



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

consciousconnectionsfoundation.org

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Dear Friends of CCF,



**Message from the
CCF Board
Vice-Chair**

We have always said at CCF that we want to work ourselves out of a job. In 2023, with your help, we've made good progress on this goal in the best way possible. This year, we celebrated the graduation of the Baseri Clinic (our oldest project) into an official government run healthcare center, and the successful creation of a financial endowment for one of our biggest endeavors to date: the Girl's Education Program – an endowment which will ensure the stipends this program provides will serve Nepali girls far into the future.

In reaching these huge milestones, we let fly two programs we have nurtured – and which have nurtured us – from the very beginning. After years of hard work and collaboration, we now pass full control where it was always destined to be: the hands of our Nepali partners.

In the midst of all this, 2023 was a precedent setting year for CCF's work with women's health and menstrual hygiene which has grown to become our largest program. Pema Gurung, co-founder of Drokpo Nepal and our partner through much of this expressed the importance and purpose of this work well when she said: *"the intention [is] to equip women with the skills to produce reusable sanitary pads and handle menstrual hygiene with dignity. [We] believe that nobody deserves to feel guilty about something over which they have no control."*

In 2023, these programs reached nearly 1,200 women in some of the most remote regions and indigenous communities from central to far Eastern Nepal. To do so, CCF's Menstrual Health Program Coordinator, Kesang Yudron and her teams braved landslides, monsoons, and days

trekking far from the nearest roads to work with community leaders on the ground in over a dozen villages. I am very proud to say that in each of these situations, it was the community that approached CCF to come and deliver these trainings.

Our goal has never been to become the biggest NGO in this or any arena, but only to do our job well where it is needed and do it with integrity. Ironically, this slow and patient approach has made us well known through word of mouth as one of the trusted organizations to seek out in Nepal for support on women's health.

The year ahead will be one of reflection and deliberation. As we relinquish two long-held pillars of our work, this growing grassroots desire for access to information, training, and resources for women's health makes it clear that our Menstrual Health Program has a unique opportunity to fill a growing need. After all, CCF exists "to invest in the power of women and girls to be key participants in their society." We now have the incredible opportunity to reflect with our partners in Nepal about what manifestations this can take next.

Thank you for being a part of this incredible journey. It is a joy to walk through it with you.

Namaste,

Cameron Conner
CCF Board Vice-Chair

CCF's MISSION –

*Through Nepali-North American partnership,
CCF invests in the power of women and girls
to be key participants in their society.*



WHAT CCF DOES AND HOW

In order to clearly articulate the values, beliefs, and motivating principles that guide CCF's work in Nepal & for the sake of accountability to both our donors and partners on the ground in Nepal, CCF's Board of Directors uses the following guidelines "What CCF Does and How" to serve as a crucial supplement to our mission statement.

CCF believes that when women and girls thrive, the world is better off. We support women and girls in Nepal becoming key participants in healthy societies by:

- **Partnering** with trusted Nepalis to identify the most pressing issues in their community and generating collaborative ways of addressing them.
- **Distributing funds** to accomplish these objectives through proposals that adhere to CCF's guiding values and the criteria created to reflect them.
- **Linking communities** and individuals across North America with the rich life of Nepal through fundraising and education.

What CCF does...

- Makes small and targeted grants
- Focuses primarily on women/girls
- Is locally led and cooperative
- Is relationship-based
- Holds a long-term perspective

CCF's motivating principles...

- A healthy society is one in which girls and women thrive.
- Working in ongoing relationships under Nepali leadership stimulates mutual respect, ownership, learning, trust, and long-term commitment to further benefit.
- Taking a long-term perspective creates lasting effect and enduring competence.



CCF PROPOSAL CRITERIA

When a proposal is brought before the CCF Board of Directors, the following criteria are used to determine whether or not it should be funded. These criteria were developed in 2019 as a part of our “What CCF Does and How” initiative in order to help ensure the work we do aligns with our values and furthers our vision.

CCF Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- 1) Does it increase the ability of women and girls to thrive as key participants in a healthy society?
- 2) Is it Nepali-led by a person/group we trust?
- 3) Is it a collaborative effort between CCF and the community being served? What is each of our contributions?
- 4) Does it invest in and empower the local community?
- 5) In 20 years, will this have proven to be a good idea?

