



NCO Orphanage Support, Nepal

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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.

However, NCO provides more than just shelter and medicine to the orphans; it provides a family environment where children truly feel at home. For example, the children refer to the female staff who care for them as “Mamu,” meaning mother, and RMF nurses as “Didi,” meaning sister. This illustrates how NCO has created an environment of nurturing, belonging, and support, all of which are essential to the children’s emotional development.

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 1 nurse and 2 auxiliary nurses. RMF’s nurses provide 24-hour, daily care for the 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, as 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 costs of investigation, treatment, and hospitalization.

Summary of Activities

- 358 children were provided with nursing care during this reporting period
- 343 children were independently treated by RMF nurses while 15 were taken to the hospital for treatment
- RMF Pediatricians from Kanti Children’s Hospital continued to visit NCO homes on a weekly basis

NCO Patient Numbers: April–June 2018

SN	Month	Patients Treated by RMF Nurses	Patients Treated at Hospital	Total
1	April	105	2	107
2	May	107	7	114

3	June	131	6	137
	Total	343	15	358

Patients treated by RMF staff at NCO

SN	Disease	April	May	June	Total
1	Respiratory System	23	39	31	93
2	Digestive System	25	16	12	53
3	Fever	15	10	13	38
4	Headache	3	3	1	7
5	Musculoskeletal System	4	5	4	13
6	ENT & Dental Diseases	3	4	9	16
7	Skin Infection	5	11	4	20
8	Cut Injury/Fall Injury	4	2	7	13
9	Allergy	4	0	2	6
10	Eye Disorders	4	3	9	16
11	Others	17	21	45	83
	Total	107	114	137	358

Due to summer rains and crowded conditions at NCO homes, children have been especially vulnerable to respiratory problems during this reporting period. Fewer resources, buildings damaged by earthquakes, lack of nutritious food, and other factors are the other main causes of illness. RMF nurses have been working diligently to prevent and treat these health problems, despite the many challenges they face in their work.



RMF Nurse Bina giving medicine to an NCO child

RMF Welcomes Ranjana as RMF Nurse at NCO

Ranjana Shrestha is an Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) who graduated with distinction from her ANM course at Lalit Polytechnic Training Institute in Lalitpur, Nepal in 2016. Originally from Gorkha, Ranjana currently lives in Kathmandu. She has completed 3 months of on-the-job training at Kathmandu Model Hospital where she practiced patient care in different settings. Ra is a dedicated ANM who is interested in learning new things.

Ranjana is now working as residential nurse at NCO as a part of RMF's support to the organization. She will provide care to children of all ages with or without disabilities. She will also provide health education and assistance to the in-house NCO mothers (caregivers).



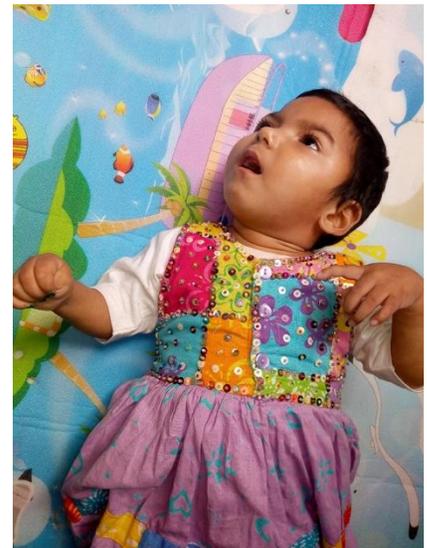
Ranjana Shrestha, RMF nurse at NCO

Success Stories

1. Dipika Sarki's Nutritional Improvement

Dipika Sarki is a 5-year-old girl who was adopted with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy with a seizure disorder and moderate malnutrition. Soon after coming to NCO, Dipika was sent to a nutrition rehabilitation center for nutritional intervention. On admission, she weighed 7kg.

After a month of meticulous care and nutritional treatment, she gained 900g. The doctors and other staff there told RMF nurses that her cerebral palsy was preventing her from gaining weight despite the nutritional intervention. She was discharged and the nurses were advised to give her highly nutritious food. RMF Nurse Pushpa made all the arrangements for Dipika's transportation, caretaker, and medications. Dipika is now doing well. NCO and RMF appreciate Nurse Pushpa for her efforts in taking care of Dipika's health.



