



NCO Orphanage Support, Nepal

Reporting period: July 1, 2017 – September 31, 2017

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

Project title: Orphanage Support

Project location: Kathmandu, Nepal



July–September 2017

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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 brought together children without families and created an environment of nurturing, belonging, and support. This family environment is 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.

RMF’s support is now continued at NCO by the three nurses who work in the homes. They continuously provide basic nursing care to the children at NCO as well as preventive, curative, and rehabilitative healthcare. The nurses also regularly make decisions regarding the children’s health status and conditions, as well as treatment options. In addition to their healthcare related work, the RMF nurses also help the children study, maintain clean environments at NCO homes, and help other staff in their routine work.

NCO Patient Numbers: July–September 2017

S/N	Month	Treated By RMF Nurses	Treated at Hospital	Total
1	July	26	67	93
2	August	96	15	111
3	September	105	1	106
	Total	227	83	310

Patients Treated by RMF Staff at NCO

S/N	Disease	July	August	September	Total
1	Respiratory System	15	18	15	48
2	Digestive System	15	11	22	48
3	Fever	6	14	13	33
4	Headache	3	1	7	11
5	Musculoskeletal System	0	3	3	6
6	ENT & Dental Diseases	10	11	13	34

7	Skin Infection	11	9	8	28
8	Cut injury/Fall Injury	10	13	16	39
9	Allergy	0	12	1	13
10	Seizure	2	5	1	8
11	Eye Disorders	7	2	3	12
12	Others	14	12	4	30
	Total	93	111	106	310

Success Stories

1. Sabal Sunar Fights an Infection

Five month old Sabal Sunar was crying continuously and refusing to feed. Then, slowly, his temperature began to rise. RMF Nurse Sanskriti assessed the child and gave him paracetamol drops to control the fever, but the condition showed no signs of improvement. Sabal was rushed to Kanti Children's Hospital for emergency treatment. At the hospital, he was kept for observation and blood samples were taken for testing. A urine test was also performed, revealing a severe urinary tract infection. Because the Sabal was very young and was not breast fed, he was vulnerable to serious complications, so he was admitted to the medical ward for intravenous antibiotics. RMF Nurses Sanskriti and Bina alternately took care of the child, and he improved. He was discharged from the hospital and healthy after 7 days.



Sabal Sunar

2. Sumi Baidhya's Wrist Repaired

Sumi Baidhya is a bright and playful 8-year-old girl who is very active in school. One September evening while she was playing with her friends on the NCO premises, she fell down. She was in pain and quickly ran to RMF Nurse Sanskriti who saw that Sumi had sustained injury on her right wrist and was unable to move it.

Sumi was rushed to emergency department of the nearby hospital for proper diagnosis and treatment. There she took an X-ray which revealed torsion in the right distal radius. The orthopedic doctor applied a splint on her right arm to support and immobilize the injured area. She was also given medications to ease the pain. Sumi still has the splint on and is happy that RMF Nurse Sanskriti took immediate action to ease her suffering.



Sumi Baidhya

3. Maya Devi Shahi's Health Improvements

Maya Devi Shahi is a 4-year-old girl who was adopted by NCO in September. She was brought from Mugu, one of the remotest mountainous districts in the country. She has a 7-year-old older brother and the NCO staff was troubled to learn that the siblings were neglected by their parents. When a general physical assessment was performed on her arrival, she said she had difficulty walking, sitting, and especially defecating. It was found that she had severe rectal prolapse which was causing difficulties in all her activities. She was taken to nearby hospital and saw a pediatrician who, after examination, told NCO staff that she had severe anemia and malnutrition. The prolapsed rectum was cleaned and pushed into the anus. He also advised the staff to provide Maya with a highly nutritious diet as well as a stool softener. RMF nurses are taking good care of Maya and teaching her exercises to strengthen her pelvic floor muscles. As a result, her condition is improving slowly.



Maya Devi Shahi

4. Sejal Balika Comes to NCO

Sejal Balika, who was born as a twin, was brought from Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital. The twins were delivered at 33 weeks of gestation. The other twin weighed 1.5kg at birth and died immediately. Sejal was born second and weighed 1.9kg at birth. She was kept in the NICU for 3 days.