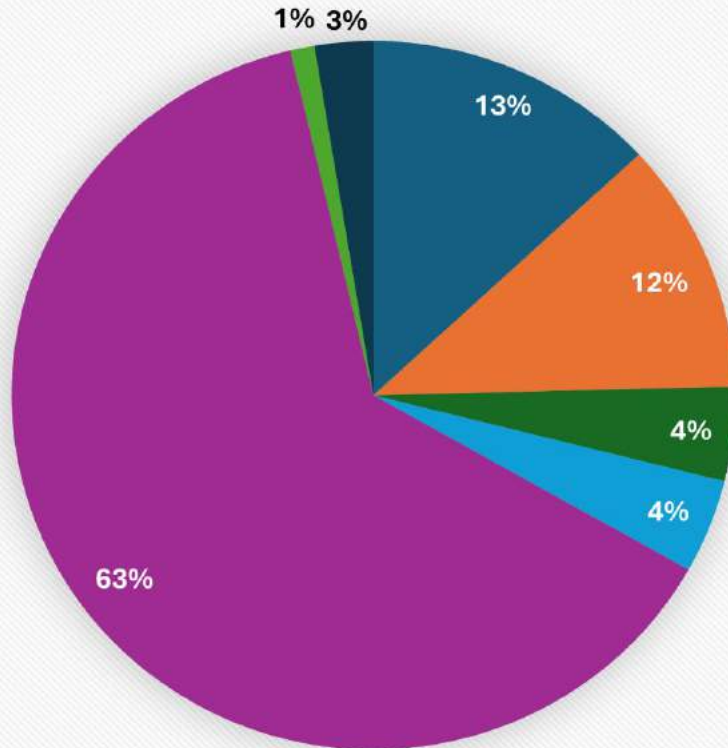
Bonus Criteria

- 1) Does it create interconnections (both within Nepal and between North Americans and Nepalis) and lay the foundation for more opportunities down the line?
- 2) Is it adaptive and emergent (both before, during, and after)? Is it listening for and responsive to what is truly needed?
- 3) Does it reflect a commitment to the communities where we work, enhancing their potential?



2023 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

Where Your Money Goes



In 2023, CCF granted **\$45,386** to its partners in Nepal. The grants were distributed as follows:

- **\$6,110** – Power of 5 Child Education Stipends
- **\$5,358** – Deurali Community Service Center (aka Baseri Clinic) for salaries and building maintenance
- **\$2,000** – Girls' Higher Education: Joy Attwood & Individual Scholarships
- **\$2,000** – Girls' Education Program Administrator
- **\$29,418** – Menstrual Education Programs
- **\$500** – Emergency Relief

Our Administrative Expenses were:

- **\$1,218** – Administrative Expenses

In 2023, CCF spent **97 cents of every dollar** donated directly on programs in Nepal. Only 3 cents/\$ went to administrative expenses.

Conscious Connections Foundation

2023 PROGRAMS

EDUCATION

- Power of 5 Child Education Fund
- Girls' Higher Education
- Girls' Education Program Administrator



HEALTHCARE

- Baseri Clinic
- Menstrual Health Programs
 - Job Creation
 - Resource Distribution
 - Menstrual Education
 - Training Manual

Conscious Connections Foundation

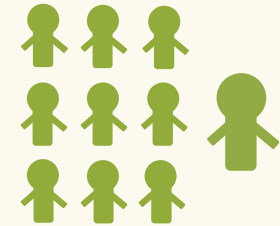
2023 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

121 CHILDREN
ABLE TO
ATTEND SCHOOL
This year!



*Raised for CCF's Education
Programs*

34 GIRLS
ABLE TO ATTEND
HIGHER
EDUCATION
SINCE 2015



1,375
YEARS OF SCHOOLING
PROVIDED
SINCE THE INCEPTION
OF THESE PROGRAMS

EDUCATION

WHY KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL IS IMPORTANT

When a Nepali girl isn't in school she is 3X more likely to be married before the age of 18, have children at an early age, and continue the traditional cycle of exclusion and poverty. Girls, families, and society suffer.

