

ANNUAL REPORT-2023



 <https://healthfoundationnepal.org/>

 Maharajgunj, Kathmandu, Nepal

Message from the President of Health Foundation Nepal, US and Director of Mental Health Program

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride in the strides we have made at Health Foundation Nepal (HFN). Since our inception in 2013, our mission to enhance the health and well-being of underserved populations in Nepal has driven us to innovate, collaborate, and expand our reach.

In 2023, we have continued to break new ground in our efforts to address critical health challenges. Through the support of our dedicated team and volunteers, we have launched and sustained several impactful initiatives.

One of our key achievements this year is the successful implementation of community-based mental health programs for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, postpartum mothers, and the elderly. Our maternal mental health program, launched in 2018, not only screens for depression and anxiety but also integrates physical and mental health services to ensure a positive birth experience for mothers. Additionally, our Smile Ama-Baa Campaign targets underdiagnosed mental health disorders among the elderly, providing essential care and tackling societal stigma to empower them to prioritize their mental health.

Our Mental Health Care and Rehabilitation Center plays a crucial role in closing the treatment gap for mental health problems in Nepal. Here, individuals receive free medical care and rehabilitation services from interdisciplinary teams, focusing on both immediate needs and long-term recovery. Furthermore, the Integrated Mental Health Centre in Ghorahi, Dang, extends our efforts by providing comprehensive clinical services to marginalized individuals through community-based treatment, capacity building, and research initiatives.

We have also made significant progress in addressing non-communicable diseases in rural part of Dang and enhancing digital health literacy in more than 28 schools in Chitwan district. Our mobile health clinics have reached remote areas, ensuring that essential health services are accessible to those who need them most.

These accomplishments are a direct result of the unwavering support from our partners, donors, volunteers, and team members. Your dedication and belief in our mission fuel our efforts and inspire us to push boundaries and achieve greater impact.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. With your continued support, we can continue to transform lives and promote health and well-being in communities that need it the most.

Warm regards,

Dr. Shreedhar Paudel

MD, MPH

Founder and President, Health Foundation Nepal, USA



Message from the HFN, Nepal President

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the remarkable progress we have made at Health Foundation Nepal (HFN). Since our establishment in 2013, we have remained steadfast in our mission to improve the health and well-being of underserved populations across Nepal. Our commitment to advocating for effective public health policies and providing integrated healthcare services has never been stronger.

In 2023, through collaboration with local community-based organizations and support from our dedicated partners, we have implemented a range of impactful projects. These initiatives focus on mental health, non-communicable diseases, digital and health literacy, and strengthening health systems.



Our focus on mental health, particularly for pregnant women, postpartum mothers, and the elderly, has been pivotal. Programs like our maternal mental health initiative and Smile Ama-Baa Campaign have ensured accessibility to mental health care integrated with physical services. Establishing the Mental Health Care and Rehabilitation Center and the Integrated Mental Health Centre in Ghorahi, Dang, has created opportunities for comprehensive support to those with severe mental illnesses. Additionally, our efforts in combating non-communicable diseases through mobile health clinics and promoting digital literacy in Chitwan signify our commitment to holistic well-being of the community.

Our achievements this year would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners, donors, volunteers, and dedicated team members. Your commitment to our cause inspires us every day and drives us to reach new heights.

As we look forward to the future, we remain committed to our vision of a healthier, more equitable Nepal. Together, we will continue to advocate for and implement programs that promote the health and well-being of all, particularly those in underserved communities.

Thank you for being a part of our journey. With your continued support, we can create lasting change and improve the lives of many more individuals and families across Nepal.

Warm regards,

Dr. Ranjan Sapkota, MS, MCh
President
Health Foundation Nepal

Message from the HFN, US Executive Director

Dear valued HFN donor, members, & well-wishers,

The annual report of HFN activities for year 2023 is in your hand. This report has arrived to you after a hard work of each and every member of HFN team here in USA and Nepal. This report is an outcome of what we have achieved this past year under dedicated HFN donors, leaders, staff members, and other stakeholders.

Please take a moment to review this report and let us know if you have any feedbacks or concerns. Your feedback will of much value for us to improve on our future endeavors.

Please know that we have achieved a lot via our venture programs such as Non communicable diseases, Mental Health, digital health and other supporting programs in partnership with other organizations and stakeholders.

I would like to request you to realize that none of this would have been possible without your support; financial and moral. I would like to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for your unwavering support to HFN initiatives.

I look forward to partner with you to continue our successful current program and perhaps add more programs in the future.



