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Photos: Sajana Shrestha / People in Need

Acknowledgements

2017 was another big year for Hamro Palo. We would like to thank the adolescent girls and boys, young adults, and schools in Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk districts for their involvement, trust, and support. We would also like to thank the Girl Support Committees and their mentors who continued to work with the girls and boys in their villages for the improvement of their schools and communities. A big shout out to our donors and funding partners: UKaid, CARE, People in Need, The Boston Foundation, Cooperation Circle for Development (Círculo de Cooperación al Desarrollo), MATCH International Women's Fund, Sambhawana, and With and For Girls Collective for their help, generosity, advice and belief in our work. Our work wouldn't be possible without your involvement and we hope to continue these partnerships in future.



Executive summary

2017 was another big year for us. We delivered our Her Turn workshops to 2,267 adolescent girls and started working with adolescent boys – 876 of them

this year. We delivered Safe School Trainings to 40 schools. We continued to work with 12 mentors who worked with 204 Girl Support Committee members who addressed various issues in their communities - for example boys and girls dropping out of school and early marriages – and referred them to appropriate resources when needed. On top of their work in villages, the mentors met in Kathmandu twice. This year we also introduced a Fellowship Program, through which 17 young urban women shared ideas, knowledge, and skills with rural girls over a five-month period.

On top of these ongoing programs we engaged in advocacy efforts. In 2017, we organized two district level conferences in Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha. The conferences were a platform for the participants to share their experiences, discuss the challenges they have been facing and to come up with solutions together. We also organized a National Conference on Gender Based Violence where we brought all of the fellows from the Fellowship Program together so they could share their insight on girls' issues with a wider audience. On October 11th we celebrated The Day of The Girl, when we paired up with People In Need in our #HerTurn Day Of The Girl Campaign. Through the campaign we introduced some of the girls we work with and the issues they are passionate about. The outcome of the campaign was a calendar for 2018 featuring the girls' ideas for the future. In 2017, we also started work on an Online Safety Toolkit, which will be shared with adolescents and others to educate them about safety measures online.

We also strengthened our organizational governance by developing and approving nine new policies.

The adolescent girls and boys we work with continue to inspire us and lead the change in their communities. So do the trainers and mentors we work with who engage in discussions in their communities on adolescents' potential and challenges they face (including harmful traditions and practices), who prevent early marriages, who help girls and boys who are victims of bullying, and who encourage students who have dropped out of school to re-enroll. You can learn more about their work in 2017 from this report.

I grew up thinking that women are second to men, but now I understand men and women are equal. In my home, my brother used to get more, but now I demand from my parents that we be treated equally.

HT participant

Introduction

Letter from our Executive Director Anita Thapa

2017 was another incredible year as we continued our work with adolescent girls in earthquake affected districts: Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk and also introduced a new program for Kathmandu based young women – a mentorship program fellowship. One of the interventions that we prioritized last year was to work with adolescent boys, so they become allies with the girls and support them to combat social injustices based on gender. We introduced His Chance workshops for adolescent boys, which are similar to Her Turn workshops. Through His Chance, we worked with 876 boys in 13 schools, and with Her Turn workshops we reached 2,369 girls in 30 schools. In June 2017, as I watched the closing ceremony of Her Turn workshops in Sindhupalchowk, it was fascinating

to see a grandmother who walked hours to see her granddaughter host the program where hundreds of villagers were in attendance. What a gesture from one generation to another!

At our Safe School Trainings, we invited teachers, parents and other local leaders and community members so everyone could be part of developing solutions for adolescents' safety at schools and in the communities. An 80-year-old woman joined the training in Duwachaur; when asked about her participation, she replied she had been learning about gender and women's rights from her granddaughter who had joined the Her Turn workshop and she also wanted to join similar workshops. Phenomenal!!

While it's amazing to see the girls implementing learnings from the workshop, it's even more amazing to learn that adolescent boys who attended His Chance workshops are more resilient and are championing

young girls' issues. Many of them have become advocates for girls' rights such as menstrual hygiene, equal access to education, and nutritious food. Through our mentorship program, we continued to support grassroots advocacy as our mentors worked relentlessly against social injustices such as early child marriage and gender based violence. Over the period, we realized that it is equally important to engage with young women in cities to advocate regarding rural girls' issues and link them with national issues. So, this year we also introduced a fellowship for young women with an aim to bridge the gap in regard to ideas, knowledge and skills sharing between urban girls and rural girls through Girl Support Committees.