Research also shows that *two of the top ten most effective responses to climate change are investments in girls' education and voluntary family planning*. Combined, they reduce carbon emissions more than any other solution identified. See www.drawdown.org

CCF partners with Nepali organizations that help struggling families keep their girl children in school without any cost to the family. Every eligible family receives \$10/month as an educational stipend and in return they provide monthly evidence of the girl's attendance and progress in school. The program's focus is on girls but boys in need are not excluded.



Gathering of past & present Joy Attwood scholars in 2023



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

– Nelson Mandela

EDUCATION

THE POWER OF 5

The Power of 5 Education Fund provides low-income children access to education through a monthly stipend program. CCF partners directly with the Association of Craft Producers (ACP) to keep 120+ children (with an emphasis on girls) in school. In 2014 CCF committed to creating an endowment for this program that would allow it to be financially secure well into the future. In 2021 CCF fully funded the endowment and the interest from that fund covers the stipends for the 120 students for 6 years of schooling.

In 2023, CCF raised \$10,100 for ACP's education programs. This combined with the interest earned from the endowment funded the stipends needed to keep 120 children in school. \$6,110 of what was raised allowed for the expansion of one more year of schooling for the 120 children in the program. The balance of the funds went to the 3 Joy Attwood college scholarships and CCF's portion of the program administrators salary.

Since Power of 5 began in 2012, over **1,375 years of schooling** have been provided in K-10 education for an average of 110 children educated per year.



Sangam Luitel-Power of 5 recipient in grade 6 in 2012



Sangam Luitel-2018 Joy Attwood Scholar recipient

Now each year it is CCF's goal to raise extra money for further expansion of the program to eventually cover all 10 years of schooling.

Following girls from early on, keeping them in school and providing bigger opportunities is what CCF is about.



Sangam with her mother in 2023. She is studying to be a lawyer.

EDUCATION THE JOY ATTWOOD SCHOLARSHIP

In 2014, CCF created a Girls' College Scholarship. This competitive scholarship, administered by the Association for Craft Producers, gives three Nepali girls (with the need, ability, and desire) a way to continue their education into the 11th and 12th class.



Sara Ranjit – Age 16

Inspired by her cousin, Sara wants to become a Chartered Accountant. Her ultimate aim is to provide financial literacy. "People are not aware how financial literacy can improve their financial condition. I want to learn about it myself and apply the knowledge to help others." She thinks that financial and investment concepts should be taught at an early age. Sara is currently studying Business Management in Everest Innovative College.

Sara was involved in Scouts in her school days. She enjoyed and actively participated in various events and social activities through Scouts. Her hobbies are dancing and drawing. Sara shared that she was awarded the first prize in 'rangoli' competition.

Meet our 2023 scholarship recipients!



Diya Maharjan – Age 16

Diya aspires to be a doctor or a nurse to help people suffering from life threatening diseases particularly cancer, which a disease she has lost several family member to. To fulfill this dream, she is currently studying Science in Bernhardt College.

"My parents are my greatest strengths," Daya says. "They support me in my happiness and sadness. I am what I am today because of them."

Diya wants to use her education to address the gender discrimination that she says is still deep rooted in society: "People think men are better and greater than women, which is not true. Creating awareness and educating on equality is required to reduce the discrimination.", expresses Diya.



Niva Maharjan – Age 16

Niva now attends the National College of Computer Sciences (NCCS) where she is studying Computer Science, Maths and Business Studies.

During the gap of 2 months after her secondary school examinations, Niva took her first computer class. That is when she realized that she was interested in programming. She aims to become an IT professional and wants to build an application that will help people in rural areas. If she ever gets to start her own IT company, she wishes to give more opportunity to women.

Remembering the COVID lock-down, she recalls that initially it was difficult to attend online classes. But after her family bought a laptop, it was much more convenient. "My parents have worked hard for me. I have to justify their hard work by studying well and being humble."

EDUCATION

CCF COLLABORATION WITH OTHER NGOS IN NEPAL



First Joy Attwood scholar, Heema Maharjan, attends a one day WomenLead workshop.