Sincerely,

Drona Raj Pandeya, MSCLS, MBA

Executive Director

Health Foundation Nepal, USA



Overcoming Mental Health problems and scaling up Mental Health Services



Reducing Malnutrition



Empowering children of challenging backgrounds



Partnering with Government entities



Our Areas of Expertise



Adequate health literacy



Providing comprehensive, multidimensional, and longitudinal clinical care

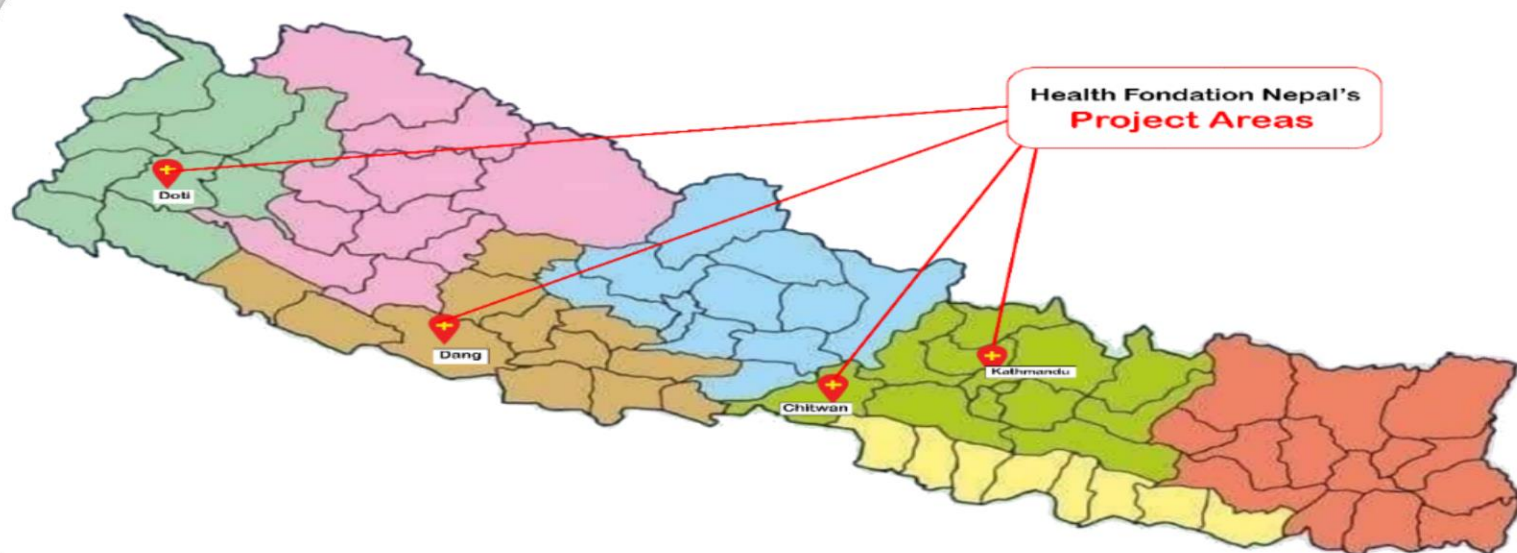


Research and data dissemination

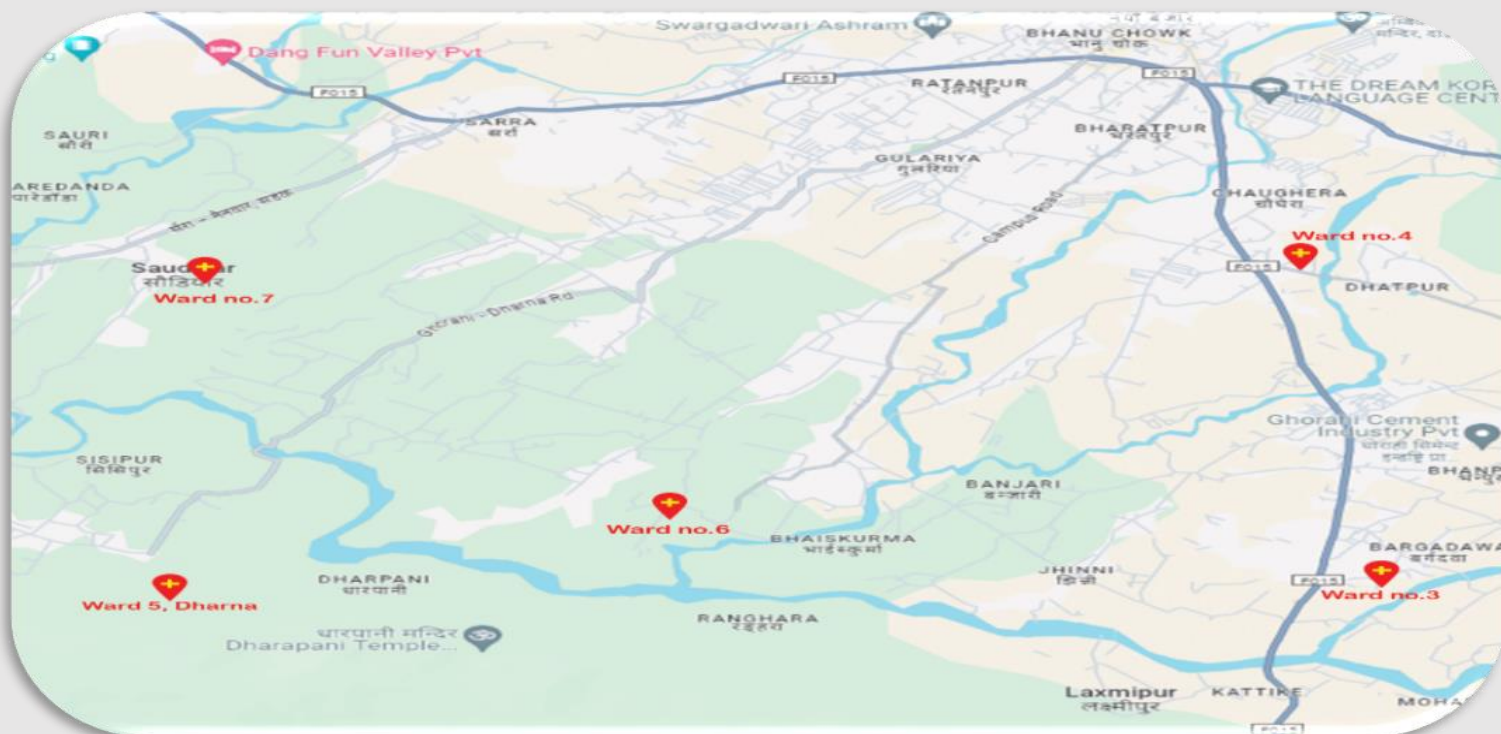


Serving Health service to rural

Our Areas of work



Working area of Ghorahi Sub Metropolitan City



Introduction to HFN

Health Foundation Nepal (HFN), a non-profit organization registered in both the United States and Nepal, has been working in Nepal since 2013. Health Foundation Nepal was founded with the mission of advocating for public health policies and programs that promote the health and well-being of underserved people in Nepal's rural and urban areas, allowing them to reach their full potential. It is a nonpartisan, apolitical organization that provides health care services in collaboration with local community-based organizations using an integrated health approach. HFN is a non-profit organization in both the United States and Nepal. HFN operates from its headquarters in Kathmandu, Nepal. It is currently operational in Nepal's districts of Chitwan, Dang, Kathmandu, and Baitadi. It also provides financial and technical assistance to local organizations in rural Nepal that work in the fields of community-based primary health care and public health.

HFN has been implementing various projects, including those focusing on under-five child nutrition, women of reproductive age (WRA), pregnant and lactating mothers, people suffering from severe mental health problems, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), digital and health literacy, COVID response, and health system strengthening. HFN has been implementing various health research projects in collaboration and partnership with national and international organizations.

HFN has been collaborating with the Government of Nepal (GoN), External Development Partners (EDPs), and local organizations. The primary goals of HFN are to ensure the accessibility and availability of high-quality health care services to people of all ages; to provide practical solutions based on scientific evidence, on health and education to promote the health and well-being of the community; and to generate evidence to inform public health programs and policies, with a special emphasis on existing and emerging public health problems. HFN has also implemented an internship program to train recent graduates in community-based public health programs and health research, as well as to strengthen innovations and advance community work. HFN's programs are comprehensive, community-based, and multi-sectoral.

