

# Transformation & Empowerment



Rukmini Girls to Rukmini Graduates

Recent graduates Divya, Sunshree, and Sharmila (in hats) receive congratulations, mentoring and career counseling.

## Namaste and welcome!

I am pleased to present our Annual Report for 2023. As I reflect on the year, I remember the story of Ranjana Karki, a survivor of the 2015 earthquake, who joined our program. After the disaster, her family lost their home and had to move in with distant relatives. Ranjana was traumatized and found it difficult to adjust. She was very quiet in school and didn't participate much. But with the help of her mentors (Didis), she began to make progress and excel in her studies. In a few years, she **transformed** into an **empowered** girl and became one of our best examples. In 2023, she even joined our team to mentor and empower younger girls. After finishing school and gaining work experience, she is now leaving us to pursue an opportunity abroad with her extended family. Although we are sad to say goodbye, we believe she leaves us as someone who can take care of herself and her family.

I credit Ranjana's success to her strength and our **holistic program**, which has empowered her for the last six-plus years. Through our program, she received mentorship, self-defense training, regular health check-ups, and the opportunity to gain work experience. It is stories like Ranjana's that make my work worthwhile. We have seen many other stories of holistic empowerment this year, from promoting digital empowerment to helping establish a business for local women to focusing on total well-being. Lastly, with the recent earthquake that impacted the community of Jajarkot, I am proud that our team was able to provide some financial support and share how we were able to get schools up and running after the earthquake. I am proud of all our girls and our team, and I am grateful to our donors and supporters worldwide for making it all possible. This year we added 45 more girls to our program, and I hope to be able to share more stories of transformation in our future updates. Thank you for everything you allow us to do. Please enjoy our 2023 Year in Review with stories of **Transformation & Empowerment**. Namaskar!



RANJANA AS A STUDENT

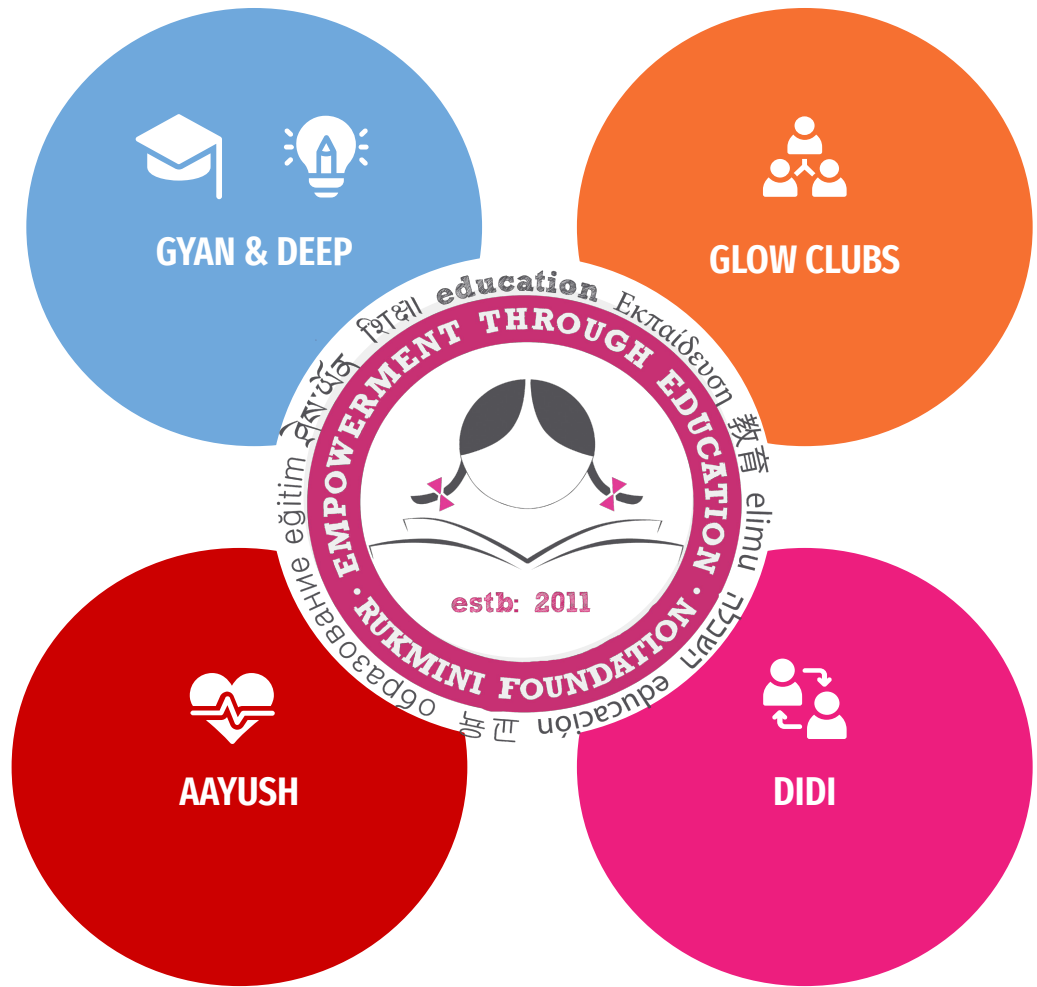


RANJANA AS A MENTOR



# Mission

**Empower** girls through a **holistic** approach so that we can eradicate child marriage, end gender inequality, and enable a more equitable and prosperous community.