To create a greater cumulative impact in girl's education & women's empowerment, CCF collaborates with like-minded Nepali NGOs that provide young women with the skills, education, support, and opportunities to become changemakers. Women LEAD is one such partner. Their 12 month leadership course provides young women with a safe space in which to learn and connects them with a growing community of other young women who share their vision. They work with high school girls in Kathmandu ages 16 to 18 years old, focusing on intensive leadership training, skills-building opportunities, mentoring, a peer-support network, and university preparation.

The girls chosen for Women LEAD come from diverse backgrounds but share a passion for creating change in Nepal. Many of the participants had never written a resume or spoken up in public before attending a Women LEAD program. In 2020, the Joy Attwood Scholarship started requiring all applicants to apply to the LEAD program and in 2021 Riza Prajapati, became the first Joy Attwood scholar to be accepted. No JA Scholars were chosen in 2023 but the opportunity to apply is a great learning experience for them.

Riza Prajapati, talking about her Women Lead experience "it has totally changed me joining WomenLead. Before I was introverted now I have developed my confidence"



EDUCATION

POWER OF 5 & JOY ATTWOOD SCHOLARSHIP IMPACT

Sara Sanjit has been an enthusiastic recipient of the Power of 5 Education Fund stipend since soon after its inception in 2012. She was also a merit and need based winner of the Joy Attwood College Scholarship in 2023.



Sara Sanjit

In early 2023, CCF was able to interview Sara. She is in grade 11 and has seen that “women lack financial education and how to make money, they don’t have much financial literacy” she said and she wants to learn and share financial knowledge with women. Her dream is “to become a Chartered Accountant and help women”. She thanks everyone for this incredible opportunity to continue her education.

“When girls are educated and free to pursue their passions, they contribute more to a thriving society. When women have a voice, they raise it to demand a life that is greater than what they’ve been told they have a right to expect. And these demands change the future for everyone.”

-Melinda French Gates



Sara & Mother

GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR – An Evolving Situation

As CCF's Power of 5 and Joy Attwood higher education scholarship funds have grown, the administrative and reporting requirements have grown along with them.

In 2022, Pawan Dhakal was hired to replace Prastuti Dhakal as the Girls' Education Program Administrator. Prastuti left to pursue her Masters in Social Justice. Pawan started as the new Program Administrator in 2022 with the goal of helping CCF and ACP oversee the education programs, report on their progress, and address any difficulties they might encounter. He was also responsible for mentoring and counseling the girls and their parents as they move through the educational system and through puberty.

In March of 2023, CCF asked Pawan what excited him about his position and he said "girl child education not only helps to encourage the education of female children by providing a monthly allowance but it also helps the family understand the importance of education and encourages the continued study of all of their children."

Pawan did a great job at ACP but unfortunately at the end of 2023 he had to leave to accept a position with a higher salary to support his young family.

Although ACP has tried to recruit someone to replace Pawan they have been unsuccessful in filling the position in 2024 due to the salary CCF & ACP are able to offer. As CCF and ACP grapple with the challenges of attracting and keeping talented young people in the competitive job market of Kathmandu, we are assessing how we can make the position more attractive to retain a qualified person for the long term.



*Former CCF Program Administrator
Pawan Dhakal*

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2023 HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS: THE BASERI CLINIC

3,500 PATIENTS
SERVED
THIS YEAR

20 women given
maternity care

11 BABIES
DELIVERED



MOST COMMON TREATMENTS:

- IV Rehydration
- Fevers
- Burns
- Maternal Care
- Gastric Issues

HEALTHCARE

THE DEURALI COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER'S BASERI CLINIC



The Baseri Clinic opened its doors in February 2010, to address everything from maternal healthcare issues to burns, breaks, and intestinal disorders. Since its opening, thousands of people have been served.

Tragically, on April 25, 2015, the first Baseri Clinic was reduced to rubble in the massive magnitude 7.8 earthquake that struck Nepal. With help from volunteers in the US and Nepal, CCF constructed a five-room, insulated, and earthquake resilient building in its place. This new clinic is easily accessible to all of the surrounding communities and was fully built and functioning within 14 months of the earthquake.