Adolescents girls' safety and security is our main priority, through School Safety projects and community projects funds, adolescent girls, boys and women were able to solve some of the everyday issues in their communities such as: toilets, drinking water in schools, library, emergency media support.

This year, we also focused on organizational development, introducing a software based financial system and also policies such as human resource policy, anti-corruption policy, and anti sexual harassment policy that will help us to be more organized and systematic in policy based decision making.

We are more than committed towards achieving our vision and we continue to champion adolescent girls' leadership and goals and continue our journey in advocating for their rights. We would like to thank everyone for joining us in this journey and we look forward to your support in the coming days.

Nepal 2017 - 2 years after the earthquakes

Two years after the devastating earthquakes that struck Nepal, the country is still struggling to bounce back. People who were affected in Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk districts where we work are still living in temporary shelters and it is still common to see students studying in temporary learning centers. The recovery and reconstruction process is slow – out of 767,705 Nepali households eligible for the government provided reconstruction grant, 89% are enrolled. But almost three years after the earthquakes, only 21% received the second tranche of the grant, and only 5% received the third. Many children are forced to study in schools without proper classrooms, let alone toilets and safe spaces for

After the earthquakes we have been completely focused on reconstruction work and somehow social and safety concerns were neglected. However, Hamro Palo's work has addressed the ongoing issues by providing information and awareness, which is one of major needs right now.

School Principal, Mr. Uttar Narayan Shrestha



adolescent girls to manage their periods with safety and dignity. As a result, many adolescents attend school irregularly and some drop out altogether.

2017 Elections

In May, June, and September 2017, Nepal held its first local elections in two decades for provincial and local level authorities, as was specified in the 2015 Constitution. Our work was somewhat affected by the local elections, as NGOs were banned from delivering trainings and workshops a month before elections, and the participation of government authorities was less than expected in our programs. However, we began our coordination with newly elected local authorities and we are excited about working with them, strengthening their capacities and facilitating their working closely with the Girls and School Support Committees.



Programs

Her Turn

In 2017 we continued our work with Her Turn workshops in the districts of Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha, reaching a total of 2,267 adolescent girls (2,020 with SAFE Strengthening Access to Fair and Equitable Justice project, funded by UKaid in partnership with People in Need and CARE, and 247 in partnership with Sambhawana, funded by the Boston Foundation).

During the 24-day workshops, the girls learned about health issues (nutrition, safe water handling, puberty, menstrual hygiene management), safety issues (bullying, domestic violence, human trafficking, early marriage, sexual harassment) and leadership skills development (public speaking, confidence building, problem solving). Each group of the participants of Her Turn workshops also met a local female leader – a member of a local women's network, a social worker or a local activist. The workshops were delivered by trained young local women from the same communities, who speak girls' mother tongues. Each workshop was concluded with a Closing Ceremony prepared and conducted by the girls themselves. They invited their parents, community leaders and members, and teachers. They used the events as advocacy platforms to engage the guests in discussions about the subjects of the workshop. At the closing ceremonies the girls performed self composed poems, songs, dances, dramas, and speeches. Each ceremony was different as each was designed and planned by the girls and reflected their priorities within their particular contexts.

Some of the results from the evaluation of Her Turn workshops include:

- One fifth more participants knew what the legal age of marriage in Nepal is, from 71% before the workshop, to 91% after.
- 27% more participants viewed menstruation as natural, from 57% before the workshop to 84% after.
- Almost one third more participants knew that domestic violence is illegal in Nepal, from 50% to 82%.
- 29% less girls declared that it should not be a husband's decision in a relationship about how many children to have; before the workshop 63% of the participants thought so, afterwards, 92%.
- 21% more participants thought boys in a family should help with cooking, from 61% before the workshop to 82% after.
- After the workshops, we ask the girls about their experiences. Here are some of the findings: 98% said they learned a lot during the workshops,

97% said what they learned was very useful, 97% declared they changed their behavior at home after the workshop, and same amount declared they changed their behavior in school, 76% reported they've made a lot of new friends during the workshops, 97% reported they understood their trainer well, 85% said they participated in the community project, and 84% reported they have participated in the closing ceremony.