Dipika Sarki after treatment at Nutritional Rehabilitation Home

2. Goma Adhikari Treated for Chronic Conditions

Goma Adhikari is a 13-year-old girl who was adopted by NCO home Siphah in April with a diagnosis of type 1 diabetes. She was using 20 units of insulin in the morning and 8 units in the evening. She was very ill when she was adopted and was immediately rushed to hospital where it was discovered that her blood sugar was dangerously high at 500mg/dl. Further tests revealed a thyroid disease for which she had been previously medicated, but her medications were discontinued, which led to health consequences.

When Goma was discharged from the hospital, RMF nurse Pushpa took charge by preparing a dietary schedule for her and teaching her to administer insulin by herself. She is now taking her medications and doing very well. "Thanks to sister Pushpa, she helped me so much," said Goma.



Goma Adhikari after treatment

3. Aman Balak's HIV Status Investigated



Aman Balak

Now 4 months old, Aman Balak was just 17 days old when he was received at NCO home Bal Mandir. Since the time of his adoption, he needed hospitalization and intensive care. However, even with medication his health did not improve. The doctors decided to check his HIV status, and unfortunately the test came back positive. This was alarming to the caregivers because they care for children at NCO in the style of a family home, which means that they had not used the recommended precautions or barriers. It would also be risky to keep Aman at the home because NCO does not have the necessary provisions to care for a child with HIV.

RMF Nurse Bina was also concerned because, due to her extensive experience working with children, she knew that very few institutions would accommodate a child with HIV. Her intuition told her to have Aman tested for HIV again to confirm the results. Incredibly, the second test came back negative. Although Nurse Bina and the other staff members were relieved, the differing test results left Aman's HIV status ambiguous. The test was repeated a third time and came back negative again. Nurse Bina's action and intuition led to this final diagnosis, which prevented Aman from facing serious problems. He has remained with NCO.

4. Asim Balak Receives Crucial Surgery

Asim Balak is 14 months old. He was brought to NCO from Patan Hospital at the age of 4 months because his parents fled the hospital knowing their child had multiple health problems at birth, and they could not afford the treatment. He was born with a hernia and hydrocele (scrotal swelling).

At NCO, RMF pediatrician Dr. Shreeram examined him and informed the NCO authority that the child needed surgery. Kanti Children's Hospital also advised surgery, but Asim's weight was too low for anesthesia; he was scheduled for surgery once he reached 12 months or weighed 10kg. However, when he turned 12 months old, the surgery department at Kanti Children's Hospital had a large number of cases, so Asim was added to the wait list. Dr. Shreeram personally took charge by admitting him to the hospital, where he received the necessary surgery. Asim was saved from a life of disability and is now doing well.



Asim Balak

5. Sophiya Balika Begins Nutritional Therapy



Sophiya Balika

Sophiya Balika is 4 months old. She was 1 month old when she was brought to NCO by the police. They learned that the mother asked a pedestrian to carry her child, claiming an emergency, and fled the scene. That person gave Sophiya to police and police who handed her to NCO.

Upon her arrival, Sophiya was very frail and staff members believed she may not live much longer. She weighed just 1300g. Dr. Shreeram was worried about the child's stiff joints and overall condition, and asked RMF Nurse Bina to take the child to Kanti Children's Hospital to consult a senior pediatrician. The senior pediatrician prescribed her multivitamin powder rather than medication. Once Nurse Bina started giving Sophiya the multivitamin powder with her milk, her condition started improving. She will continue the nutritional therapy for six months. Her condition is gradually improving, and the nurses are taking good care of her.

6. Newborn Sameer Balak Treated in Hospital

Sameer Balak was 5 days old when he was received by NCO. When he arrived, he had yellow discoloration all over his body and he was lethargic. RMF Nurse Bina took him to Kanti Children's Hospital where he was diagnosed with jaundice and kept in neonatal ICU for 5 days. His condition slowly improved and he was discharged. As they do with all NCO children who have recently been discharged from the hospital, the RMF nurses took special care of Sameer when he returned to the NCO home.



Sameer Balak