In 2023, after several years of discussion, Baseri Community leaders and CCF representatives met with local government officials to finally take the next step in the Clinic's evolution and pass day-to-day responsibility for funding and management to the Nepali government. The government's respect for the clinic and eagerness to invest in its long-term continuation is a testament to all of the incredible work that has been done over the last 14 years.

THE BASERI CLINIC TRANSITION

Since it first opened its doors in 2010, the Baseri Clinic has served approximately 35,000 patients. The staff have helped safely deliver over a hundred newborns and saved dozens of lives. Even though it was destroyed in the 2015 earthquake, the community made a temporary shelter and the clinic served as a focal point for care during that difficult time. Best of all, however, the Clinic has become a beacon of pride for the Baseri Community and they want it to remain there forever.

In 2017, the Nepali government approached CCF and the community to learn more about how they could partner with the Clinic. They were so impressed with what had been established that they proposed a partnership to build on the foundation we had established.

They proposed the government pay 9 months of the salary for two of the positions, with CCF covering the rest. For the last five years, this partnership blossomed with the clinic's capacity growing and the government also using the clinic to train new medical staff in remote primary care.

In 2023, CCF Chair Denise Attwood and the Baseri Clinic Council met with Ward Chair Ramesh

Dakal to discuss transiting day-to-day operations of the clinic entirely to government. At a meeting of over 40 community members, CCF representatives, and government officials, a deal was negotiated:

Starting in late 2023, all salaries, all medicine, and all future expansion of the clinic are being provided by the Nepali government. This transition opens access to new resources including funding from the government for improvements to the birthing center, lab equipment for doing blood work, as well as a refrigerator and other medical equipment. It also ensures that the clinic becomes and remains a permanent part of the country's healthcare system far into the future.

Thus far into the first year of the transition, community members from Baseri report that the process has been a success and the government is carrying out its promise.

It has been remarkable to facilitate this transition. The Clinic began as a dream of previous CCF Board Member Sita Gurung who saw both her brother & her sister die from lack of medical care in Baseri. This dream survived the devastation and rebirth during the 2015 earthquakes. This next stage will take the vision even further.





*Inside the Baseri Clinic birthing room
with CMA Goma Gurung*



Baseri head CMA Kamal Magar

A Fond Farewell to the Baseri Clinic:
Leaving her in good hands!



EVOLVING SUPPORT FOR THE BASERI COMMUNITY

CCF will always remain engaged and supportive of the Baseri Community. Since we are no longer responsible for regular operations, we can now assist with larger emergencies, special needs or community requests that the government is unable to cover.

One such opportunity arose in the fall of 2023 when CCF was contacted by the Youth Project committee Director, Uttam Gurung about a particular need in the Baseri/Dhadagaun community. He explained that when village residents die, their tradition is to cremate the bodies. To date there was no shelter for the friends or family members who care for the bodies to stay overnight or during rainstorms. It is mandatory that people stay with the body until it has completely burned to ashes. The village had gathered donations for the shelters but it was not enough for the final construction so they requested that CCF fund the \$3500 needed to construct 3 shelters. Now the area has three comfortable shelters for families to stay in while their loved ones are cremated.



The Villagers of Dhadagaun construct one of the cremation huts

One of the completed cremation huts in Baseri/Dhadagaun.



Conscious Connections Foundation

2023 MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM IMPACT

1,270

Reusable menstrual
hygiene kits distributed



Over 250 comprehensive
menstrual hygiene manuals
distributed

What's in a CCF
Reusable Menstrual
Pad Kit?

3 Shields (2 day, 1 night)

5 Napkins

1 Soap

2 Underwear

1 Carry bag

1 Use and care instructions
manual

1,170 Women

*trained in
reproductive health
and menstrual
hygiene*



Total cost to produce
1,270 kits



“Our intention was to equip women with the skills to produce reusable sanitary pads and handle menstrual hygiene with dignity. Our team believes that nobody deserves to feel guilty about something over which they have no control.”

– Drokpo Nepal Co-Founder and Program Coordinator,
Pema Gurung

GIRLS' & WOMEN'S MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The response to CCF's menstrual hygiene programs has been tremendous! Women & girls who have received trainings have been active on social media talking about what they have learned which has resulted in more requests for trainings for other groups. Thus CCF's major program funding in 2023 was around menstrual hygiene education.