His Chance

After starting our work with adolescent girls, we immediately started receiving consistent feedback from the participants, their teachers, and their male peers, that we should also have a program for adolescent boys. This need is confirmed by a growing body of research on how including boys and men in violence prevention programs and gender transformative programs is beneficial. We had been planning to start working with boys for several years, but these plans were put on hold by the 2015 earthquakes. In 2017, jointly with People in Need, we finally developed the His Chance workshops, which we delivered in 13 schools (4 in Gorkha district and 9 in Sindhupalchok). Through His Chance, we have worked with 876 boys aged 12-16.

Learn more about engaging men and boys:

[What about the boys? Raising Men to End Violence Against Women, Equal Community Foundation, 2013](#)

[Working with Men and Boys to Prevent Gender-based Violence: Principles, Lessons Learned, and Ways Forward, Men and Masculinities, 2014](#)

[Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health, UNFPA, 2010](#)

[Lessons in good practice from work with men and boys for gender equality, IDS, Promundo, Sonke Gender Justice, 2015](#)

His Chance is similar to Her Turn, though gender differences are taken into account. The boys' workshop is also 24 days long and covers health and safety issues, including, for example, menstrual hygiene. It is based on a gender-transformative approach that encourages boys to critically reflect on the social norms and values of their community and how they affect themselves, girls, women and men differently. It is delivered by trained young local men and also concludes with Closing Ceremonies, planned and organized jointly with the girls. While our main focus are adolescent girls, through participating in His Chance workshops, many boys become girls' allies and strong advocates for their rights.

Some results from the evaluation of His Chance workshops:

- Before the workshop, 58% of participants disagreed with the opinion that women shouldn't be leaders in their community. After the workshop 83% of the participants disagreed, a difference of 25%.
- Before the workshop, 74% of participants disagreed with the opinion that girls and boys from different castes shouldn't be friends. After the workshop 89% of the participants disagreed, an increase of 14%.
- Before the workshop, 64% disagreed with the opinion that the husband should be the one who makes the decisions about how many children to have. After the workshop 88% disagreed, a difference of 24%.
- Before the workshop, 71% of participants knew the legal age of marriage in Nepal (20 years). After the workshop, 92% of participants knew the legal age of marriage, an increase of 21%.





School Safety Projects

During Her Turn and His Chance workshops, the participants, School Support Committees, and Girl Support Committees implemented 235 School Safety Projects (SSP). These aim to improve safety, sanitation, hygiene, and a healthy environment in the schools. Funds for School Safety Projects are usually provided on the 2nd week of Her Turn and His Chance workshop to the trainers along with the guidelines to implement the fund. The trainers then discuss with participants what they would want to spend the funds on, and coordinate with the schools.

Almost half (47%) of the SSPs covered water and sanitation needs, which included toilet maintenance, repair and construction, and water supply maintenance. Other areas included health (25% for HT and 8% for HC), classroom upgrades (19% for HT and 33% for HC, 30% for combined projects) and menstrual hygiene management (17% for HT, 8% for HC and 10% for combined projects.) The girls seemed to prioritize menstrual hygiene management more than boys because menstrual restrictions and lack of facilities affect them much more directly and restrict their school attendance, academic performance, and confidence. Additionally, many girls identify the topic of menstruation as the most important part of the workshops, where they learn and understand it as a natural and healthy body function.

Safe School Training

Child friendly environment and gender sensitization in schools is another priority for us. In 2017, we implemented a two-day Safe School Training in 40 schools of Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha districts. Of 509 participants of the Safe School Trainings, 179 were male and 330 were female – teachers, members of Gender Based Violence Watch Groups, Mothers' Groups, School Management Committees, and others. The Safe School Training aimed to provide information on

adolescents' gender-specific needs and the importance of creating a safe learning environment. Participants discussed and learned to identify and address issues affecting safety at school, such as corporal punishment and sexual harassment, prevention and response techniques and the various tools they could develop and use to create a safe and healthy learning environment. On the second day, the participants worked together in groups to prepare a code of conduct for their school. The code of conduct was then printed on a vinyl banner and provided to the schools to be signed by the participants present during the Safe School Training as a gesture of commitment. The schools installed the codes of conduct in the school premises where everyone could see them. Some of the common elements of the codes of conduct included:

- Creating child friendly and gender sensitive environments at school.
- Building toilets and drinking water taps that are accessible to all students, including differently abled students.
- Maintaining a Suggestion Box for students.
- Arranging safe spaces for girls to change and dispose of sanitary pads.
- Prohibition of physical and mental pressure to the students.
- Prohibition of corporal punishment.
- Prohibition of smoking and alcohol consumption on school premises.
- Parents' increased involvement in school life.
- Schools maintaining attendance records and only approving leave after

Our school's curriculum is limited. Therefore I would like to thank Hamro Palo for filling that gap of practical knowledge and skills among our students. I request girls to share learning of this workshop with others, especially with students who have dropped out.