# Our Impact Over the Years

Girls Empowered | People Served | Lives Impacted & Transformed

## GYAN

**11,000+**  
Beneficiaries



Scholarships,  
Awareness programs,  
quality education  
initiatives, tutoring  
support

## AAYUSH

**3389+**  
Girls



Ensuring health  
outcomes through  
nutrition, check-ups,  
and additional support

## DIDI

**5672+**  
Girls



One to one mentoring,  
group programs, home  
& school visits, special  
events to broaden  
their horizon

## GLOW CLUBS

**13**  
Clubs



After-school program  
focused on fostering  
creativity, self-esteem,  
and entrepreneurship  
that has served nearly  
**5,000 girls.**

## DEEP

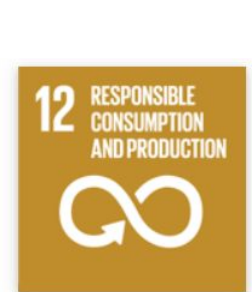
**1,100+**  
Beneficiaries



Digital Education &  
Empowerment Project  
bridging digital divide  
and expanding meal  
program



# How we are aligned to UN SDGs

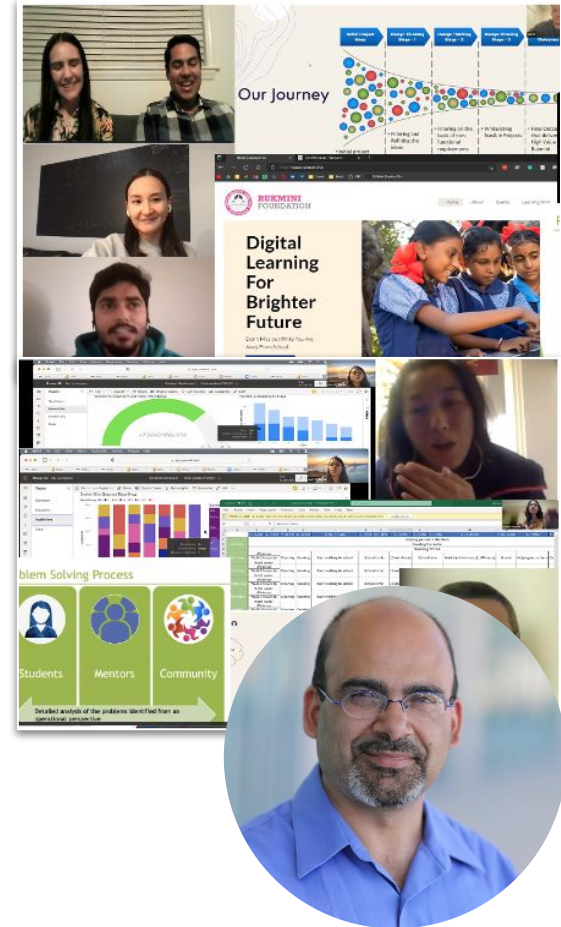


# Reflections on transformation and connectedness

Reflecting on our scholars' origins in rural areas of Nepal, it might initially appear that their challenges and experiences are not easily relatable. However, my recent engagement with the Rukmini Foundation Nepal team during a workshop for my graduate class at Cal State LA revealed a different truth. The interactions between the students and the Nepal team were profoundly inspiring, prompting me to become more actively involved.

Contemplating the foundation's journey brings to mind terms like **"transformation"** and **"connectedness."** Transformation involves a profound change that necessitates self-reflection, growth, and adaptability without altering the essential properties. Remarkable transformations are evident in mentees evolving into mentors, STEM trainees transitioning into trainers, and skill workshop participants becoming entrepreneurs. These transformations serve as guiding milestones on the foundation's path toward empowerment. While the journey may sometimes feel solitary, we are not alone. Our connection extends beyond borders, linking us to local, national, and international stakeholders. While the main focus is on girls' education, our services are not confined to the walls of their schools. The foundation has boldly asserted that by improving the overall environment, girls can achieve empowerment through education. This holistic approach follows the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals of "providing a shared blueprint for peace, prosperity, and sustainable development for people and the planet."<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/)





The leadership team in Nepal that is **transforming** lives



Roshani. B | Roshani. R | Sirjana | Usha | Dipa | Tamanna | Sabina | Roshana



# STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION

Our work is transformative and these stories will demonstrate just how much.