CCF's Menstrual Pad Project (MPP) weaves together three goals:

1. **EDUCATION**-CCF funds informational menstrual education programs led by trained Nepali women to discuss menstruation, sanitation, family planning, environmental issues, and breaking cultural taboos. Participants in these programs each receive a reusable menstrual pad kit provided by CCF along with training in how to make their own reusable pads.
2. **DISTRIBUTION**-CCF funds and facilitates the distribution of reusable kits along with our menstrual hygiene manual to women in need.
3. **JOB CREATION**-CCF trains and pays a fair wage to low-income women to sew reusable menstrual pad kits for CCF distribution.

CCF menstrual pad kits contain:

- 3 shields (2 day, 1 night)
- 5 napkins
- 1 soap
- 2 underwear
- Carrying bag
- Use and care instructions



HEALTHCARE: MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

CCF MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

MANAGER: *Kesang Yudron*

In 2017, Kesang started volunteering with CCF's work in Menstrual Hygiene Education and in 2019 became CCF's Volunteer Menstrual Hygiene Program Manager in Nepal. In late 2021 she joined the CCF's board of directors.

In 2023 Kesang continued to identify and collaborate with women who wanted menstrual hygiene training and as a result of her incredible relationship building she facilitated the distribution of over 1270 CCF reusable menstrual kits to women in need, and comprehensive menstrual hygiene training to over 1170 women and girls.

As Program Manager, Kesang oversees the menstrual pad workshop, facilitates trainings, and evaluates applicants who want Menstrual Hygiene training. In 2019 & 2020 she led a team to develop CCF's comprehensive MHM training manual for rural, non-literate girls and women. This 29-page manual is illustrated with Nepali centric pictures and written in simple Nepali and has been an integral resource in CCF funded trainings. In 2023 we distributed over 250 manuals to teachers, health clinics and women trainees.

At the end of 2023, Kesang was elected to serve as the Vice Chair for CCF's Board of Directors. We look forward to amazing things from her in the future!



HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Education

JOBS: MENSTRUAL KIT CREATION & WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

In 2023, CCF granted \$11,565 to pay for the sewing and construction of 1270 reusable menstrual hygiene kits. Sewing these pads provides vital work for several women. We choose to make the kits in Nepal in order to provide this employment.

Since March of 2018 through the end of 2023 CCF has funded the making and distribution of over **6,970 reusable menstrual kits!** This has provided training and sustained work for several young Nepali women such as Nilam Sunwar pictured at right. Nilam has worked sewing kits for CCF since we started in 2018, and we are so excited to say that in 2023 she graduated with a Bachelors of Sociology using the funds from her work with CCF to pay for her education. In the future she hopes to be a teacher.



Nilam said she “is grateful to CCF for giving her the opportunity for flexible work hours in a quiet environment. CCF’s part time employment helped her to get time to study, and live and pay for her medical expenses in Kathmandu.”

HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Education

DISTRIBUTION, EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE: Working with the Lhomi Women's Welfare Fund

In 2022 CCF had partnered with the Lhomi Women's Welfare forum to provide menstrual health and hygiene trainings in the remote Sankuswoba region of far eastern Nepal. That training went exceptionally well and we were thrilled when the Lhomi leaders reached out to us again in 2023 to expand the work to Lhomi tribal women in other areas of Nepal.

In June and December of 2023, CCF partnered with the Lhomi Women's Welfare Fund to provide two menstrual health and hygiene trainings for the Lhomi women of Sunsari and Khadari. Working with community leaders, we trained over 244 women during the 4 days of trainings while also distributing 270 reusable kits and teaching the women how to sew their own.

Menstrual education and kit distribution:

- 244 girls & women benefitted
- 270 kits distributed



HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Education

DISTRIBUTION, EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Health & Hygiene Training in the Tsum Valley

In November of 2023 CCF partnered again with Drokpo Nepal, who had received requests by women in the upper Tsum Valley of central Nepal for menstrual hygiene trainings. According to Pema Gurung, co-director of Drokpo, “the journey to Upper Tsum Valley from Kathmandu involved 12 hours of jeep travel and 4 days of hiking. We started our trek over steep terrain, muddy roads, and narrow routes while the rain poured heavily and the path was slippery. The hike was often disrupted by landslide-prone sections and swollen rivers. Despite the challenging and adventurous journey through the rough mountains, our four-women team persisted and made it to our first targeted settlement (Chhokhangparo) in the high Himalayas.”