HT trainer

talking with parents.

- Ensuring equal participation of boys and girls in extracurricular activities.

Some of the results of the pre- and post-training surveys:

- Before attending Safe School Training, 71% of the participants agreed that a woman should not tolerate violence in order to keep her family together. After Safe School Training 91% agreed, a difference of 20%.
- Before Safe School Training, 69% of the participants agreed that corporal punishment does not maintain discipline. After Safe School Training, 88% agreed, an increase of 19%.
- Before Safe School Training, 78% of the participants agreed that violence prevention is not only for women and girls. After the workshop 92% agreed, a positive difference of 14%.

Mentorship Program

In 2017, we continued to enhance and improve our mentorship program. After completing Her Turn and His Chance workshops in Sindhupalchok and Gorkha districts, the best performing trainers were appointed as mentors who would further provide guidance to the workshop participants to help solve problems at their local schools and communities. In 2017, we had 13 new mentors in Sindhupalchok district and 7 in Gorkha district. These mentors worked with 168 Girl Support Committee members in Sindhupalchowk and 36 in Gorkha, a total of 204 Girl Support Committee members. The mentors conducted 145 monthly meetings in 24 schools: 20 schools in Sindhupalchowk and 4 in Gorkha.

The mentors met in Kathmandu twice, once in March and once in October. The March meeting of mentors in Kathmandu was held on International Women's Day, with eight mentors, two Girl Support Committee members, and two social mobilizers. During the three-day meeting, we observed International Women's Day on March 8th, celebrating mentors' and Girl Support Committee's work. There were also guests who joined the event and a panel on Girls' Rights in Nepal focusing on the issue of early / child marriage. The panel members included Mr. Kiran Rupakhtee, Program Director, National Planning Commission, Mr. Sabin Shrestha, Executive Director, Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD), and Ms. Aleksandra Ola Perczynska, Program

My suggestion to Hamro Palo is: the way you brought this useful program to our school, please reach other schools also with the same program.

HT participant

Manager, People In Need (PIN) and our advisor. On March 9th and 10th, the mentors were trained to conduct a Her Turn refresher workshop with the Girl Support Committees.



In October we held a five-day Training of Mentors in Kathmandu. The meeting included training on mental health and psychosocial support. A total of 20 mentors, including 13 from Sindhupalchowk and 7 from Gorkha districts attended the training. Among these 20 mentors, two were already working as mentors under the Mentorship Program and the rest were newly appointed. The objective of the training was to prepare participants for mentoring Girl Support Committees and School Support Committees, to orient mentors about their roles, responsibilities and duties, and to train them in case reporting and problem solving. Apart from learning their roles and responsibilities, it was also an opportunity for mentors to get to know each other and share socio-cultural issues, challenges and solutions in their respective communities. All mentors participated actively in the five-day training, which ended with great enthusiasm from the mentors who were motivated and committed to become

active and contribute to making a difference in girls' lives.

Meet some of our mentors:

Babita Khadka, Palchok: I'm a high school graduate and work as a social mobilizer. I wanted to become a social mobilizer because I was always aware of the social evils happening in the society. I always wanted to do something about it, and by becoming a social mobilizer I got an opportunity to make a difference in my society. One of my best moments as a social mobilizer was when I was able to bring a girl to continue her schooling after dropping out and working as child laborer.

Krishma Tamang, Indrawati: I'm a local resident of Indrawati, Sindhupalchowk, and I'm working as a social mobilizer. When I came back to my Rural Municipality after my orientation with Hamro Palo, I was very nervous about hosting my first meeting with the school and I was also intimidated by the students because many of them were the same age as me. But as I went on

This workshop has not only changed my students, but also made me stronger. Before I used to think that I can't do anything. Now I realized I was wrong, I feel confident and this was a great journey.

HT trainer

speaking about my work, I felt I've become more and more confident in myself, and I was able to present the agenda in front of people without any doubt. Gaining confidence in myself is the most memorable moment for me working as a social mobilizer, and I hope to continue to grow as a person.