# From Bahinis (Younger Sisters) to Didis (Mentors)



Roshani:  
From Mentee to Tutor and Mentor



Bimala:  
From Trainee to Computer Trainer



Purnima:  
From Student to Dance Teacher

# What the girls are saying about their transformation...

**Purnima Shah**

**Rukmini Graduate**

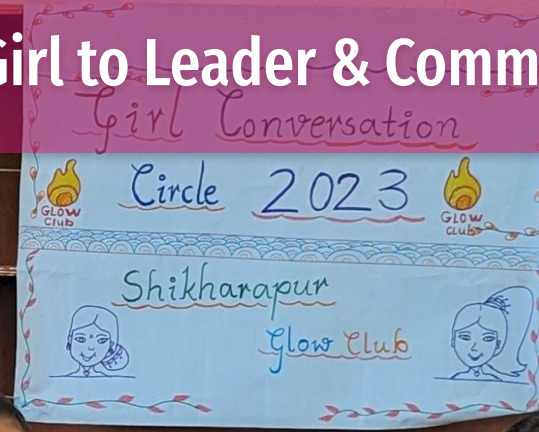
**Dance Instructor: Champadevi & Shree Krishna Secondary Schools**

“It feels great to be a member of the Rukmini family. I was in the family as a Bahini before and the foundation Didis always encouraged us in our studies and extracurricular activities. My passion has always been with dance and I feel very happy that Rukmini Foundation is helping me chase my dreams by giving me the opportunity to be a dance teacher and help my younger sisters and brothers by learning beyond books. I received offers from some private schools to teach as well, but I turned them down because I want to help the Bahinis that Rukmini are supporting. This is my chance to be a mentor (Didi) and teach them to love learning through dance.”





# Personal Transformation: From Shy Girl to Leader & Communicator



Samjhana's transformation is mainly due to her resilient nature, but her exposure to new things and the confidence she has developed as a GLOW Club Member and 2023 GAC representative has played a big part. She is not only speaking in front of her local sisters, but also joining calls with girls all over the world.

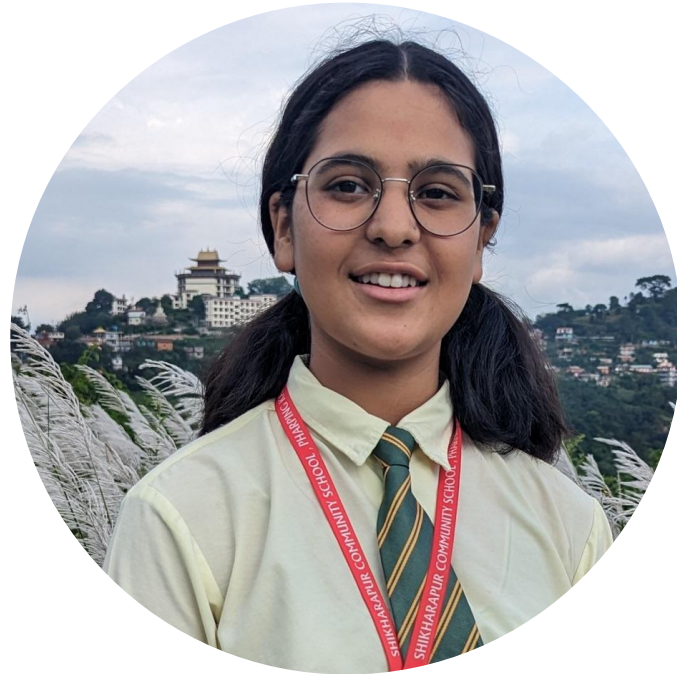


# What the girls are saying about their personal growth...

## Samjhana Hamal

Representative, Girl Advocacy Committee (GAC)  
Shikharapur GLOW Club

“As a GLOW Club member, I had the chance to learn about the importance of girls empowerment, leadership skills and have been involved in many awareness programs. However, being a member of GAC is a completely different experience for me. I now have the opportunity to meet so many friends from all over the world and learn different points of views from the conversations. I feel honored that my mentors have trusted me to lead the Girls Advocacy Committee in 2023.”





# Physical Transformation: From Malnutrition to Healthy Meals



Of the many transformative things we have done over the last 12 years, helping schools establish a lunch program is one of the truly most tangible, visible impacts because it helps all students and you can see the transformation in enrollment, attendance, physical health, and also academic performance.

