



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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Friends of VIN is an SDO

Ever since we entered the world of non-governmental, non-religious, non-profit organizations, we decided to not label ourselves with a negative pre-fix, so Friends of Volunteers Initiative Nepal (FoVIN), Netherlands, calls themselves an SDO – a **Social Development Organization**.

FoVIN was founded in March 2011 and our work centers on putting the efforts for change in the hands of local people and we actively encourage local people to volunteer within their communities, aiming to unite all sectors of society in working together to set up and run local projects. We run these programs with our Nepal-based partner, Volunteers Initiative Nepal (VIN) and once the community is self-sustainable we remove our active presence and move on to a new area. Our goal is to facilitate empowerment and improvement of basic living conditions and to make marginalized communities independent and self-sustainable.

We perform various fundraising activities in Europe, form partnership with private institutions and apart from providing financial support and sending volunteers to Nepal, Friends of VIN also acts as a sounding board for our partner organization in Nepal, VIN.

Happy 2077!



FoVIN NL team would like to wish you all a Happy Nepalese New Year 2077! This year turned out to be quieter than previous years but we were still able to conduct a couple of projects.

We continued to support marginalized Nepalese communities in our key focus areas: education, women's empowerment, and health.

Another special event was the library project we did in collaboration with Mahrberg Library and VIN, but more about that later.

We thank you deeply for your continued support - without you, none of this would be possible.



Having just arrived at Tribhuvan Airport, as per custom, I was offered a beautiful mala (garland) made of marigold.

OUR APPROACH



Poverty is a complex phenomenon; its causes and symptoms are entangled and there is no one-fits-all solution. **FoVIN's mission is to empower marginalized communities** by holistically co-creating healthy, self-sustainable communities where people have access to adequate sanitation, health care, education and economic opportunity. After a period of several years when the community is self-sustainable, we remove our active presence and we move to the next community and repeat our process.

Our five focus areas are:

- ❖ Women's Empowerment
- ❖ Community Health
- ❖ Youth Empowerment
- ❖ Children's Development
- ❖ Environment and conservation



Women's Empowerment

The Women's Empowerment Program is essential for the social and economic development. We have been working with and for the most marginalised women to improve their quality of life and uplift their social and economic status, through income generation activities, formal and informal education, and social awareness workshops.

FoVIN is supporting the continued work of the microcredit cooperative and helps drive women toward autonomy.



Community Health

Nepal has made impressive progress in health outcomes relative to its income level. Life expectancy has been steadily increasing and Nepal's progress in reducing maternal and child deaths has been lauded internationally, even though the maternal mortality remains the highest in the South-East Asia Region. But challenges remain.

Healthcare is not yet universal: access to quality services at an affordable cost remains a goal rather than an achievement for several groups of Nepalis. The rise in non communicable diseases and the constant threat of natural disasters require new approaches.

FoVIN is striving to build a healthier and more sustainable future for Nepal.



Youth Empowerment

The Youth Empowerment Program aims to empower socially and economically youth aged 16 to 30 by means of educational, life skills and entrepreneurship development projects, and to involve them in community development initiatives through Youth Clubs' formation. We aim to reverse this trend by developing and retaining community youth. We want to inspire and encourage Nepal's youth. Engage them in community development or give them vital social and professional skills.



Children's Development

The primary goal of the Children's Development Program is to enhance the holistic development (physical, cognitive, social and psychological) of children aged 3 to 15 and to support the basic education of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It aims to promote children's rights through access to both education, and school- or community-based Children's Clubs.



Environment and Conservation

The Environment and Conservation Program aims to conserve, promote and protect the natural environment and the indigenous knowledge, and to prevent, abate and control water, land and air pollution in order to enhance health, safety and welfare of this and future generations of Nepal.

Program Updates



On the following pages, you will find an overview of VIN's various program activities in 2019. They cover all our project areas; Kavresthali, Okharpauwa, Okhaldhunga and even some projects conducted in Jitpurphedi.