This report presents a summary of activities accomplished from January to December 2023. This report also provides information on the contributions of HFN as well as the progress of programs implemented by HFN.

HFN Nepal is responsible for program development and implementation, as well as financial resource management and program monitoring and evaluation.

To further its mission, it collaborates with a wide range of partners to:

- Provide financial and technical assistance to community-based organizations
- Conduct public health research
- Provide direct clinical care through a comprehensive primary care approach



Mental Health Initiative of Health Foundation Nepal



Mental health issues among pregnant women, postpartum mothers, and the elderly are significant public health concerns in Nepal. Health Foundation Nepal (HFN) has been leading efforts to address these challenges. Since 2018, the organization has implemented a range of targeted initiatives aimed at providing essential support and care

to these vulnerable populations. One such program is the maternal mental health program, which not only focuses on screening for depression and anxiety but also emphasizes the integration of physical and mental health services to ensure that mothers have a positive birth experience. This holistic approach recognizes the interconnectedness of mental and physical well-being during the crucial stages of pregnancy and childbirth.



In addition to maternal mental health, HFN has launched the Smile Ama-Baa Campaign, which specifically targets underdiagnosed mental health disorders among the elderly in Ghorahi Sub Metropolitan City. This comprehensive program is tailored to meet the unique needs of older adults, addressing not only their mental health concerns but also providing essential care and support to improve their overall well-being. By recognizing the societal stigma that often hinders older

individuals from seeking help, HFN aims to create a supportive environment where they feel empowered to prioritize their mental health.



Furthermore, HFN operates a Mental Health Care and Rehabilitation Center, which plays a crucial role in closing the treatment gap for mental health problems in Nepal. Through this facility, individuals receive free medical care and rehabilitation services provided by interdisciplinary teams comprising psychiatrists, medical doctors, nurses, and mental health counselors working collaboratively to provide personalized treatment plans. This approach not only focuses on addressing the immediate needs of patients but also aims to support their long-term recovery and successful reintegration into society.

Moreover, the organization's efforts extend to the establishment of an Integrated Mental Health Centre in Ghorahi, Dang. This center aims to provide comprehensive clinical services to marginalized individuals with mental illness through community-based treatment, capacity building, and research initiatives. By engaging with local communities and building partnerships with key stakeholders, HFN seeks to strengthen mental health services at the grassroots level, ensuring that individuals receive the support and care they need to thrive.



Maternal Mental Program (Smile Mothers Campaign)



Mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety are prevalent among pregnant and postpartum women globally, affecting a significant portion of women in developing countries, as noted by the World Health Organization. These issues often remain undetected due to their similarity to typical experiences of motherhood. However, they can lead to various adverse outcomes, including poor physical health, risky behaviors, and obstetric complications.



Furthermore, affected women may be less inclined to seek prenatal and postnatal care, thereby increasing the risk of maternal mortality. In Nepal, screening for maternal mental health disorders is not prioritized. To address this gap, HFN has launched a community-based maternal mental health program in Ghorahi Sub-metropolitan city, Dang, Nepal, targeting certain wards within the municipality. The program offers a range of counseling services tailored to mild to moderate cases, including individual, couple, and family psychosocial counseling. Severe cases are referred to psychiatric

care and rehabilitation centers, with immediate individual psychosocial counseling provided. The primary aim is to assess and improve the mental well-being of pregnant and postpartum women in Ghorahi Sub-metropolitan city.

In the year 2023, we were able to screen 882 pregnant and postpartum mothers and follow-up was completed among 1853 mothers.

Impact in 2023



Different types of counseling services

Individual



580

Couple



14

Family



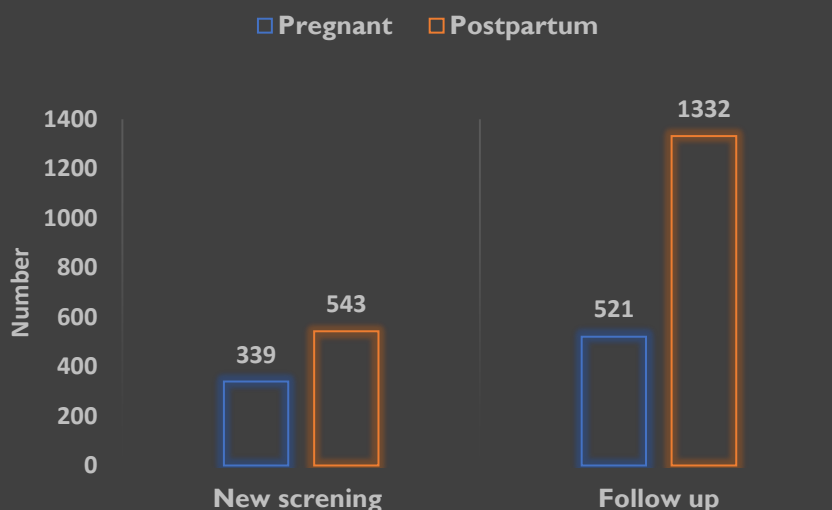
38

Group



7

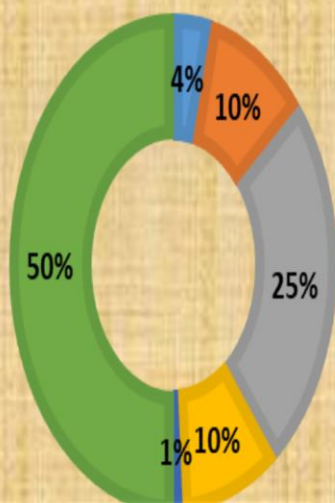
Number of screening in the year 2023



ETHNIC COMPOSITION

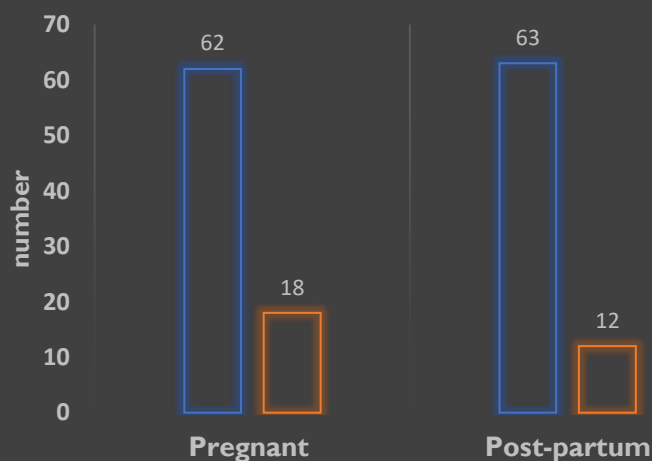
■ Brahmin ■ Chhetri ■ Janajati ■ Dalit ■ Others