[Photos of Meal Program in Action- Flickr]



## What teachers and community leaders are saying about lunch in school...

"Rukmini has done us a great service by providing the day meal program. No amount of thanks can express our gratitude. There is **no program as effective as this one in ensuring students attend school**. Nowadays, **almost 100%** of students attend, and the day meal **program has greatly improved their health** and eating habits. As a result, parents are also saving money. Whenever we meet parents, they express their appreciation for this wonderful program. However, as the number of students increases each year and our budget is limited, it's becoming increasingly difficult for us to manage. We are looking forward to receiving more funding to help with this program. Once again, thank you for your support and for making this program possible."



**Ram Kumar Basnet**  
Principal, Setidevi School-Sokhel

# Personal Transformation: From Strangers to Sisters

## [GLOW Club Summit 2023 Photos]



GLOW Club Summit:  
Brings girls across schools and villages together



Sharing and Learning:  
Girls that were strangers leave as sisters



# Transformation Journey Begins for 45 More Girls



After several years of COVID related issues, the need to get girls back into school has never been greater, so this year we saw the need in the community and responded by enrolling 45 more girls in schools and our holistic program.



## What the parents and guardians are saying about our program...

“Although she is not my biological daughter, I cannot imagine my life without her. She brings so much happiness and hope into our lives. As I am getting older and with only my pension as income, providing her education has become a significant challenge. I am very happy that Rukmini Foundation support us in overcoming these obstacles and giving my daughter a chance.”

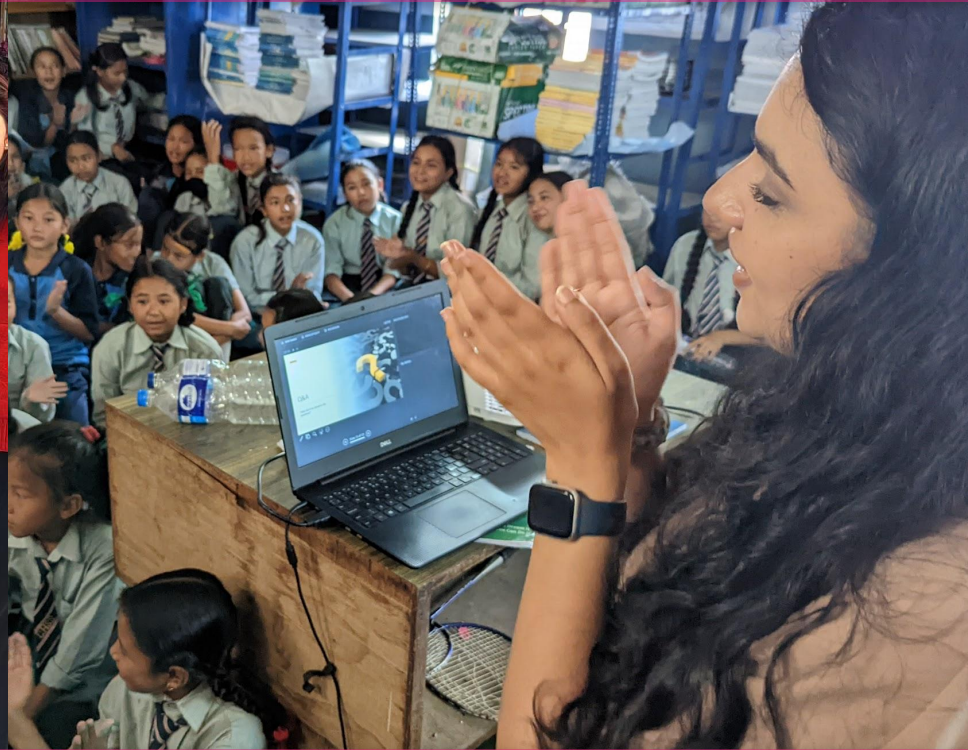
**Dhruva Bahadur Basnet**  
Guardian of Binita Bom



