



NCO Orphanage Support, Nepal

Reporting period: April 1, 2017 – June 31, 2017

Prepared by: Ganesh Shrestha, Program Manager

Pragya Gautam, Program and M&E Coordinator

Organization: Real Medicine Foundation Nepal (www.realmedicinefoundation.org)

Project title: Orphanage Support

Project location: Kathmandu, Nepal



April–June 2017

Real Medicine Foundation
11700 National Blvd., Suite 234
Los Angeles, CA 90064
+1.310.820.4502

Background

Nepal Children’s Organization (NCO) is a nonprofit organization that houses, educates, and shapes the future of hundreds of vulnerable children throughout Nepal, serving orphans, as well as deserted, conflict-affected, and dependent children of prisoners. The organization has a nationwide presence and is providing shelter to about 500 children in its ten children’s homes.

NCO not only provides shelter for these children, but also all provisions necessary to ensure proper growth and development including formal school education, staff who care for children full time, an environment for physical activities, and psychological support. NCO also provides treatment and care to sick children at their homes and, if necessary, at various hospitals. This organization respects the rights of children and aims to help them grow to become responsible citizens.

RMF’s Presence

Real Medicine Foundation (RMF) began supporting Nepal Children’s Organization (NCO) shortly after the devastating April 2015 earthquake, which damaged NCO’s main building, located in Naxal, Kathmandu. We initially provided support through emergency food supplies, hygiene, nutrition, sanitation, basic health training, provision of medicine, construction of toilets, development of a sick room, and a two-day workshop with American psychologist Dr. Ron Palomares.

Providing Health Care for NCO Children

Currently, RMF supports two NCO children’s homes in Kathmandu, located at Naxal and Sifal, with 2 nurses and 1 auxiliary nurse. RMF’s nurses provide 24-hour, daily care for the 118 children sheltered in these homes. Nurses provide both preventive and curative health services to all the children as well as staff of NCO. As a result of their continuous presence, they are able to diagnose children more efficiently, leading to earlier diagnosis and treatment. RMF’s nurses are especially committed to providing care for the children with chronic diseases and special needs. There are currently about 9 infants and 11 children with special needs in NCO, Kathmandu. These children are more vulnerable to infections and require special care.

Apart from providing nursing staff for these two NCO children’s homes, RMF also provides financial support for more extensive medical treatment. When a child has a serious illness, his or her case is taken over by RMF. The child is treated at the appropriate hospital in Kathmandu, and RMF bears all the cost of investigation, treatment, and hospitalization.

Some activities regularly conducted by RMF nurses at NCO include:

- Immediate and appropriate treatment for injuries and accidents
- Routine deworming of the NCO children and staff every six months
- Celebration of significant events such as World Environment Day with event-specific programs designed for children
- Provision of voluntary services at health camps organized by NCO

NCO Patient Numbers: April–June 2017

S/N	Month	Treated By RMF Nurses	Treated at Hospital	Total
1	April	70	6	76
2	May	73	7	80
3	June	59	4	63
	Total	202	17	219

Patients treated by RMF staff at NCO

S/N	Disease	April	May	June	Total
1	Respiratory System	12	12	11	35
2	Digestive System	13	14	10	37
3	Fever	8	14	7	29
4	Headache	3	3	4	10
5	Musculoskeletal System	3	4	5	12
6	ENT & Dental Diseases	3	2	3	8
7	Skin Infection	2	8	4	14
8	Cut injury/Fall Injury	10	5	5	20
9	Allergy	5	4	4	13
10	Seizure	0	0	0	0
11	Eye Disorders	5	4	3	12
12	Others	12	10	7	29
	Total	76	80	63	219

Success Stories

1. Wrist Injury Remedied: Dipendra Dangi

Dipendra Dangi is a bright and active 11-year-old who has been raised at NCO Naxal from a very young age. On June 9, 2017, while he was playing on the NCO premises, he fell down and injured his right wrist. He was crying due to severe pain when an RMF nurse came to the rescue. After an initial assessment, RMF Nurse Sanskriti found that Dipendra could not move his hands and noticed the injured area started to swell immediately. Suspecting a hairline fracture, the nurse rushed Dipendra to the emergency department of Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital where the doctors assessed him, ordered an X-ray, and gave him an analgesic to reduce the pain. Luckily, there was no fracture, but a soft tissue tear was diagnosed. A posterior slab splint was applied to secure the injured area, and ibuprofen was prescribed to reduce the pain and swelling. He still has the splint, but his pain has markedly reduced. He is thankful to RMF Nurse Sanskriti for taking immediate action to prevent him from further suffering and for taking good care of him.



