A year of long journeys
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1. WHO WE ARE

Welcome letter, mission and about our program

Celebrating the 6th Anniversary of the Foundation in Nepal
Hello! Namaste!

Thank you for taking the time to review our 2017 annual report. This was a challenging year for the foundation in ways that we could not imagine at the beginning of the year. The theme of our report is around the long journeys that we took in this year. From bringing a group of girls to New York for the 2nd HerStory Summit and bringing a team to take part in FIRST Global Robotics Challenge in Washington DC, our foundation traveled far indeed. However, the real long journey for us was in reaching out to more remote villages around the areas where we already serve. Even though geographically these villages are not that far, the challenges we saw in these areas showed us that we need to pay more attention here. We saw even higher rates of child marriage and severe cases of malnutrition in schoolchildren. We started the year wanting to reach more remote villages, and when we got there, we realized that we had to focus on these areas if we really wanted to make a difference. We believe that we are starting to see positive changes, but there is much to be done. In the end, we are proud of our journey in 2017, and we look forward to staying on this journey in 2018 along with all of our supporters. Thank you all for making this journey possible.

Bibhuti Aryal on behalf of the Board, Staff and Volunteers
Rukmini Foundation
Mission

Empower girls through quality education so that we can eradicate child marriage, end gender inequality, and enable a more equitable and prosperous Nepal.

Nirjala Basnet, a student at Kalidevi School speaks about the importance of education and importance of proper nutrition.
Empowerment is a big word, and we take it seriously. It is not just paying for tuition. It is a holistic approach to developing the scholars and providing them opportunities that they would normally not have. The core of our program involves access to quality education, mentoring support and health & wellness programs.

**Educate**
- Scholarship / Uniforms & School Supplies
- Tutoring
- Teacher Training


**Motivate**
- Regular check-ins with scholars
- Home visits
- Special programs with women leaders

Program details: [http://bit.ly/2gSg0Uf](http://bit.ly/2gSg0Uf)

**Protect**
- Yearly Check-Ups
- Health Education Programs
- Counseling

We continue to add additional programming to ensure that the girls we support have the best opportunities available.

**LitClub Nepal**
Through our partnership with our friends at LitWorld and Global GLOW, we have a network of 10 LitClubs across various villages and cities that provide girls an opportunity to collaborate, share and explore their creativity.

**Space for Moms**
Many women in the communities where we work never had the chance to go to school, so we have created an environment where they can share ideas, express themselves and find solutions to their own problems in a safe, supportive environment.

**Music & Arts**
We continue to find ways to bring more opportunities for students to sing, dance and learn musical instruments.

**STEM**
This year, we took part in a Global Robotics competition, and we learned a lot about how to get students involved and excited about STEM.

**Sports**
Sports is not just for boys, and we look to increase opportunities for girls to play sports, especially team sports where they learn valuable teamwork skills.
2. 2017 PLAN

What we set out to do in 2017 and how we did

Students at Shikharapur Community School enjoying the Science Lab we helped to build
Our 6 key goals for year 6 and how we fared on each of those

- **Reach more remote villages**: We did great
- **Conduct Child Marriage Prevention Programs**: We could do better
- **Provide Opportunities Beyond High School**: We did not do very well
- **Grow LitClub Nepal Family**: We did great
- **Focus on Quality Education**: We did not do very well
- **Bring Arts to the Schools**: We did great
Reaching further out

We added 3 new partner schools

We reached new communities that need support

As we venture further out we are seeing areas where child marriage is very high, and even basic necessities are not being met

Mentors carefully walking their way to remote villages
Malnutrition and high rates of child marriage

As we ventured out to more remote villages, we have noticed that these issues are even more acute in these areas. Even something as simple as a child getting enough to eat is an issue in these areas. We know that it will be difficult to empower them with education if they have empty stomachs.
Conduct child marriage intervention program
(Niwano Peace Foundation project)

As we venture further out to areas where child marriage is very high, this effort becomes even more critical.