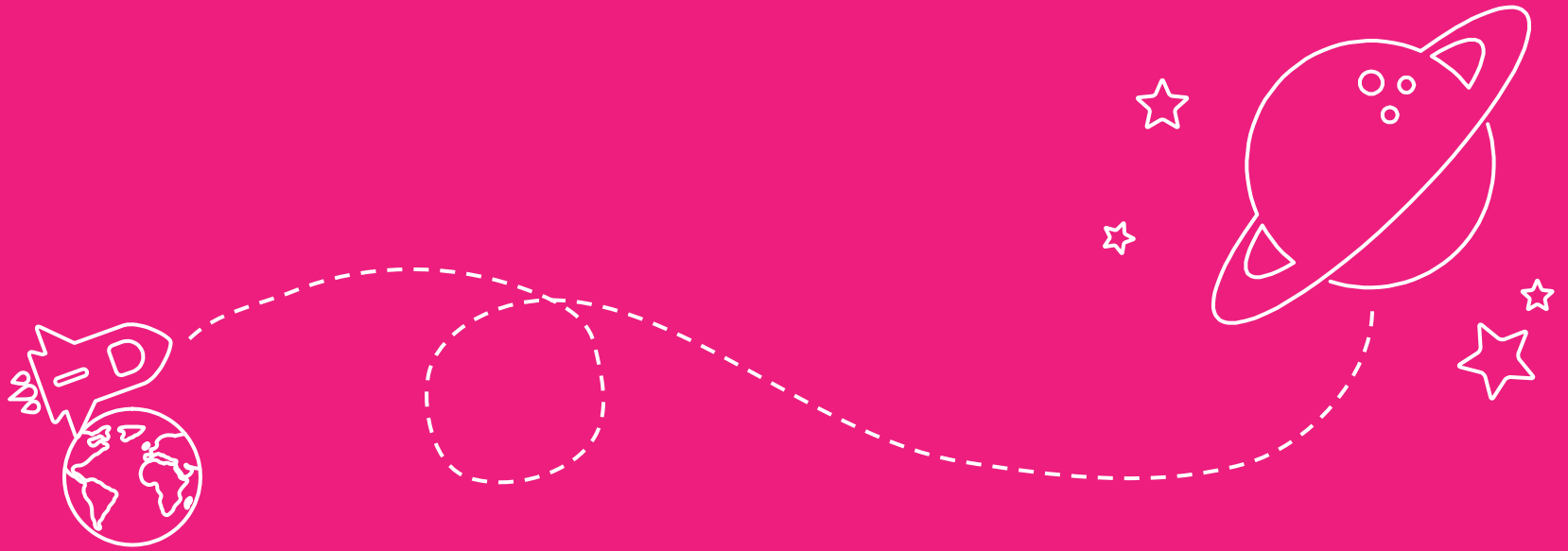
# Transformation Begins at Home: Continuous Training & Support of Staff



Leadership Training for Staff and Mentors  
Conducted by Board Member & VP, Priti Bhattarai



Board Member & Secretary, Preeti Khanal  
Visiting Programs and Supporting Key Staff Virtually



# STORIES OF EMPOWERMENT

See the different forms of empowerment we bring to bear to make these transformations possible.



# Economic Empowerment: Establishing a Women's-Owned Business

A group of approximately 15 people, mostly women, are in a bright room with blue walls and large windows. Several women are seated at long wooden tables, each with a black 'SAPNA' brand sewing machine. They are dressed in casual to semi-formal attire. Two men stand in the background; one is wearing a white polo shirt with 'Education 2030' printed on it. A woman in a pink traditional Indian outfit stands in the center. The room has a cheerful atmosphere with colorful paper cutouts on the wall. A semi-transparent purple box with white text is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

2023 was a great showcase of economic empowerment where our team was able to facilitate training for women, but more importantly to help establish a formal business. The business has already earned more than 250K Rupees by selling school dresses, masks, and sanitary pads. These women are also strong advocates for girls' education.

# What women entrepreneurs are saying about economic empowerment...

**Karuna Sunar**

Chairperson, Yog Mahila  
Silai Samuha



“Everyone could give the training but couldn’t provide such support like support of Rukmini Foundation. We even get the support to register the Yog Mahila Udyami Samuha. I am happy to work with great support from RF family. We are hoping to be independent women and looking for a better future.”

**Rojeena Neupane**

Member, Yog Mahila  
Silai Samuha



“Being a house worker and a mother it was incredibly difficult to travel 6km away from home for a training that lasted over 4 months. At times, managing time became extremely difficult and I even wanted to quit the training, but my desire to become an independent woman and contribute to my family kept me going. Now that I successfully completed my training, we can sew uniforms for students of Rukmini’s partner schools and even making rubber bands and fancy bags has become a source of my income. I am proud to say that through my efforts, I am making a positive impact on my family’s well- being.”



# Community Empowerment through Improved Awareness and Access



Awareness:  
Importance of routine check-ups



Access:  
Receiving care that is hard to get to



Awareness:  
Learning how to care for animals



# Digital Empowerment: Upskilling Community in Technology



The DEEP Program is not just about purchasing laptops and handing them to schools. It is about establishing a culture of wanting to learn more and that starts with good training.

# What the community is saying about the DEEP Program...

**Rajan Balami**

Chairperson, Village  
Development Committee



I never knew how to use laptops. At my age, I did not think I was able to learn or that I am too old for this type of technology. Thanks to Rukmini Foundation and this opportunity I am finding it interesting and now I even have a goal to learn how to use technology to maybe start an online business for my shop.

**Sami Karki**  
Homemaker



Honestly speaking, I am here to manage half an hour for myself. I am a well-educated person with a master's degree in RD. I have basic knowledge of computer skills, but due to family issues, I am unable to dedicate my time as an employee. Currently, I am taking care of my in-laws and raising my two babies. Sometimes, I feel lonely at home but coming here gives me the chance to meet people from my age group and revise my computer skills.



