

Friends of VIN USA Annual Report 2022

Introduction

Friends of Volunteers Initiative Nepal (FoVIN) USA is a non-profit organization that focuses on empowering marginalized communities in Nepal, with a focus on women and children. We aim to raise funds, awareness, and support for [Volunteers Initiative Nepal \(VIN\)](#) and other Nepali non-profit organizations. Our organization was established in 2011 and is run by volunteers sharing the experience of deep connections and love for Nepal and a passion and skillset for philanthropy.



*2022 FoVIN USA Board of Directors, from left to right: Wendy Mcelvain (Secretary) Maddison Rosenberg (Treasurer), Sadie Green (President), Janelle Reinstra Jones (Vice-President)

Internal Strategic Planning

In 2022, FoVIN USA conducted several months of internal strategic planning with [Shira Goldstein](#) to ensure that we are using our resources effectively and efficiently. This process helped us to identify areas where we could improve and ways to better support our mission.



International FoVIN Coalition-Building

Since 2020, we've been building a coalition of Friends of Volunteers Initiative Nepal (FoVIN) organizations from around the world, including in the US, Canada, the UK, and the Netherlands. Our sister organizations have been meeting regularly to collaborate and support VIN's community development programs. In 2021, we launched the Global FoVIN website, hosted by FoVIN USA: friendsofvin.org In 2022, we continued to build this coalition with regular meetings, including a summit in Nepal and a collaborative fundraising campaign (see below).



Global FoVIN Nepal Summit

In October 2022, three of our board members traveled to Nepal to attend an international Friends of VIN conference. During the five-day summit, we engaged in strategic planning and visited many project sites, families, and community members supported by VIN programs. We stayed at the FoVIN USA-supported, newly built [NaraTika Community Learning Center \(CLC\)](#) in Thulachap, Okhaldhunga.

We also brought 8 iPads donated by our friends at [LF and Sturgeon Technology Solutions](#) for the CLC's computer lab and training center and met with one of our sponsored students, Binita.

*Bhupi, VIN Founder and President (Top row, second from left), with FoVIN USA, Canada, and The Netherlands at the NaraTika CLC in Okhaldhunga.

During this trip to Nepal, we also coordinated a donation from the company [Saalt](#) and physically brought to Nepal 120 pieces of 'period underwear'. We distributed these to the [Maha-Sukha Foundation](#) for the 30 nuns living at the extremely remote Serang Monastery in Nubri, Gorkha.





*Six young women at the Naratika CLC's computer learning lab, learning computer skills on the iPads we brought in October 2022. VIN added the wireless keyboards, mice, and stands.



*Meeting with community stakeholders during the FoVIN Nepal Summit, where beneficiaries, farmers, teachers, students, families, women entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders came to share their thoughts and ideas, concerns, requests, and gratitude with VIN and FoVIN.



"I am Pema Dolma, a nun from Serang monastery. I have received four pairs of period underwear from you guys through Ms. Tsering Dekyi. It has been very useful. We stay in an extremely remote area. So, it's very difficult for us to buy sanitary pads as there are no shops available. The rags we usually use are not durable and complicated. I would like to offer my deepest appreciation to all the people who help us. Your donation has been truly appreciated and valued."



*A representative from the VIN-supported women's agricultural and savings cooperative speaks at the community stakeholder meeting during our October 2022 trip to Okaldhunga. She was primarily voicing the cooperative's need and desire for increased capital investment into their group, as the women would like to be able to take out small loans to start their own enterprises and ultimately become financially independent.

Collaborative Fundraising Campaign for Water Tanks

During the last quarter of 2022, we collaborated with our FoVIN sister organizations in a fundraising campaign. This campaign successfully raised approximately \$12,000 to support the construction of 12 permanent 4,000-liter water tanks, the installation of drinking water filtration systems and micro-irrigation systems, and the provision of sustainable farming training and resources for 12 Dalit families in Okhaldhunga.



*FoVIN USA team with Bhupi from VIN, getting a tour of one Dalit family's VIN-supported water tank, toilet, and kitchen garden. October 2022

"It's been two years since we got our VIN water tank. We didn't have drinking water at our house before, but now we do. Our lives have become easier. Now, we plant and consume more vegetables in our home garden, whereas we used to have to walk far to buy them. Now, we can pick and eat our own vegetables, and this is very good for us. My friends here are also hoping and waiting for their water tanks."



Support for Female Students

We are proud to continue supporting the last of 17 students that we began supporting back in 2012. The last student in this cohort is now studying in grade 12. Thirteen of our seventeen original students, or 76.5%, all of whom are female and come from disadvantaged communities



in rural Nepal, have graduated from high school. Many of them have gone on to pursue higher education, including college and other technical training courses. Three of our students continued to university with FoVIN USA partial scholarships. This is significant, given that only 35% of students graduate from grade 12 in Nepal, and these young women all come from particularly disadvantaged backgrounds and are almost entirely the first generation in their families to be literate.

"Namaste! My name is Binita. I've been receiving your support for my

education since 2nd grade, and for this, I am very happy and grateful. Now, I'm studying in grade 12. When I graduate from high school, I want to join the Army. Thank you so much."

October 2022



Grant for Operating Expenses

In addition to our other efforts, we sent VIN a grant of \$1,200 for general operating expenses. This grant helps to ensure that VIN can continue its crucial work in the region.



*Pictures from October 2022 trip to Okhaldhunga, from top to bottom and left to right: Women's vocational training course in jewelry-making at the CLC. Children of water-tank, toilet, and permaculture training recipient households. Women gathering for their monthly savings cooperative meeting, Ms. Shrestha, VIN-supported farmer, in her permaculture-inspired field.

Conclusion

Overall, we are proud of the work we have accomplished this year. We have continued to support VIN's holistic, long-term, community development programs in Okhaldhunga, Nepal. We are grateful to our supporters who have helped us to make an impact in the lives of women, children, and others in this marginalized community in Nepal. With your continued support, we look forward to continuing our work.



Thanks to the generosity of our friends, family, and colleagues, Friends of VIN USA has made a significant impact in Nepal since our establishment in 2011. Our achievements include:

- Building water tanks and providing permaculture training and resources for 12 Dalit families in Okhaldhunga, Nepal (2023)
- Supporting sustainable food production in Okhaldhunga, including planting 500 fruit trees (2021-2022)
- Supporting COVID-19 relief work, including providing health and hygiene training to 1,500 community members and distributing necessary materials such as soap and masks (2020-2021)

- Funding the construction of the VIN Community Learning Center in Okhaldhunga, which has provided education and training to over 2,000 individuals (2017-2019)
- Sponsoring temporary housing and other disaster relief efforts after the devastating earthquake, which provided shelter to over 500 people in the Kathmandu, Nuwakot, and Okhaldhunga districts (2015-2016)
- Funding the construction of over 100 toilets in the rural Okhaldhunga district, improving sanitation for over 1,000 people (2013-2014)
- Supporting women's agricultural cooperatives and mother's groups in Jitpurphedi, Nepal, providing training and resources to over 100 women (2011-2013)
- Providing 17 female students with need-based scholarships, with three students successfully completing university (ongoing, since 2012)
- Sending volunteers and providing expertise from the USA to Nepal (ongoing, since 2011)

We are incredibly proud of the work we have accomplished and the impact we have made in the marginalized communities of Nepal. We couldn't have done it without the continued support of our donors and volunteers, and we are grateful for their commitment to helping us make a positive difference.