Volunteers on teaching farm



Children participating in winter camps

Program Updates



| Program | Type of Output | Total |
|------------------------|---|-------|
| Women's Empowerment | No. of women involved in the micro-credit system | 1,757 |
| | No. of women trained for entrepreneurship activities | 483 |
| | No. of women who started a business | 75 |
| | No. of goods produced (liquid soap, bags, jewelry, dolls) | 5,815 |
| | No. of women involved in workshops and classes | 984 |
| Children's Development | No. of classes and workshops delivered | 105 |
| | No. of children engaged in creative activities | 1,100 |
| | No. of children educated about their rights and life skills | 700 |
| | No. of children supported through sponsorship | 48 |

| Program | Type of Output | Total |
|----------------------------------|--|-------|
| (Children's Development - con't) | No. of teachers trained on teaching methods | 256 |
| Youth Empowerment | No. of youth trained on plumbing and leadership skills | 31 |
| | No. of people who received a doctor consultation | 522 |
| Community Health | No. of medical supplies provided | 4,774 |
| | No. of people involved in health research | 239 |
| | No. of people educated about diseases and use of antibiotics | 804 |
| Environment and Conservation | No. of parents and children educated about hygiene and nutrition | 230 |
| | No. of students educated about waste management | 86 |
| | No. of farmers trained about permaculture | 35 |

A Dream Come True – the Women's Business Center in Tarakshwor



With the support of Friends of VIN – UK, VIN was able to open the Women's Business Center at the end of November 2019.

It's a multifunctional building which will serve as headquarters of the Jitpurphedi Women Agriculture Cooperative Limited cooperative, and as a venue for cooperative meetings, women workshops and classes



Volunteers 2019

2019 was a challenging year as we saw a decline in numbers - and we rely on both their financial and human resource contributions for the projects to run.

The countries where our volunteers came from:
Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China,
Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France,
Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea,
Lithuania, Malta, Mauritius, Netherlands, New Zealand,
Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scotland,
Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland,
Taiwan, UK, USA



Library Project in Okhaldhunga

Made possible with the cooperation of Mahrberg Library and volunteers

Okhaldhunga



Our Nepalese partner Volunteers Initiative Nepal runs multiple projects in various VDCs in Nepal in both Kathmandu and Okhaldhunga districts; Kavresthali, Okharpauwa, Taluwa, Thulachhap and Bhadaure.

Friends of VIN has decided to focus on supporting and raising awareness about projects in Okhaldhunga, a remote area located approx. 240 km east of Kathmandu. But improved infrastructure now allows for “only” 8-10 hrs travel to reach Okhaldhunga which is quite a big improvement compared to 3 years ago when the journey typically took 15-17 hrs. This is hardly exceptional as an estimated 36% of Nepal’s 29 million people live at least a two-hour walk from the nearest all-season road, and 15 out of Nepal’s 75 districts are not connected by road. 60 % of the main road network and almost all rural roads are dry-season tracks that cannot be operated during the rainy season.

We are active in 3 VDCs:

1. Thulachhap
2. Taluwa
3. Bhadaure

Each VDC is divided into 9 wards, home to approx. 1900 households, with a total population of around 10,000 people. There are now 24 schools and 20 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers. For all projects executed in Okhaldhunga in 2018, please see the table on the next page



Our Focus



Specifically, FoVIN focuses on Women's Empowerment and health and sanitation. We held several project management and leadership skills trainings for the women of Bhadaure and Thulachhap and did a Team Building and Group Dynamics training for Taluwa Multipurpose Cooperative Limited, established in 2014, and for women belonging to Thulachhap VDC.

The trainings have been focusing on team building to facilitate the way women need to work together when they are part of a cooperative but also on conflict resolution and project management. The training was composed of a mix of exercises and theory. Afterwards, the team shared its training plan and lessons learned to the VIN team for future trainings.



VIN has been conducting the women's empowerment program in Okhaldhunga since 2014. The program was started from Taluwa and expand to Thulachap from 2017. In Taluwa, Siddicharan Municipality ward 1, 55 women groups with 342 women has formed a cooperative. In Thulachap, Siddhicharam Municipality ward 2, 25 women groups with 150 women has formed a cooperative. In 2017, VIN has conducted co-operative management training, sanitary pad making training, English and computer class, life skills training, women rights, and domestic violence campaigns with women.

Women Empowerment



The Women's Empowerment Program is essential for the social and economical development of the areas where our organization is working. The program has been implemented for 12 years in Jitpurphedi, three in Kavresthali and 11 in Okhaldhunga district. During this time, we have been working with and for the most marginalised women to improve their quality of life and uplift their social and economic status, through income generation activities, formal and informal education, and social awareness workshops. The goal of the program is to empower women socially and economically through education, life skills and income generation initiatives. This program aims at meeting three objectives, around which rotate the three main projects, active in four municipalities: Jitpurphedi, Kavresthali, Taluwa and Thulachhap.



Women attending sewing class in
Kavresthali May 2018.