Conducted several programs in schools and communities Engaging the community and parents as well as students

Students at Setidevi Secondary School participate in a Counseling Program around Child Marriage to learn how to advocate for themselves.
Provide opportunities beyond high school

3 Scholars (Anjana, Sajina and Junu, left to right) started a Vet Tech Vocational program.

Team RukuBot member, Rubi (not pictured) supported to study Science post high school.
Grow our LitClub Family

3 new LitClubs started in 2017
LitCamp program another huge success
Moms Club inaugurated

LitCamp 2017 where 90 girls from different areas came together to forge friendships
I have never seen or heard of this kind of program, and I was nervous about joining the LitClub. After being part of the LitCamp I am not nervous because I was able to make friends from different parts of Nepal and share stories with them while doing different activities.

Pramila Waiba
Scholar / LitClub Member, LitClub Panchakanya
Focus on Quality Education

Identified national expert to provide training and guidance

Conducted multiple teacher training sessions

Teachers have shown interest

A group of teachers participating during one of the sessions led by Mr. Amit Sijapati
12 GRADUATES

In 2017, we had 12 scholars who took the national School Exiting Examinations (SEE), which is a requirement for graduating high school. We are proud to report that all 12 passed.

9 Bs or BETTER

9 of the 12 scholars had a score of B or better.
Bring Arts to the schools

One of our graduate scholars, Deepika took part in Nepali Idol singing competition.

The interest level of the kids is very high, and we know that we need to provide more opportunities.

Members of the Kalaa Program performing during International Women’s Day Program.
3. FINANCIALS

See how we allocated funds for our programs in Nepal this year

NOTE: This data is UNOFFICIAL until a complete accounting of 2017 is completed. This is an analysis of our expenditure in Nepal, which is the bulk of our Expenses.

A focus on Quality Education will continue to be the core of our Program. This includes Arts, Teacher Training and more.

We are beyond grateful to our friends at LitWorld and Global GLOW for supporting LitClub Nepal, which has become a key aspect of our overall program.

The Niwano Peace Foundation Project focused on Health & Wellness initiatives, and we believe this program will continue to grow in 2018.
Whether planned or not, these were some things that made us jump for joy.

Samir, Monika, Rubi, Milan and Bipin (left to right) of Team RukuBot jumping for joy as they get ready to head to Washington DC to take part in FIRST Global Robotics Challenge.
We traveled far as an organization this year, and some of our highlights reflects on that journey
Journeys in 2017

In 2017, some of our team members were able to take some life-changing trips. From our 2nd HerStory Summit in New York to Team RukuBot taking part in the inaugural FIRST Global Robotics Challenge, they got to experience something that many in their villages did not dream possible.

However, when we talk about traveling far, we do not just mean by plane. This year, we had a goal of reaching further out to more remote villages, and this turned out to be quite the journey as well.

New York, NY - Global HerStory Summit
Washington DC - FIRST Global Robotics Olympics
Nairobi, Kenya - LitClub Nepal Visits LitClub Kibera
LitClub Nepal makes an impression in NYC...again

4 Members of LitClub Nepal shared stories and connected with girls across the world for a week long program called HerStory Summit.

We are looking forward to participate in the program again in 2018.

Susmita, Alisha, Bandanaa and Prakriti (left to right) took part in the HerStory Summit where they shared their own stories and learned from girls all over the world.
The team had no Robotics experience prior to this project.

We finished 38th out of 163 International teams in the 1st Annual FIRST Global Challenge Robotics Olympics.

Monika, Rubi, Bipin, Samir (holding RukuBot), Deepraj and Milan - left to right as they complete a day of “coopertition” at FIRST Global.
LitClub Nepal's Prakriti visited LitClub Kibera during her visit to Kenya and met with LitClub mentors and kids.

LitClub Kibera welcomed Prakriti (2nd from right) and the Rukmini family.
Foundation celebrated International Children’s Day. The program was organized and led by Scholars.