N=882



Category of Mental Illness

■ General Anxiety ■ Depression



Mental health program for geriatric population (Smile Ama-Baa Campaign)



HFN has also launched Smile Ama-Baa Campaign, a comprehensive mental health program specifically tailored for the elderly population in wards 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of Ghorahi Sub Metropolitan City. This program addresses the prevalent issue of underdiagnosed mental health disorders among individuals aged 60 and above, a problem exacerbated by societal stigma hindering their willingness to seek help. With an estimated target of 7,000 older adults, the program encompasses various components to provide essential mental health care and support.

a. Training of Community Mental Health Facilitators

To facilitate the identification of mental health issues among the elderly, HFN has enlisted 18 community mental health facilitators. These individuals play a crucial role in supporting psychosocial counselors in screening the elderly population for mental health concerns

b. Screening for Different Mental Health Conditions:

The program utilizes a range of assessment tools, including demographic surveys, PHQ-9, GAD-7, CAGE, loneliness scale, Insomnia Severity Scale, WHO-QL, and general well-being assessments. Trained community mental health facilitators, supported by psychosocial



counselors, conduct door-to-door screenings. In 2023, 813 older individuals were screened for different mental health problems through home visits.

c. Counseling Services:

Individuals with identified mental health issues, receive targeted counseling services from psychosocial counselors. Follow-up screening visits are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the counseling interventions. Counseling sessions are diverse and may include individual, couple, family, and group counseling. In 2023, the program provided counseling to a significant number of individuals across various sessions.



d. Smile Ama-Ba Clubs:

The Smile Ama-Baa Clubs is a community-based initiative that focuses on promoting holistic well-being, with a particular emphasis on the mental and physical health of the elderly population. These clubs offer a supportive environment where participants engage in activities, discuss mental health topics, and build connections among themselves. The primary goal is to improve the overall quality of life for elderly individuals by addressing both mental and physical health. The clubs also conduct health check-ups, including monitoring blood pressure and blood glucose levels, further supporting the participants' physical well-being. In the year 2023, we formed five initial Ba-Ama clubs where the older people of five different communities benefitted. Three running clubs were followed up after a month.



Psychiatric care and Rehabilitation Centre



At the heart of Nepal's journey towards holistic mental health care lies the Psychiatric Care and Rehabilitation Center in Kuirepani, Dang, a beacon of hope and healing for those battling chronic mental illness. Established through the collaborative efforts of Health for Nepal (HFN) and Movement for Inspiration Nepal (MOFIN), this center stands as a testament to the transformative power of psychosocial rehabilitation. Our mission is clear: to facilitate the journey of individuals with severe mental illness toward optimal

independence and improved quality of life. With a focus on emotional, social, and intellectual skill development, we aim to equip our patients with the tools they need to thrive in their communities with minimal professional support. Within our 25-bed facility, we offer a comprehensive range of services, all provided free of charge. Residential treatment and rehabilitation form the cornerstone of our approach, tailored to meet the unique needs of each patient, whether they require short-term or extended care. Central to our success is our interdisciplinary team, comprising psychiatrists, medical doctors, nurses, and psychosocial counselors. Through collaborative efforts, we craft personalized treatment plans and set specific goals for every individual under our care. Regular visits from our dedicated staff ensure continuous support and monitoring. Medical officers, nursing staff, and counselors rotate their schedules to provide comprehensive care throughout the week. Experienced psychiatrists, both local and international, contribute their insights through weekly consultations, guiding our team in optimizing treatment strategies. Counseling, both individual and group-based, addresses fundamental aspects of daily living, from personal hygiene to social skills and time management. We recognize the importance of recreational activities in fostering community integration, hence our emphasis on group leisure pursuits, outdoor therapy, yoga, and sports.



Our commitment extends beyond the confines of our center, with follow-up home visits forming an integral part of our rehabilitation process. By engaging with patients and their families in their local communities, we provide ongoing support and guidance, ensuring continuity of care even after discharge. As we reflect on our journey in **2023, having served 54 (28 inpatient and 26 OPD)** individuals through both inpatient and outpatient care, we remain steadfast in our dedication to empowering lives and rebuilding communities. The Psychiatric Care and Rehabilitation Center stands as a hope, illuminating the path towards holistic mental health care in Nepal.

Integrated Community Mental Health Centre



Health Foundation Nepal (HFN) established an Integrated Mental Health Centre in Ward number 6, Ghorahi, Dang, aimed at bridging the gap in mental health care for marginalized and neglected individuals grappling with serious mental illnesses. This innovative community-based program encompasses various components, including the creation of a Psychiatric Care Centre, mental health research initiatives, capacity building for service providers and volunteers, and community-based mental health treatment and behavioral change communication (BCC) activities.

At the core of the Integrated Mental Health Centre's mission is the provision of comprehensive, facility-based mental health services tailored to the specific needs of each individual. Trained mental health providers offer a range of essential services, encompassing therapy, diagnosis, psychiatric care, and the management and treatment of mental illnesses. By offering these services within the community, the center aims to remove barriers to access, reduce stigma, and provide a supportive environment for individuals to seek and receive the care they need. By actively enrolling community members with mental illness and providing them with essential mental health services, the center aims to improve overall mental health outcomes within the community. Moreover, through mental health research and capacity-building efforts, the center seeks to enhance the knowledge and skills of both service providers and volunteers, ultimately strengthening the mental health infrastructure at the grassroots level. Through its integrated approach, the Integrated Mental Health Centre not only addresses the immediate needs of individuals with mental illness but also works towards creating a more inclusive and supportive community environment. By promoting understanding, acceptance, and access to mental health services, HFN's initiative represents a crucial step towards reducing the gap in mental health care and improving the overall well-being of individuals and communities alike.