Dipendra Dangi with his arm in a cast

2. Kamana B.K. Treated for Infection

Kamana B.K. has been in the custodial care of NCO since she was three months old and is now 15 months old. When she fell sick with a fever, she cried and refused to eat, and then she suddenly she began to convulse. The caretakers and RMF nurse were shocked to see her quivering and turning blue and her eyes rolling back.

She was taken to the Kanti Children's Hospital at once, and there she was diagnosed with a febrile seizure. She tested positive for C-reactive protein (CRP) which indicates presence of an infection. Kamana did not have another seizure in the hospital, but the doctors informed RMF and NCO team members that convulsive episodes can have serious consequences for a child of this age, which is why they elected to keep her in observation for 24 hours. After taking the prescribed antibiotics, she has now recovered.



Kamana B.K. at Kanti Children's Hospital

3. Prerana Chand Heals from Monkey Attack

Prerana Chand, who lives at NCO Siphah, was doing her chores when a monkey suddenly attacked her. She was very frightened but bravely fought the monkey. Despite her efforts, the monkey had already bitten her on the right shoulder by the time others came to help. She sustained a large wound that was bleeding profusely.

RMF Nurse Pushpa immediately responded to the situation by cleaning the wound with soap and running water and applying povidone-iodine solution. She then covered the wound with a soft bandage and injected a tetanus vaccine. When Prerana continued to feel discomfort and pain, an RMF nurse took her to the hospital for a rabies vaccine. After 5 doses of the rabies vaccine and continuous care from Nurse Pushpa, Prerana has completely recovered.



Prerana Chand receiving a tetanus vaccine

4. Rabindra Lama Continues Treatment for Heart Condition

In February 2017 when 9-year-old Rabindra Lama was brought to NCO home after losing his parents. During his thorough physical assessment, RMF Nurse Pushpa discovered he had a fever as well as a long scar in the middle of his chest which looked like an incision mark from surgery. When Nurse Pushpa asked him about it, Rabindra told her that he had had surgery during his early childhood. After informing the NCO officials, Nurse Pushpa made arrangements to talk to his distant relatives who confirmed that he had open heart surgery for a congenital heart condition years ago. Rabindra also revealed that he is taking medication. After obtaining a clear picture of his health history, Pushpa took him to Shahid Gangalal National Heart Center for a check-up and to update his medications. There he underwent multiple blood tests, an electrocardiogram, and an echocardiogram for reassessment of his heart health as well as the reconfirmation of his diagnosis after surgery. He is now healthy and still on medication for his heart

condition. Thanks to a perfectly timed careful assessment and the tactful decision-making of RMF Nurse Pushpa, Rabindra was able to continue living healthfully after he was orphaned.



Rabindra Lama with RMF Nurse Pushpa

5. Akash Balak and Ayush Balak Bitten by a Stray Dog

NCO Naxal home has a vast outdoor area where children are encouraged to play on a daily basis in order to promote their proper growth and development. On May 19, 2017, Akash Balak and Ayush Balak were playing outdoors when one of them happened to step on a dog's tail. The dog angrily attacked the 4-year-old boys who were frightened and screaming when other came to help. They sustained wounds on their calves, and RMF Nurses



Akash Balak and Ayush Balak

Sanskriti and Bina took charge to clean the wounds with soap and running water. After the wounds were cleaned, they were dressed with antiseptic solution and left open. Both of the boys received tetanus vaccinations as well as a routine courses of 5 doses of the rabies vaccine. Their wounds have healed, and they are now very frightened of the dogs due to the attack.

6. New Adoptee Begins Medical Treatments: Anita Jaisi

Anita Jaisi, who we believe is 7 years old, was adopted by NCO at the end of May 2017. When she arrived at NCO, she was found to be underdeveloped and her appearance was that of a 5-year-old. She also had an abnormally protruding abdomen. According to the doctor at NCO, she also had arrhythmia, which RMF nurses also confirmed in a thorough physical examination.

