MONTH

you can support a young adult attending Higher Secondary School in Melamchi or Kathmandu.

You can make a difference.