To facilitate this project, CCF provided funding and Drokpo conducted programs that gave Menstrual Hygiene training, reusable menstrual hygiene kits and pad making training to 458 women in 12 different remote villages and 2 nunneries in this region.

Pema said: “In our training sessions, we equipped women, nuns, and young girls with knowledge about the menstrual cycle, highlighting the importance of hygiene maintenance and family planning and guiding them toward appropriate menstrual products. We had many one on one conversations where our team learned that most of the women frequently turn to temporary solutions like handkerchiefs and headscarves due to cost constraints. This alone can result in a number of health issues. Many of the participants also had misconceptions and insufficient knowledge regarding menses. A large number of respondents didn't know where or why women menstruate.”





CCF Teams Up with Drokpo Nepal to Deliver Hands-On Menstrual Hygiene Training in the Tsum Valley

“This journey wasn't just a hike; it was a mission to break barriers, challenge stigmas, empower communities, and demonstrate that change can be started even in isolated areas of the Himalayas. These mountain women envision a future where young, nuns, and older women can be empowered by destigmatizing menstrual stigma, embracing period literacy, and sustainable menstrual practices.”- Pema

Read the full story online: [The Story of Drokpo Nepal](#)

HEALTHCARE: Menstrual Education

PARTNERING WITH ST. XAVIERS COLLEGE

In October of 2023, CCF teamed up for the first time with the Bachelors of Social Work (BSW) program at St. Xavier's College, Kathmandu. They had reached out to CCF to work with 21 women students pursuing their BSW to train them in the topic of menstrual health.

Each year BSW students do a 12 day service trip into village areas, and they wanted to take MH training into rural areas. To prepare the students, Drokpo Nepal taught them how to conduct Menstrual Hygiene training sessions in remote, rural communities and taught them how to sew their own pads. The students then traveled to the villages of Majhuwa, Sindhuli, and Thulo Paakhar, in the district of Sindhupalchowk to deliver trainings and 500 reusable kits to over 500 women and girls. They also trained the participants in how to make their own pads from locally available materials.

The students found that villagers had very little understanding of menstruation and felt that the basic menstrual health training and reusable menstrual kits were very valuable. They are excited to partner again with CCF in the future.



BSW students teach villagers about Menstrual Hygiene (above) and learn how to sew their own pads (below)



HEALTHCARE: MENSTRUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

EDUCATION: MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANUAL

CCF's early menstrual hygiene training workshops led us to understand that a resource guide on menstruation that women could keep, reference, and share with others was badly needed. After looking for a resource appropriate for all ages, CCF realized that any available materials were far too academic, boring, and not appropriate for the rural, smart—but mostly illiterate—women being taught.

In the spring of 2019, Kesang, CCF's Menstrual Hygiene Program Manager in Nepal, proposed that CCF fund the creation of a mini manual with engaging materials and lots of good, Nepal-centric pictures. A manual written in simple village Nepali that provided accurate information that would compliment our MH trainings. Since this type of material didn't seem to exist, or at least wasn't available to us, we decided to create it and make it available to anyone who wanted to use it under a creative commons license. As MH Program Manager Kesang Yudron put it:

“The manual is a labor of love for all Nepali women who want to talk and learn more about their periods.”

Kesang gathered a Nepali team, including writers, a graphic designer, illustrator, menstrual hygiene expert, and translator and by December of 2020 it was reviewed by rural women and CCF's Menstrual Hygiene Committee members. This wonderful resource was finished and put to use in January of 2021! Since that time we have distributed 1000's throughout Nepal.



What's in the mini-manual:

- Basic biology & anatomy
- What is menstruation (illustrated)
- Health and hygiene during menstruation
- What problems can occur and when to go to a doctor
- Nepali cultural menstrual restrictions and taboos
- Menstrual products available to make or in the market
- Lots of illustrations

Conscious Connections Foundation
2023 DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS

DISASTER RELIEF:

KAGBENI FLOOD RELIEF

On Sunday night, August 13, a calamitous flood all but destroyed the village of Kagbeni in Lower Mustang in Nepal.