The NCO doctor suggested a detailed heart health screening, and RMF Nurse Sanskriti took her to Shahid Gangalal National Heart Center where an echocardiogram and chest x-rays were done. The tests revealed that there was fluid accumulation in her heart capsule. They conducted further testing and additional blood tests including total blood count and thyroid function tests as well as an ultra-sonogram. Surprisingly, the test results were normal but her abdominal distension has not subsided. She is due for a consultation with an endocrinologist and a second echocardiogram. RMF Nurses Sanskriti and Bina, as well as the rest of the NCO staff, are taking good care of her by monitoring her nutrition and activities. Anita has told the staff that she feels better as a result of the love and care of the RMF nurses.



Anita Jaisi

7. Disabled Children at NCO Treated for Malnutrition

4-year-old Dipisha Oli, 13-year-old Usha Balika, and 13-year-old Upasana Balika all have severe cases of cerebral palsy and therefore are challenged physically as well as mentally. Despite the painstaking care they are provided, they failed to gain enough weight for their respective ages and were malnourished. An RMF nurse arranged to take them to Nutritional Rehabilitation Home at Sunakothi Lalitpur where the children were admitted for a couple of weeks. The children were given freshly prepared meals and other nutritious food. Dipisha's weight increased from 11.6kg to 12.8kg, Usha's weight increased from 16.7kg to 17.4kg, and Upasana Balika's weight increased from 13.5kg to 14kg. Although this weight gain was an improvement, the feeding impairment caused by the neuromuscular condition prevents these children from gaining sufficient weight for their age. Nurse Pushpa, who diagnosed the children's malnutrition, explored the treatment center and collaborated with NCO staff to take these three children for appropriate treatment and nutritional intervention. RMF nurses and NCO staff leave no stone left unturned in their mission to improve the wellbeing of Dipisha, Usha, and Upasana.

Celebration of World Environment Day

Against all odds, NCO creates an environment in which the children learn the essences of life. One way that NCO achieves this is by celebrating significant days and teaching the children the importance of each event as well as their own roles in the celebration. On June 5, 2017, each NCO home celebrated World Environment Day. On this day, the children were taught the value of healthy environment and their roles in maintaining the natural world. RMF nurses taught them how to maintain their personal hygiene and keep the environment clean by picking up and disposing of waste properly. They also taught the children about global warming and the importance of preserving the environment for healthful living.

This year's theme for World Environment Day was 'Connecting People to Nature' which was aimed at motivating people to go outdoors and explore nature as well as helping people understand nature conservation and their role in it. The children at NCO observed this occasion by cleaning the NCO premises.



Cleaning NCO premises on World Environment Day

Deworming and Anti-Helminthic Medication Administered

All NCO children were provided with albendazole tablets for routine deworming. RMF nurses also arranged for anti-helminthic medication which they administered to the children in order to treat any helminthic infestations.

NCO had previously asked the NCO administration to submit an official request to the District Public Health Office to supply anti-helminthic medications, and as a result they are able to receive and administer the medicines every six months. NCO appreciates the RMF nurses' noble efforts which have somewhat improved morbidity rates among the children.



Nurse Pushpa administering deworming medication

SPARSHA Nepal HIV/AIDS Health Camp Participation

A few months ago, 2-year-old Prapti Balika, who was adopted by NCO, was found to be HIV positive. Because the NCO staff treats the children living there as a family, they take care of them as if in a family home, i.e. without using universal precautions. The child's diagnosis imposed a health risk on the staff, which is why NCO in collaboration with an NGO organized a health camp with SPARSHA Nepal, an organization which works in the field of HIV/AIDS. The main objective of the camp was to screen NCO staff and children for HIV/AIDS. The camp was organized on June 24, 2017, and RMF nurses also participated in the camp by providing voluntary services. The camp was a great success as none of the children or staff members tested positive.

RMF nurses informed the NCO administration that there is always a risk for HIV as they receive children from various sources, and HIV also has a long window period when it cannot be detected. Thus, they advised that HIV screening tests should be done every six months for everyone at NCO. Following the advice, NCO met with SPARSHA Nepal's team and has planned to conduct another camp at NCO Siphel and conduct similar events every six months in the future. Thanks to the RMF nurses, a new health venture has been started at NCO.



HIV Screening Camp at NCO



HIV Screening of a Disabled Child