When the hospital authority searched for the mother, they discovered that she had abandoned her child. They tried to search for the mother using the information provided at the time of admission, but the woman has provided fake information. As a last resort, the hospital authority contacted NCO and handed over the child. On arrival at NCO, the Sejal weighed 2.1kg, and now she is healthy and under the care of NCO mothers.



Sejal Balika

5. Anamika Balika Healing Well at NCO

Locals were alarmed to find a crying newborn baby near the garbage can of Lumbini premises. The locals gathered and decided to seek help from the police. The police came and investigated but were not able to find the mother. They handed the child over to NCO, who took her to NCO home Naxal. On arrival, Anamika was in very poor condition with sticky eyes and infected wounds behind the ears. She weighed just 2kg. She was taken to the hospital where her condition was diagnosed as a local infection. She was given eye drops and oral antibiotics. Her condition has markedly improved as she is well-fed on formula. Her condition is being monitored by the NCO mothers.



Anamika Balika

Celebration of Children's Day

At NCO, Children's Day is celebrated with great enthusiasm. It is celebrated on September 14 (the 29th day of the 5th month of Nepali Calendar). This year NCO celebrated Children's Day by organizing a formal function at a nearby school. A week prior to the event, children participated in many competitions such as singing, drawing, dancing, and sports, and the top three contestants in each category were selected to perform at the Children's Day function. Such competitions help build confidence, independence, and satisfaction in the children. These activities also help the children master their skills and explore their hidden talents while supporting their physical and cognitive development.



NCO children performing cultural dance at Children's day event

The Children's Day program was organized and attended by distinguished guests; NCO President Ms. Rita Singh chaired the event while Minister of Youth and Sports Mr. Rajendra Kumar KC was the chief guest. Other attendees included all NCO board members as well as all the staff and children of NCO homes Sifal, Thecho, Panchkhal, and Dolakha. Furthermore, the students participating in the interschool drawing competition came from Ripumardini Sainik Mahavidhyalaya, Nagarjun Valley School, Occidental Public School, Pinnacle Scholars' Academy, and Bal Byawasayi School. The children of Hawker Club also attended the program.



Minister of Youth and Sports Rajendra Kumar KC launching the NCO magazine BALAK

The theme of Children's Day this year was 'Child Friendly Governance – Respect of Child Rights.' The program was filled with dance and drama performances as well as sporting events. The winners were awarded prizes by the

chief guest and the president of NCO. Minister KC launched the annual NCO magazine *BAALAK* (Nepali word for child). The distinguished guests spoke about NCO's impact and other issues related to children in the program. In her speech, NCO President Singh thanked RMF for the invaluable support that has continuously been provided. RMF nurses actively participated in the program by planning the event, welcoming guests, distributing badges, offering food and beverages, and other necessary tasks. As a result of the combined efforts of the RMF nurses, the honored guests, and the NCO staff and children, the program was a huge success.



RMF Nurses with NCO staff at Children's Day event

Celebrating Dashain at NCO

NCO celebrates many festivals at each home, both to provide a homelike environment for the orphaned children and to teach the children about the importance of each celebration and its value in our lives. Dashain is celebrated in September/October (the sixth lunar month) of each year and is observed for 15 days. NCO homes celebrate Dashain by performing all the rituals with the children. The first day of Dashain is called Ghatasthapana; on that day, the auspicious ritual of sowing barley seeds in a sacred area of a worshipping room is performed. Each day, the seeds are worshipped and watered along with Goddess Durga. On seventh day, many plants and flowers are offered to the Goddess. On eighth day, a goat is sacrificed to the Goddess and the meat is cooked and served as "Prasad," the holy food. On tenth day of this year's Dashain, all the children were delighted as the NCO staff put tika (a bright red pigment) on their foreheads. This festival is celebrated to symbolize the victory of good over evil.

The children at NCO celebrate Dashain with great excitement. During this festival, they get a vacation from school and enjoy feasting on mouth-watering delicacies. They also get more time to enjoy and utilize their creativity. The

children clean the NCO premises and their own rooms in honor of Dashain and show respect to the NCO staff as their family. The festive atmosphere of Dashain has put everyone at NCO in high spirits.



NCO children receiving Tika from RMF Nurse Pushpa



RMF Nurse Sanskriti with NCO children on the tenth day of Dashain