Celebrating Children’s Day
To celebrate International Women’s Day, we organized a program for local women. 80 local women: grandmothers, mothers, aunts and elder sisters shared their voice and spoke up for themselves in the community. The women sang, danced and played games as well as connecting with each other.
Fathers and daughters gained a better understanding of each other through programs like this.

Highlighted importance of fathers in promoting girls education.
Former Scholar, Dikshya started work as a Staff Nurse at Manmohan Community Hospital.
What our scholars, LitClub members and the community are saying about our work

**Rajan Adhikari**  
Headmaster, Kalidevi School  
From my entire school team, thank you so much, Rukmini Foundation for choosing our school for this nutrition program. This program will help our students to be physically and mentally present in school.

**Pramila Waiba**  
Scholar  
I feel very happy to be able to feed cake to my father in front of my schoolmates and other people. He is the biggest role model in my life.

**Tara Adhikari**  
Moms Club Member  
Today I had many things to do at home, but my husband said I should come to this session as he said that the program was very important to learn new things, and I am very happy that I attended.

**Rubi Balami**  
Spokesperson, Team RukuBot  
We are all very thankful for the opportunity we were given by the Rukmini Foundation and FIRST Global. This project proved that if we get an opportunity and support, we can succeed in anything. I feel so lucky to get this opportunity, and I will continue sharing my experience and encourage other students of our village to work hard and pursue their dreams.
5. LOOKING TO 2018

Some things we are looking forward to doing in 2018

Mentor, Rojin (far left), Foundation Leader, Kedar Acharya (pointing ahead) and Sr. Program Officer, Usha (far right) as they navigate through the remote villages
Our areas of focus for 2018 explained

- **Take Care of Basics**
  - Issues like malnutrition and basic health needs will be a focus (especially in remote villages)

- **Push Scholars Forward**
  - As scholars graduate from high school, we need to help push them on into higher education or vocational training

- **More Local Support**
  - Ensure more mentoring support and more frequent visits home by mentors. Get moms and female elders even more involved through Moms Club

- **Experiment**
  - We are looking to partner with organizations that are supporting girls and women in innovative ways
Address malnutrition in schools

We cannot fill their heads with knowledge if their bellies are empty.

Kids enjoying a tasty, healthy meal as part of our Pilot Nutrition Program
Former scholars and now mentors, Sushmita (left) and Puja (right) are true examples of empowerment. We want to develop more mentors like them to support more remote villages.

Provide more local Didis (mentors)
Get Moms involved more

Moms Club initiated this year and is bringing women together to lift each other up and finding solutions to the community challenges together.
Support for differently-abled children, especially girls / women

We seek to work with organizations that support people, especially girls and women with physical disabilities, such as blindness to provide opportunities to learn to those who have historically been shut out.

Bright Star Society uses technology to bring literacy, life skills and independence to those most vulnerable in Nepal.
Teach Music & Languages

We are planning to take an inspirational educator (Ceinwen King-Smith) from the US to Nepal who has expertise in languages and music to help develop these talents in the girls we support.

Ms. Ceinwen King-Smith playing the piano and singing songs (in 5 different languages) during our Anniversary Event in October.
In 2018, several Board Members are planning to visit Nepal to see in person the work that we have committed to. We believe this trip will help to reinforce our commitment as well as develop new ideas for the future.
6. CALL TO ACTION

How you can take ACTion in 2018 & beyond, and also thanking those who ACTed this year.

Scholar, Nirupa Poudel takes action by helping her family with chores as well as being a great scholar.
You can ACT in 2018 to empower girls through education

**ACT**

**Advocate**
Connect with us on Social Media and help share our stories
Subscribe to our newsletter to stay up to date

**Contribute**
With as little as $25 a month, we are making amazing things happen, but we need your support. There are many ways to give:

- [DONATE Online](#)
- Setup recurring donations
- Contribute through UnitedWay

**Take Action**
Are you the type of person that has boundless energy and is passionate about equity and justice? If you are, then we are always looking for people like you to help empower girls through education. We have room for:

- Board Member
- Volunteers
- Interns

Reach out to us by email at: info@rukminifoundation.org
Thank you to all those who contributed this year