In 2023, our integrated mental health center extended a range of counseling services and outpatient visits to patients. We offered OPD assistance to 192 individuals who were new to our center, followed up with 170 ongoing cases, and referred 20 cases to specialized facilities. Additionally, we've been delivering complimentary psychosocial counseling and basic medical checkups to members of the community via our center.

School Mental Health Program



In the rural areas of Dang, there is a growing worry about the increasing mental health challenges faced by students. People in these areas encounter numerous difficulties like poverty, limited access to necessary resources, language barriers, and traumatic experiences. These challenges, along with the pressures of academics and social interactions, contribute to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among students.

To address these concerns, the Health Foundation Nepal (HFN) has introduced School Mental Health Programs. These programs have a clear goal: to enhance the overall well-being of students in educational settings. They employ various

strategies to deal with various aspects of mental health, including assisting students with their emotions, managing stress, and identifying and treating mental health disorders in a timely manner. The main objective is to support students in achieving academic success, fostering social growth, and ensuring overall mental well-being.

HFN serves as a key contact for schools dealing with mass conversion disorder. The counselors and medical teams provide follow-up and counseling services, offering awareness sessions to students and teachers. This comprehensive approach aims to address individual cases, reduce stigma, and promote overall mental well-being within the school community.

By concentrating on the specific challenges and needs of the HFN working areas, these programs aim to establish a positive and supportive environment for students to succeed both academically and emotionally. The goal is to create conditions where students can thrive and overcome the obstacles they face in their daily lives. **In 2023 we conducted 12 School Mental Health Programs and about 827 students, teachers, and guardians were reached.**



Celebration of Special Mental Health Days



Health Foundation Nepal has been actively involved in mental health programs, both in communities and schools, since 2018 through different awareness related activities. The foundation has celebrated two significant mental health awareness days to spread knowledge and create awareness among the public and community-level healthcare providers.

To promote awareness about suicide prevention on September 10, 2023, with the theme "Creating Hope through Action," Health Foundation Nepal organized a rally program. The event aimed to raise awareness about preventing suicide and included active participation from the school community.

Candle-lighting programs for the same cause were also conducted by various groups in Nepal.



Additionally, on October 10, 2023, a one-day training program was held for female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV) on World Mental Health Day. The primary goal was to equip these volunteers with the skills needed to identify mental health issues in the community and guide individuals to the right resources for assistance. The training focused on building their capacity to recognize signs of mental health challenges. Many dedicated FCHVs participated in this training and orientation conducted by Health Foundation Nepal.

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) - Nepal Study



Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), known as chronic illnesses, pose a significant health challenge globally, particularly in low- and middle-income countries like Nepal. These diseases include cardiovascular issues, respiratory diseases, and cancers, contribute to a substantial portion of premature deaths in Nepal, with estimates suggesting they will be responsible for over three-quarters of fatalities by 2040. In response, Nepal has adopted the WHO's PEN intervention and integrated it into its healthcare system, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 3 to address NCDs' impact on public health and well-being. Through collaborative efforts between government bodies, healthcare providers, and NGOs, Nepal aims to prevent and manage NCDs by addressing modifiable risk factors such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and alcohol abuse, while also improving access to early identification and treatment. In the Ghorahi sub-metropolitan City of Dang, Nepal, the Health Foundation Nepal (HFN) initiative has launched a comprehensive NCD program targeting individuals aged 40 to 75 in select communities. Through mobile health clinics established in specific wards, HFN conducts ongoing screening and care services while also conducting epidemiological studies to understand the interplay of lifestyle, nutrition, culture, and socio-demographic factors in NCD prevalence. The project, executed in close collaboration with government authorities and healthcare professionals, adheres strictly to infection prevention



guidelines and personal safety precautions. Trained healthcare workers, including doctors, public health specialists, and counselors, are mobilized to conduct NCD screening camps, with laboratory diagnosis managed by the National Path Laboratory (NPL) branch in Dang. By targeting early detection and intervention among the at-risk population, the initiative aims to mitigate the adverse health effects of NCDs, emphasizing their preventability and treatability for improved public health outcomes.

Initial Mobile Health Clinic Setup

To ensure physical accessibility, mobile health clinics were strategically located near participant neighborhoods. Each clinic featured nine stations, each responsible for specific tasks including obtaining informed consent, gathering socio-demographic data, conducting measurements such as height and waist circumference, assessing vital signs like blood pressure and pulse rate, and performing finger stick glucose tests along with questionnaire interviews and lab investigations. **In 2023, a total of 23 mobile health clinics were held, screening 483 individuals.**



Laboratory Investigations and Follow-up

Under the oversight of the National Path Laboratory, categorized as a level 'B' laboratory by the national accreditation organization, individuals at high risk received thorough laboratory investigations. Within a fortnight, participants engaged in face-to-face discussions regarding their lab results at the mobile clinics. Those identified with pre-existing or recently diagnosed non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

underwent additional screenings for urine albumin/creatinine ratio, lipid profile, serum creatinine, and urine dipstick tests. Subsequently, follow-up visits were conducted to ensure continuity of care, with 273 individuals

with pre-existing NCDs receiving follow-up within a week in 2023. An additional 278 individuals, previously diagnosed with NCDs, received continued care.

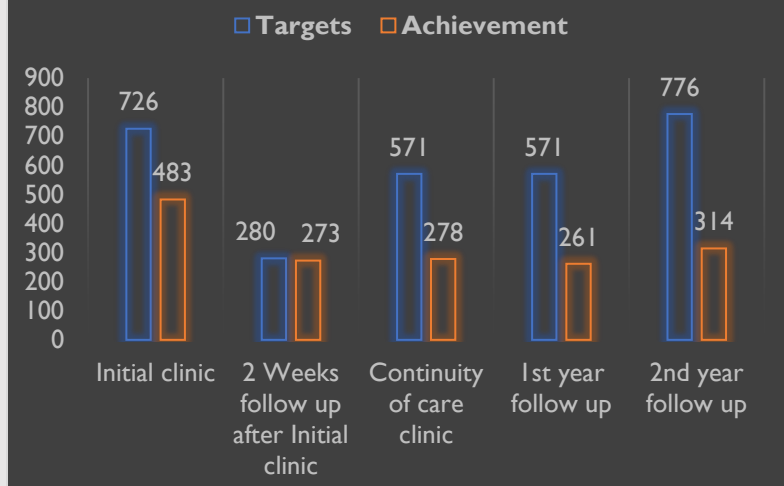


Follow-up Mobile Health Clinics

In 2023, twenty-five mobile health clinics were dedicated to providing follow-up care to individuals previously treated for NCDs. After one year, 261 participants with pre-hypertension, high hyperglycemia, or other risk factors were monitored, with 314 participants without risk factors monitored after two years. Continuity of care was facilitated through stationary clinics, with visit frequencies determined by pre-established protocols considering patients' laboratory needs, comorbidities, illness severity, and other pertinent factors.