Important Achievements



The most important achievements of the Women's Empowerment Program in 2019 are:

- The establishment of the Tarakeshwor Women Business Centre in Tiniple (Jitpurphedi), a multifunctional building which serves as the headquarters of the micro-credit co-operative, as a venue for cooperative meetings, women workshops and classes. The building was inaugurated by State Urban Development Minister Rambir Mandharon on November 28th. The inauguration of the building and the Puja celebration showed a great participation of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders in Jitpurphedi, with 335 people attending the inauguration and 250 attending the Puja.
- Samsung sponsored a week-long business and entrepreneurship training attended by 30 women. Ten laptops were donated by Samsung and are now available at Tarakeshwor Women Business Centre. Thanks to it, a computer literacy project started in December 2019.
- The collaboration with the children's development program that lead to the organization of a gender equality and sexual harassment campaign conducted in two schools of the area with 216 participants.





A Story of Empowerment

Kopila Adhikari has been living in Lamichhani village, Kavresthali, for 10 years. Born and raised in Makwonpur, Hetauda, the 35-year-old woman is now leading a very busy life: mother of two young children, she has to take care of the household, work in the field and breed her cows. Her passion, however, is handcrafting. So, when we organized a 10 days jewellery training in Lamichhani she participated with enthusiasm. From there on, she has become a creative and fierceful jewellery maker: throughout 2019, Kopila produced and sold a total of 10 000 pieces of jewellery . Kopila especially enjoys producing necklaces: she buys the crystals from Ason Bazar in Kathmandu, she spends 15 to 30 minutes on each necklace and then sells them from 150 to 200 rupees per piece, generating a good profit from the sale. She is really hard working and sometimes would stay up until midnight making necklaces. She is also very creative and always looking for new inspirations: sometimes she buys jewellery in the market then tears it apart to “reconstruct” them as she likes. Right now Kopila is only selling her jewellery in her village, so she can’t afford to rely only on the jewellery making to pay for the fees of her children’s school. This being said, she also sells milk and vegetables and, since recently, cauliflowers. But Kopila never runs out of ideas to make her jewellery business grow: currently, she’s thinking of selling her necklaces during events at Kavresthali schools, such as a “parent’s day” or an “exhibition day”. Also, she is working hard to become a jewellery making trainer.



Community Learning Center



A Community Learning Center (CLC) in Nishankhe, Okhaldhunga, has been under construction since 2018. VIN is constructing a two and half storey building with funding from Taiwan aid. The target is to finish the project by the end of the year as the inauguration will be in February 2020.

This is a long-awaited dream coming true for us; to have a center for learning which bring people together both locally and online. The opportunity to have such a center will ensure that there is a place to conduct training; a place where people can access books, newspapers and other literature and where people will have access to the internet. The CLC will also provide a place for people to hold bigger gatherings of up to 100 people

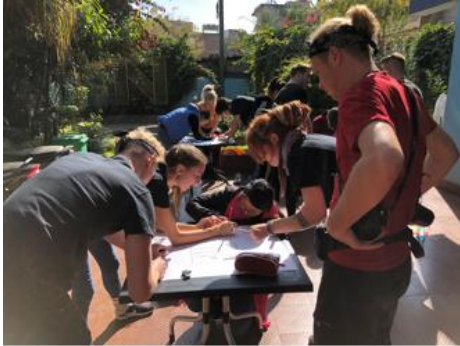


Library Project



At the end of 2019, FoVIN and VIN teamed up with Mahrberg Library for a library and computer lab project at the newly established Community Learning Center in Okhaldhunga.

The group stayed for a couple of nights in Kathmandu preparing the last things before leaving for Nisankhe.



Volunteer preparations in full swing



Packing the jeeps for the 10 hour journey



On our way to Okhaldhunga

The volunteer activities consisted of manual labor, mural painting, refurbishing the library, a children's center and a computer lab.



Computer lesson in the
new computer lab



Manual labor



The refurbished library



Mural painting



Story time in the children's center

During the week, the Mahrberg Library volunteers conducted various activities with the children from the Himalayan Secondary School and the Raktamala Basic School.



International School Dusseldorf



For the 6th year in a row, students from the International School Dusseldorf travelled to Nepal in .

Trekking through the beautiful Himalayan villages in the Annapurna Foothills, the students experienced life on the same trails travelled by local people between villages and schools.

They returned to Kathmandu for a community service project; painting the inside walls of a local school in Kavresthali to make three rooms more child-friendly. The group also raised money for child-friendly furniture for the ECD – Early Childhood Development – classroom.

A big thanks to all the students who spent their Spring break to give Nepalese children a brighter learning environment.



ISD students in one of the classrooms they painted

Learning to Be a World Citizen



Thank you for
your continued
support during
2019!



We look forward
to seeing you in
2020.

From the handover of the library in Dec 2019 - Ann Wilson and Bhupendra Ghimire (VIN)

THANK YOU!

Friends of VIN team NL