# Holistic Empowerment through Improved Awareness and Access



Dental Health:  
Collaboration with Brighter Smile



Mental Health:  
Helping Girls to Cope



Eye Check-Ups:  
Preventative Care

# What the girls are saying about mental health...

**Bimala Waiba**

**Student, Arunodaya Secondary School**

“Today’s teenagers are under a lot of stress about studies, social life, family life, marriage and many pressing issues that causes overthinking. This program gave us good guidance on how to deal with stress. I am thankful to be able to attend such an amazing program where I learned techniques that I can use daily to better understand and deal with my stress.”





# What community members are saying about awareness & access...



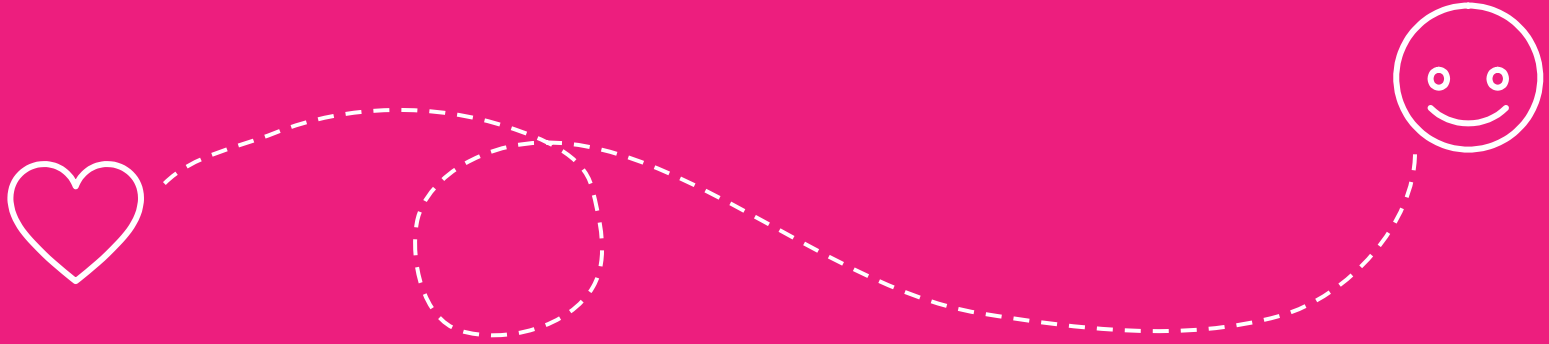
**Chandra Bahadur Pakhrin**  
Community Member,  
Bhandarkharka

My eyesight was getting so bad, but I thought it was just due to my old age. Sometimes I even worried I was going blind, but I could not go to the hospital because it is too far. I heard about the camp and came to get my eyes checked. The doctor said that I have cataracts and needed an operation. I was worried about the money for such an operation, but the program connected me to a local hospital in Pharping where my operation was performed for free. They saved my eyesight. I am very happy and grateful. Thank you to the doctors for coming to our village to do these check-ups and thank you Rukmini Foundation for help.



I was always taught that brushing my teeth once a week was enough. I did not know that we have to take care of our teeth by brushing everyday. I also did not know how to brush properly until today. Through this program I learned how to keep my teeth healthy by brushing properly and to keep a bright smile for a long time.

**Jenish Waiba**  
Student, Panchakanya School



# OTHER STORIES TO LOVE

Some more stories of how the concept of connectedness is central to everything we do.



# Connectedness: Sharing Financial Resources and Our Experience



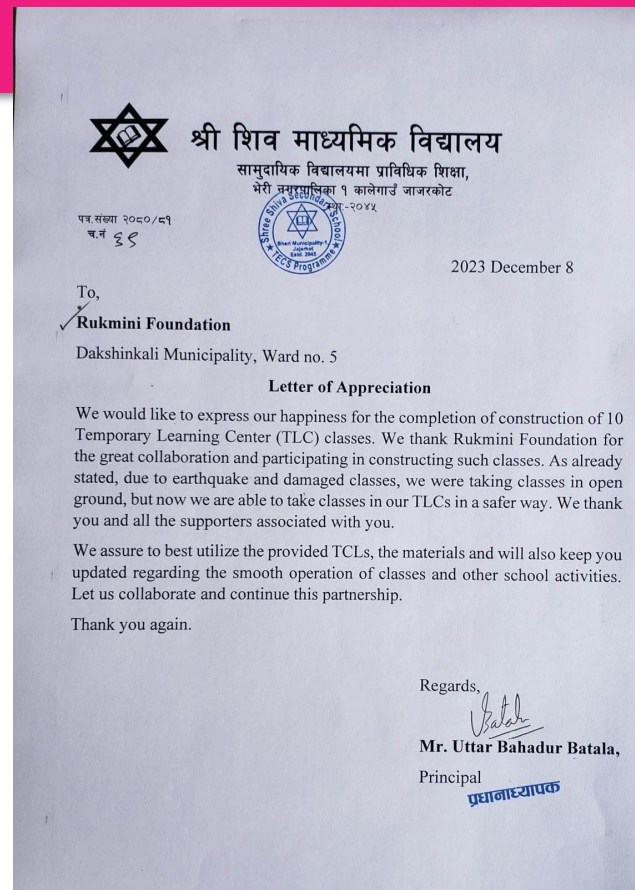
After the recent earthquake in Jajarkot, Nepal, some of our community leaders visited the community where we provided a helping hand to earthquake survivors by helping to build temporary learning spaces. As students once studied on the ground, this offered them shelter and a chance to continue their education. We went through the same experience when one of our partner schools collapsed in 2015.