Impact in 2023

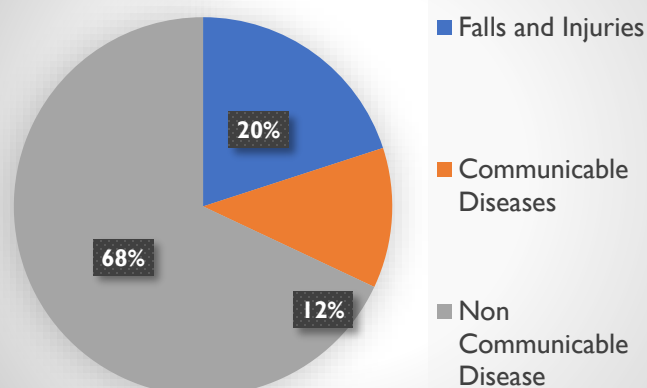
NCD Activities in 2023



Verbal Autopsy Process

Beginning in 2023, a verbal autopsy process employing the WHO verbal autopsy instrument was initiated to determine causes of death. This involved conducting verbal autopsies with the families of deceased individuals, totaling 24 cases.

Most common cause of Death



Tobacco Cessation Support

Starting in 2023, motivational interviews were offered to tobacco smokers to aid in cessation efforts. Psychosocial counselors provided assistance to active smokers looking to quit, with 98 participants receiving counseling and 4 successfully quitting.



The Health Foundation Nepal organized a one-day orientation program for Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) from ward-3 and 7, as well as a few healthcare workers, to enhance their involvement in NCD-related activities. The training, attended by 22 FCHVs and 3 healthcare workers, aimed to familiarize them with ongoing NCD programs and clarify their roles within these initiatives. The primary objective was to optimize their contributions and responsibilities in NCD Nepal's efforts.

Digital Literacy – Chitwan



In rural areas of Nepal, development often lags due to a pronounced lack of access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and essential knowledge, hindering progress and perpetuating socio-economic disparities. Recognizing this pressing issue, the Health Foundation Nepal (HFN) has undertaken a

multifaceted initiative aimed at addressing these challenges through the promotion of health and digital literacy. In these remote regions, the absence of adequate infrastructure, including computers and internet connectivity, poses significant barriers to accessing digital resources and educational opportunities. Moreover, the shortage of trained teachers proficient in ICT further exacerbates the digital divide, leaving students ill-equipped for the demands of the modern world. To tackle these issues head-on, HFN's program encompasses a comprehensive approach that encompasses both digital literacy training and health education. The digital literacy component of the program is designed to impart essential computer skills to students, covering topics such as hardware and software knowledge,



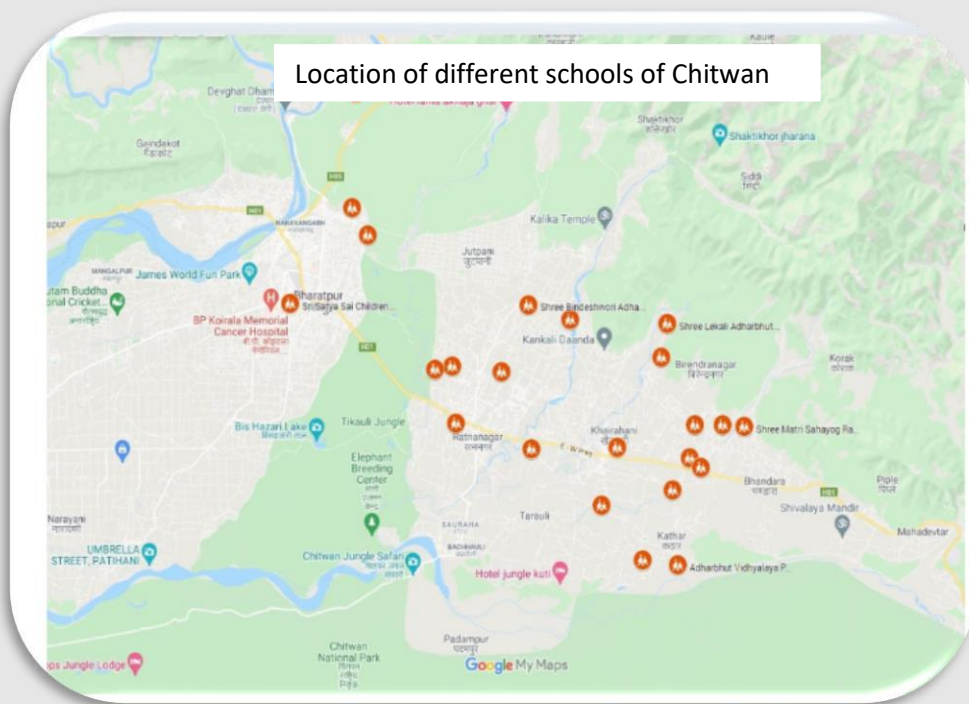


operating systems such as Windows, and proficiency in using Microsoft Office applications. Through hands-on training sessions led by qualified instructors, students are equipped with the foundational skills necessary to navigate the digital landscape effectively. Simultaneously, the program emphasizes the importance of health literacy, educating students on essential health concepts such as personal hygiene, disease prevention, nutrition, and mental health awareness. By addressing both digital and health literacy, HFN aims to foster holistic development among rural children, empowering them to lead healthier, more informed lives.

Central to the success of the program is its integration into the educational infrastructure of rural communities. Through partnerships with 27 public schools and 2 shelters in Chitwan, as well as 1

public school in Parbat district, HFN has been able to extend its reach to a significant number of students. The provision of computers, desks, and trained instructors ensures that students have access to the necessary resources to support their learning. Moreover, by conducting regular training workshops for teachers, HFN is building the capacity of educators to effectively integrate ICT into their teaching practices, thereby fostering a sustainable impact on digital education in rural schools.