Abhinav Adhikari
Alex Choi
Alexander Scheinker
Allyce Pinchback
Amanda Chevalier
Amelia Osterman
Amit Grover
Anand Perumal
Ang & Kripa
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Angela Choi
Angela Hernandez
Ann Demanski
Anne Novick
Antony Gnalian
Anup Aryal
Arlane Gordon-Bray
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Arun Aryal
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Ashlee Pierre
Ashley Cvrkel
Ashley Pinchback
Basant Subba
Basanta Kharel
Basu Aryal
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Benjamin Daniels
Beth Shannon
Bhavini Patel
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Branden Ballard
Brandi Fisher
Brandon Lee
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Brian Burley
Brian Clemens
Brian Magie
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Carla Rivers
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Cathy Zahrako
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Chase Lavsa
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Cheryl Paxton-Hughes
Cheryl Ruffin
Chris Positive
Christina Unger
Christina Watson
Christy Uffman
Clinique Brundidge
Cynthia James
Daniel Bednarzyk
Danny Haritan
Danyele Stills
Daren Eillerbe
Dave Bentley
Dave Mackie
Dennis Kremer
Derek Tibbs
Devyn Swain
Dharendra Thapa
Ebony Pugh
Elissa Winkler
Elizabeth “Lee Anne” Pontis
Elliot Cussac
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Emily Rice
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James Joshi
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Janis Burley Wilson
Jasmine Cho
Jason Christy
Jason & Lauren Smathers
Jason Stuart
Jenise Shealey
Jennifer Laface
Jerry Rubin
Jerry Walter
Jessica Lee
Jessica Ruffin
Jhason Dixon
Joanna Boudin
Joseph Kannarkat
Josh Schramm
Juan Arredondo
Julie Zebely
Julius Boatwright
Justin Forzano
Kalyani Rai Vats
Karen Clark
Karina Chavez
Kashif Hendsrson
Keith Marrow
Kenya Matthews
Ketaki & Girish
Khaml Scantling
Kimmil Harris
Kris Deneiselya
La'Fay Pinchback
LaKesha Silver
La'Tasha Mayes
Lattrnda Leonard-Shortell
Lauren Tessmer
Lhakpa G Sonam
Lim Sang
Lindsay Cashman
Linh Phung
Lisa Evans
Loren Sherman
Lynnette Evans
Madeleine Cussac
Marc Polwley
Marco Tino
Marcus Thompson
Maria Mariani
Marisa Williams
Marita Garrett
Mark Uvarri
Matthew Platts
Medina Jackson
Meghan Hanney
Meghan Larsen Reidy
Mell Steven Cressick
Michael Grande
Michal Bartko
Michelle McMurray
Mingma Sherpa
Misti McKeeneh
Munina Adams
Nicholas Maloni
Nichole Coleman
Nicole Dimarco
Nila Abuabakar
Nila Devanath
Nina Sherpa
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Nisha Blackwell
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Sunanna Chand
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Taylor Gilmore
Terry Price
Thomas Hoffman
Tiffany Lawson
Tika Dhungana
Tokihi Seto
Vasil Papakroni
Vernard Alexander
Victoria Snyder
Vince Ricinski
Vishesh Maskey
Wayne Walters
Will Bentley
Yalonda Colbert
Yogesh Neupane
Zeke Rediker

Also thanks to donors who gave through:
AmazonSmile
UnitedWay
Anonymous (we appreciate you)
Ben raised enough money to support a girl in one of our partner Government schools for an entire year...by selling lemonade and iced tea.

Ben was just shy of 6 in this picture.

Ben took ACTion for girls education in 2017...will you follow his lead in 2018?
Thank you for joining us on this journey

We hope you will continue taking it into the new year. Together we have been able to empower girls, moms and communities. We believe that we will have an even more active, challenging and ultimately successful year in 2018.

Happy New Year to you and your family from our Rukmini Family.

WWW.RUKMINIFOUNDATION.ORG

Students of Kalidevi School