[Pictures from our experience in April 2015 - Flickr]

# What community leaders are saying...


## Mr. Uttar Bahadur Batala Principal

Statement from Principal, Mr. Batala about the support of Rukmini Foundation in helping to build temporary classrooms to get students back into school after the recent earthquake that impacted Jajarkot, Nepal.





# Connectedness: Former Bahini Junu Gives Back to Community



Through our Protect Animal Welfare (PAW) Project, we spayed 134 dogs and vaccinated 174 against rabies. This helps protect the dogs, but also the humans from deadly disease and helps to keep the number of strays down. What makes this program extra special was to have former Bahini Junu, who graduated as a Vet Technician, reconnect with us to helping during the program.

# What the community members are saying about new programs...

**Kiran Nepali**

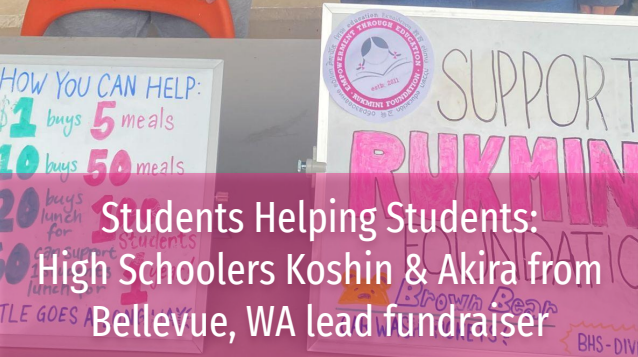
**Community Member, Pharping**

In our community, we find dogs roaming freely and they are treated poorly. For those who keep pets, they mostly keep male dogs but don't like to keep female dogs as they reproduce many puppies. We have a lot of stray dogs that have been suffering from hunger and often abuse. They don't get love and care. The program from Rukmini Foundation is helping to change people's view on how they should be treated and helped and the first step is to make them aware about animal rights.





# Connectedness: A Global Community that Believes in Empowerment



Students Helping Students:  
High Schoolers Koshin & Akira from  
Bellevue, WA lead fundraiser



Connecting in Real-Life:  
Koshin & Akira's family visited our  
programs to see impact



Connecting and Sharing:  
Pittsburgh High Schooler, Aman  
visited & took part in DEEP Program

# 2023 Goals vs. Results & Report Card

B

**Start a Music & Arts Program (Kalaa)**

*Purnima Shah started teaching dance in 2 partner schools.*

A

**Expand community based tutoring program to 1 or more villages**

*Started new community based tutoring program at two villages.*

B

**Self Defense Training at Partner School for 300+ girls**

*Conducted at 2 schools for 176 participants. Will seek to reach more in 2024.*

A

**Expand nutrition program to a new school**

*Started a meal program at Setidevi Secondary School , Sokhel.*

A

**Incorporate boys in mentoring programs**

*Included boys in Didi, DEEP Program, Ayush and other awareness programs.*

A

**Increase home and school visits**

*We had 3 additional Didis to help with visits and we covered 136 miles in visits.*