Despite the challenges posed by remote geography and limited resources, HFN's initiative has made significant strides in empowering rural communities through health and digital literacy. By unlocking the transformative power of technology and knowledge, HFN is laying the groundwork for a brighter future, where individuals are equipped with the skills and awareness necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Through ongoing support and collaboration with local stakeholders, HFN remains committed to bridging the digital divide and fostering holistic development in Nepal's rural regions. **In 2023 we added 2 new schools, 3 new computer sets in our working area.**



Capacity building of staffs



The Retreat program at Lumbini Buddha Garden successfully achieved its objectives of fostering team interaction, promoting diverse knowledge exchange, and facilitating personal and professional growth. Led by Program Managers Prayas Gautam and Kapil Sharma, the event provided a dynamic platform for 15 staff members from Health Foundation Nepal and the Nepal Institute of Mental Health (NIOMH) to engage in meaningful discussions and activities. Through icebreakers, objective sharing, and workshops on effective communication, participants built lasting connections and emphasized the

importance of holistic well-being through self-care and gratitude. The visit to Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha, added a spiritual dimension to the retreat. Overall, the program exemplified a commitment to creating a supportive community dedicated to self-discovery and collective empowerment.

Under the guidance of the Mental Health Team, Ms. Manila Shrestha, Senior Public Health Nurse of HFN,



conducted **Training to Community Mental Health Workers (CMHW)** operating in the five wards of Ghorahi (Wards 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7). The training focused on practical application and proficiency in utilizing the Kobocollect Android application for data collection purposes. Following the training, the project commenced digital data collection in the designated areas.



Dr. Sushrusha Arjyal, HFN Vice President and a Psychiatrist and Sleep Medicine Specialist from Duke University, conducted a **training session on managing insomnia through therapy**. The attendees included medical officers, nurses, psychosocial counselors, and various other healthcare professionals.



An expansion initiative for the Smile Mothers and Smile Ama Baa programs in Chitwan involves collaboration between NIOMH, HFN, and the local government. A thorough **two-day training session, facilitated by the Health Foundation Nepal** team at NIOMH, aimed to equip 8 Community Mental Health Facilitators with skills in mental health screenings and data management.

Advocacy Research and Knowledge Sharing



Health Foundation Nepal recently conducted a **workshop titled "A discussion and interaction for Sustainability of Health Foundation Nepal Projects in Dang with relevant parties of Ghorahi Sub metropolitan city"** in Jajaragau, Dang. The workshop was attended by several relevant parties, including the Mayor of Ghorahi Submetropolitan City, Health Institution In-charge and Ward Chairman from ward 3,4,5,6 and 7, and the Chief of Health Section Office of Ghorahi Sub Metropolitan City, among others. The program was chaired by Rishi Raj Jungali, the mentor of Health Foundation Nepal, while Mr. Prayas Gautam, the Program Manager, led the workshop.



The chief guest was Mr. Narulal Chaudhary, and the event was an interactive discussion focused on ensuring the sustainability of Health Foundation Nepal's projects in the region. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all the staff and participants who dedicated their time and effort to make this program a success. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of all presenters from HFN and other staff members who contributed to the success of the event. We look forward to continued collaboration and support from all relevant parties to ensure the sustainability of our projects and initiatives in the region.

We celebrated **World No Tobacco Day** with great enthusiasm! Health Foundation Nepal organized a School Health Program, spreading awareness among students about the dangers of tobacco. Our NCD project



continues its efforts in tobacco cessation through motivational interview counseling. Together, we are empowering individuals to overcome tobacco addiction and lead healthier lives.

Health Foundation Nepal with collaboration with Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan organized an impactful event in Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City, Ward No. 15, to commemorate **World Hypertension Day**, drawing the participation of 178 local individuals. With notable guests such as Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City Mayor Mr. Naru Lal Chaudhary and Ward President Mr. Ramesh Kumar Pandey, the event emphasized community empowerment through education on hypertension prevention and management.

Ms. Susagya, a dedicated officer for the NCD project, presented a poster titled "Knowledge, Self-efficacy, and Barriers to Community-based Diabetes Care: A Biphasic Mixed Method Study among Female Community Health Volunteers" **at the 49th Annual ISPAD Conference held in Rotterdam, Netherlands on October 19, 2023.** She was awarded a special travel grant for this presentation.



Shreedhar Paudel, the Founder and President of HFN, delivered both an oral and poster presentation at the **World Psychiatry Association event in Austria from September 28th to October 1st.** The presentation focused on the mental health initiatives conducted by the Health Foundation Nepal in Nepal, specifically addressing the prevalence and determinants of perinatal depression and

anxiety in rural areas of the country. The title was” **Prevalence and factors associated with perinatal depression and anxiety in rural Nepal.”**

The **Women’s Health Conference 2023** marks Nepal's inaugural event dedicated to women’s health, addressing disparities, discrimination, and developmental obstacles that place numerous women in significant jeopardy. Health Foundation Nepal contributed a poster presentation on the Maternal Mental Health Program during the conference, focusing on bridging the gap in

maternal mental health care within Nepal's low-resource context through the Smile Mother Program. The title of the presentation was **"Addressing the Maternal Mental Health Care Gap in a Low-resource Setting of Nepal through the Smile Mother Program"**



Internship Opportunities in Health Foundation Nepal

The Health Foundation Nepal (HFN) offers an internship program geared towards providing students with hands-on experience in low-resourced health care settings, focusing on non-communicable diseases and community-based mental health in the Dang region. Participants work closely with healthcare professionals, including physicians, nurses, and counselors, engaging in activities such as mental health screenings, psychosocial counseling, and rehabilitation support. The program facilitates skill development, networking opportunities with global health stakeholders, and exposure to



Nepal's healthcare policies. Open to Nepalese and international students, the internship combines virtual and fieldwork experiences. Interns have the chance to contribute to the NCD project, assisting in screenings, patient care, and shadowing physicians during consultations, while also engaging with community health workers in mental health initiatives like the Smile Mothers and Smile Ama-Ba programs.

Interns from diverse regions worldwide come to HFN seeking learning opportunities, while students from various colleges and universities across Nepal also actively participate in HFN projects. In 2023 4 interns from different universities of United States, two interns from TATA institute India and 4 Nepalese students especially from public health background joined HFN and had a fruitful journey of learning.