Kagbeni, sits a bit above 9000 feet in the Himalayas' Annapurna range. The beautiful village — one of the oldest in the ancient kingdom of Mustang in Nepal — was devastated by the severe flooding that swept through it in the dark of night.

There were no reports of lost lives but for many families, everything they owned was gone, including their homes, their belongings, and even their animals, that provide both sustenance and income.

Engage Nepal, a non-profit based in the US that was founded by former Ambassador to Nepal, Scott DeLisi, approached CCF asking for support for this region. In response, and because of their deep relationships in Kagbeni, CCF granted \$500 from the Baseri Disaster Relief to help Engage Nepal in their direct aid to these villagers.



The flooding of the Kag river swept away 29 structures including homes and hotels and caused damage to 13 more in Kagbeni in Mustang on Sunday evening. Scores of people have been displaced. The mud debris brought by the river either buried homes or washed them away. Photo: Courtesy of Anup KC, chief district officer, Mustang

2024 GOALS – THE YEAR AHEAD

GOAL	ACTIVITIES
Monitor and provide assistance for emergencies that arise	CCF will support its partners as our Nepali contacts advise and in accordance with our mission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should any unexpected emergencies develop. • When floods, landslides and earthquakes occur.
Sustainably cultivate and grow the menstrual health project	CCF will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to fully employ at least one female tailor to create menstrual pad kits. • Fund new menstrual hygiene trainings in both urban and rural Nepal. • Distribute the newly completed menstrual hygiene manuals and kits to workshop participants & others. • Prioritize teaching local leaders to set up and carry out their own trainings. • Expand in our Nepali partners' capacity to grow and carry on this effort.
Support girls' education in urban and rural Nepal	CCF will fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$6,000 for stipends for 120+ students in the Power of 5 Child Education Program at ACP. • \$2,000 for the three merit and need based girl college scholarships at ACP. • \$2,000 for half of the salary of the Administrative Assistant for the educational programs at ACP and investigate how to fair retain a qualified assistant. • Seek to support like-minded women's leadership programs offering complementary work.
Support the Baseri Clinic	CCF will continue to work with the community of Baseri to support them in areas other than the clinic while all day-to-day operations of the clinic will be done by the Nepali government.



“CCF lives in the world of possibilities and our lasting impact happens \$10 at a time. We believe if each of us gives a little it’s no longer pocket change but global change. Join us. We are nimble and effective. From start to finish our projects are Nepali-led and inspired and we get things done!”

— CCF Board

***This is an incredible journey and we need your help.
Whether your contribution is large or small, it all makes a difference.***

DONATE ONLINE: consciousconnectionsfoundation.org/donate

DONATE ON FACEBOOK (fees charged): [conscious connections foundation- ccf](https://consciousconnectionsfoundation-ccf)

DONATE BY MAIL:

Check payable to Conscious Connections Foundation (CCF)

PO Box 342, Spokane, WA 99210

CCF is a 501(c)3 and your donation is tax deductible.

EIN # 47-1602190

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Not everyone can make a financial contribution and we appreciate any help you can offer. If you would like to be involved with CCF and any of our programs, please contact CCF Treasurer Cameron Conner at cameron.nac@gmail.com

FOLLOW OUR BLOG AT:

consciousconnectionsfoundation.org/ccf-blog

LEARN MORE: www.consciousconnectionsfoundation.org

A HISTORY OF CCF IN THE NEWS:

www.thefigtree.org/oct21/100121ganeshccf.html

www.thefigtree.org/nov20/110120fairtradecovid.html

www.thefigtree.org/nov18/110118consciousconnection.html

www.spokesman.com/stories/2016/aug/14/spokane-nonprofit-ganesh-himal-trading-nepal/

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Thank You!

On behalf of all of us at CCF, we would like to thank each of you for the incredible support you have shown us and our friends in Nepal over the years.

The road has been shaky and uncertain, yet you have endured the ride alongside us with unbelievable generosity and compassion. It is due to this strength of community and remarkable network of conscious connections that we see with great excitement what the future holds.

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