A

**Support local women entrepreneurs to establish a business**

*Successfully registered a business, which generated a profit in 2023.*

B

**Provide public speaking training for girls**

*Ontrack and 1 podcast will be done this month.*

A

**Start at least 1 community-based STEM Club**

*Community based STEM club started in Pharping.*

C

**Open 1 Library/ Cyber Tea Shop to expand tech access**

*Cancelled because we focused on 1 center that community members could access.*

A

**Expand internship program to add 2 or more graduate girls**

*4 graduate Bahinis interned at Rukmini Foundation.*

D

**Conduct awareness programs about labor foreign migration**

*Postponed to 2024 as we align more expertise and resource to conduct.*



# Our key accomplishment metrics this year



**45**

**New Enrolled bahinis**

Girls across multiple villages will



**500+**

**Beneficiaries**

Trained on computers and digital technologies



**125,000+**

**Meals Served**

Across 5 partners schools



**308**

**Dogs**

Spayed /Vaccinated / Treated: Protect Animal Welfare (PAW) Project



**2,200+**

**Community Health**

Check-Ups / Connecting to Urgent Care / Health Awareness Programs

# How your support enabled empowerment & transformation in 2023

## Highlights / Notes\*

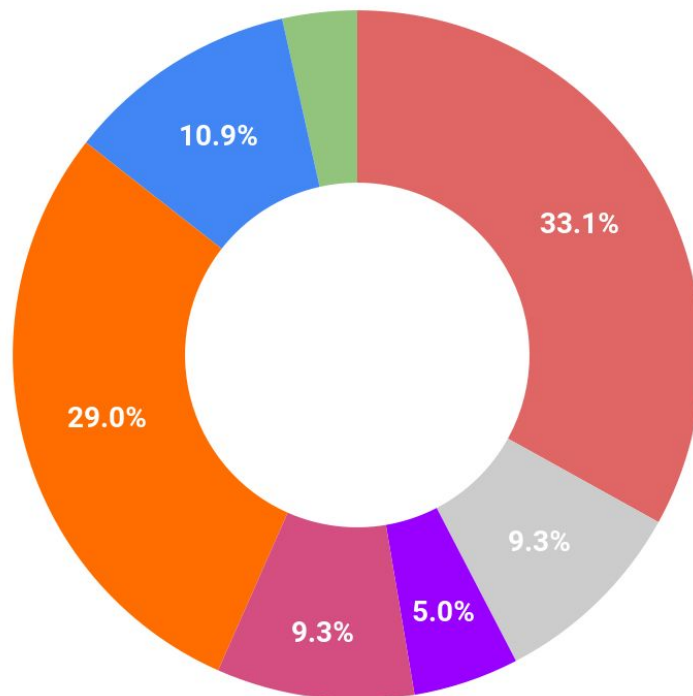
Our investment in **holistic health** is highlighted in the expenses this year as we continued to emphasize the **importance of nutrition** as well as a **new emphasis on mental health**.

Our GLOW Club programming had a huge impact again this year, but it also went **beyond** girls and **after school programs** as we helped to **establish a women-owned business** that will provide tailoring services.

Overall, we continue to be a very lean organization with **minimal administrative costs** at **less than 10%**, which includes the salaries of our women-led staff in Nepal.

We achieved these amazing results with a modest **budget of \$80,000**

- Aayush - Health & Wellness
- Administrative
- DEEP - Digital Empowerment
- Didi - Mentoring
- GLOW Clubs - Afterschool Program
- Gyan - Quality Education
- Sahara - Community Outreach



\*These numbers are being reported on a cash basis and have not been audited.









# Looking Ahead for 2024



# 2024 Goals

Here is what we are looking to do in the coming year

GYAN	AAYUSH	DIDI	GLOW CLUBS	DEEP	OTHER
					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Demonstrate <b>marked progress</b> in academic and personal development for the <b>45</b> new students of 2023.</li><li>2. Create a <b>Tutoring Program for 20+</b> Bahinis from the most disenfranchised communities.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Expand Mental Health programming to <b>reach 300+ students</b> and community members.</li><li>2. As government and schools are cutting back on support of meal programs, commit to serving <b>100,000+ meals</b> for our 5 partner schools.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Reach 200+ boys</b> through key mentoring programs dealing with child marriage and gender-based violence.</li><li>2. Self Defense <b>Training</b> continue at Partner School <b>for 200+ girls</b>.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Conduct a <b>formal training</b> program on Mental Health for <b>13 GLOW Club Mentors</b>.</li><li>2. Conduct <b>first ever</b> GLOW Club talent show.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prepare <b>4 Documentaries</b> and record <b>4 Podcasts</b>.</li><li>2. Provide Intensive Computer Training for <b>50 Bahinis</b>.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Conduct <b>4+ awareness programs</b> on emerging topics: cyber bullying, body-shaming, misinformation, dangers of foreign employment.</li><li>2. Provide marketing support to Women's Tailoring business to grow revenues by <b>200K Rupees</b>.</li></ol>



# 12 years later, we continue to learn and grow thanks to you!

As you hopefully saw from our year in review, **we are realizing our vision** of creating a virtuous cycle where **empowered girls become mentors** who give back and can also support themselves and their families. This transformation and empowerment is only possible through the unwavering support from all of you that gives us the confidence to try new things and continuously learn. On behalf of everyone associated with the foundation, please accept our deepest gratitude.



**RUKMINI**  
FOUNDATION

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by **Slidesgo**, including icons by **Flaticon**, and infographics & certain images by **Freepik**.

We hope these smiles take you into a very happy and peaceful 2024!



To help us create more smiles, please consider supporting our work.