MEET THE TEAM



Working with Health Foundation Nepal as a Program Manager brings me great joy and a strong sense of purpose. Interacting with the community and seeing the positive outcomes of our efforts fills me with gratitude every day. Being part of HFN is more than just a job; it's a rewarding journey of creating significant changes in people's lives. The team is excellent, and the leaders are very supportive. It's the best team I could have ever worked with. **(Prayas Gautam, MPH, Program Manager)**



I have been working at HFN since 2015. I possess over 15 years of professional experience in the NGO and I/NGO sectors. I value the opportunity to collaborate with distinguished personalities, public health experts, and medical professionals. I firmly believe that through the invaluable support, cooperation, and guidance of our stakeholders and donor communities, we can achieve our shared goals the organization. **(Bikash Silwal, MPA, LLB, Admin and Finance Officer)**



Working as a medical officer at Health Foundation Nepal in Dang is fulfilling. Conducting camps on non-communicable diseases allows me to provide health services where they are scarce. Supportive colleagues and mentorship from senior doctors make my role gratifying, aiding in professional development and serving underserved communities. **(Dr. Omkar Jha, MBBS, Medical Officer)**



These few months here at HFN have been an overwhelming experience for me. Early morning clinics, not knowing where I will be examining a patient in the next hour, are an adventure at the same time. Besides work, the bond I have created here has been amazing. Our Team is the best. **(Dr. Basanta Chaulagai, MBBS, Medical Officer)**



I am very grateful to be a part of Health Foundation Nepal in the work of health sector for past five years. This participation has been crucial in strengthening my interest and feeling of helping the society full-filled. I have got the opportunity to make an important contribution to the society and it makes my job pleasure. I really enjoying to work with loyal, dedicated and wonderful supportive team **(Bhumika GM_PG, Mental Health Coordinator)**



Working with Health Foundation Nepal for the past two years has been incredibly fulfilling. The organization's focus aligns perfectly with my interests, allowing me to make meaningful contributions to health initiatives in my hometown of Dang. Being part of a dynamic team dedicated to serving the local community has been an enriching experience for me. **(Susagya Bhusal, BPH, Public Health Officer)**



As health assistant, working in rural areas of Dang has provided me with great satisfaction. It always provided me with great pleasure serving the underprivileged people in rural communities. The staff, seniors, and everyone at the office are very kind and very helpful and have helped me in every step of my personal and professional journey **(Miraj Oli, PCL General Medicine, Health Assistant)**



Working with Health Foundation Nepal in Dang makes me really happy. I love helping people, and being part of this project lets me do that. It feels great to see the good things we do making a difference in the community.

(Yashoda Oli, Psychosocial Counselor)



Working with health foundation Nepal for the past 7 years as a public health nurse has been incredibly going through the path and an inspiring journey of my life. The expert team members are so friendly, helpful and always support me in need. It's been also easy for me to work here because it's my home town and my family is here to support me...

(Purnima Paudel_Public, PCL Nursing, Health Nurse)



Working with Health Foundation Nepal brings me happy. Assessing the financial and administrative operations of our Field Office has been a deeply rewarding experience. Engaging with the community and ensuring our resources are managed effectively to maximize impact fills me with gratitude every day. Being part of HFN is more than just a job; it's a fulfilling journey of contributing to meaningful change in people's lives and supporting the foundation's mission to improve health and wellbeing.

(Shivraj Paudel, BBS, Admin and Finance Associate)



I worked as a volunteer in this health foundation in Nepal from 2015 to 2018, then from 2018 to present working as a staff operation associate post, enthusiasm has been awakened while working, it has felt easy to work together with colleagues who work together. I am satisfied with my work.

(Giriraj Paudel, IA, Operation and Construction Associate)



For the past 18 months, I have been serving as a computer instructor with Health Foundation Nepal, teaching basic digital literacy skills to school students in Chitwan. My mission is to ignite curiosity and empower young minds with the essential knowledge and skills needed to navigate the digital world. Through engaging lessons and hands-on activities, I aim to foster a love for technology and provide these students with the tools they need for future success.

(Mohamad Mustafa, BCA, Computer Instructor)



Joining Health Foundation Nepal was a turning point in my life six years ago. I embarked on a journey with Health Foundation Nepal as a volunteer, and it has been an enriching experience ever since. From learning the nuances of effective leadership to cultivating essential personality development qualities, every moment spent here has been invaluable. The environment fostered by Health Foundation Nepal allowed me to engage deeply in developing leadership characteristics and nurturing personal growth. I am immensely grateful for the opportunities and experiences I've had with this incredible organization.

(Devaki Sharma, BCA, Computer Instructor)

MEET THE TEAM

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MPH – Immediate Past Executive Director

HFN staffs 2023



Prayas Gautam, MPH
program manager



Basanta Chaulagain,
MBBS Medical Officer



Omkar Jha, MBBS,
Medical Officer



Bikash Silwal, LLB, MPA,
Admin and Finance Officer



Bhumika GM, PG, Mental
Health Coordinator



Susagya Bhusal, BPH,
Public Health Officer



Manila Shrestha,
Bsc.Nursing, Sr. Public
Health Nurse



Sashin Ghimire, BPH,
Communication officer



Nabin Shrestha, BCA,
Computer Instructor



Yashoda Oli, Psychosocial
Counsellor



Purnima Paudel, PCL
Nursing, Public
Health Nurse



Minraj Oli, PCL
General Medicine,
Health Assistant



Miya Mustafa,
BCA, Computer
Instructor



Shivraj Paudel,
BBS, Admin
Finance Associate



Giriraj Paudel, IA,
Operation and
Construction Associate



Bina Neupane, SLC,
Office Helper

MEET THE TEAM



Retreat program at Lumbini



FCHV training at Ward no.3



Workshop with local level stakeholders

MEET THE TEAM



Mental Health Team of HFN



NCD Screening Clinic Day



HFN team with Interns



Refreshment session at Rehabilitation Centre

MEET THE TEAM



NCD clinic Day



Training of Teachers about Computer and IT



HFN Mental Health team, Dang



ED of HFN US with HFN team Dang

MEET THE TEAM



Digital Literacy, Chitwan Project



FCHV training at Ward no.7



Farewell to Interns



Farewell to our staff

MEET THE TEAM



Farewell to our staff



President of HFN US with HFN Dang staffs



HFN and NIOMH team at Chitwan



Integrated Community Mental Health Centre



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