Kalpana Katuwal, Panchpokhari: I'm working as a social mobilizer and since my orientation in early February, I've been learning new things every day. I'm amazed by the Her Turn workshop participants and their energy. It drives me to work against the social malpractices existing in the society with the Her Turn girls. This experience has made me more confident to present agendas in front of prominent bodies in the community and I would love to continue working against the same issues related to women and adolescents in her community.

Girl Support Committees

During the workshops, girls in each school select a Girl Support Committee with 5-15 members. Every month the Girl Support Committee holds a meeting with their respective mentor, where they discuss the issues that arise in their school and community and solutions to these issues. The Committees address issues like bullying or discrimination in schools, and prevent child marriages and other risks. In 2017, we had 30 new Girl Support Committees in 30 schools joining the growing Girl Support Committees' community.



Her Turn Girl Support Committee – Mentorship Program

Under our Mentorship Program we implemented three different activities: Her Turn Refresher workshops for Her Turn graduates, community projects, and introduced a fellowship for young urban women.

Her Turn Refresher Workshops and Community Project

In the Her Turn Refresher Workshops, we aimed at linking married and unmarried adolescent girls by enhancing their skills and knowledge on issues that affect their everyday lives. During the Her Turn refresher workshops we delivered in 33 schools of Sindhupalchowk district and three schools of Gorkha district, we worked with 425 Girl Support Committee Members and 47 married adolescent girls. The refresher workshops lasted five days. The participants learned about harmful social practices, leadership, planning processes at local level and community projects. Six schools in Gorkha and 15 schools in

Sindhupalchowk completed 21 community projects. Each school and Girl Support Committee submitted community project proposals to us. After meticulous assessment of the needs of the projects and available local resources, commitment from other organizations, and capacity to implement the projects, we accepted 21 out of 32 community project proposals. The community projects included books and a computer for libraries and a lab, awareness campaigns at three different schools and water, sanitation and hygiene related projects.

Results from refresher workshop

On the first and the last day of the refresher workshops, we conducted baseline and endline surveys that measure the difference in participants' knowledge of the content of the workshop. Major findings are summarized below:

Girl Support Committee members

- Before the workshop, 15% of the participants knew about the local women and children development program and budget, after the workshop 78% of the participants knew about it.
- Before the workshop, 23% of the participants had knowledge about Child Friendly Local Governance. After the workshop, 80% of the participants had knowledge on the subject.
- Before the workshop, 40% of the participants had knowledge about Alternative Dispute Resolution. After the workshop, 91% had knowledge on the subject.

According to the current guidelines for mobilization of public resources, 35% of the local bodies' budgets should be allocated to the Target Group Development Program. These allocations include: 10% for projects benefiting women, 10% for children, and 15% for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups.

Married adolescent girls

- Before the workshop, 30% of the participants had knowledge of local women and children development program and budget, after the workshop 76% of the participants had knowledge on this subject.
- Before the workshop, 37% of the participants had knowledge on Alternative Dispute Resolution. After the workshop 78% had

knowledge on the subject.

- Before the workshop, 54% of the participants knew they should report violence to authorities. After the workshop 78% of the participants had knowledge on this subject.

Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) can be defined as "a strategic framework that places children at the core of the development agenda of local bodies, government line agencies and civil society, promoting child rights through good governance at the local level."
South-South Cooperation On Child-Friendly Local Governance, Ministry of Local Development





Fellowship Project

With the support from MATCH International Women's Fund, this year we introduced a fellowship program for young urban women. Her Turn Girl Support Committee Mentorship Program invited 17 young urban women to join the five-month Fellowship program in August 2017. The main aim of this program was to share ideas, knowledge and skills between young urban women and rural girls through Girl Support Committees. In the beginning, the fellows participated in a three-day workshop in Kathmandu that introduced them to rural life and issues related to adolescent girls and young women. The workshop focused on knowledge and skills on subjects such as: human trafficking, early / child marriage, different tools and techniques of evidence-based advocacy.

In September, fellows visited Girl Support Committees in schools located in different villages of Sindhupalchowk district, organizing different activities with girls and the community members to identify the issues affecting rural girls. After returning back to Kathmandu, they advocated on the issues they saw in the villages. On December 22nd, the fellows gathered together at the national conference to share their experiences in the village with Girl Support Committees and schools and also their advocacy projects to raise voices for girls rights and women's empowerment. Some of the advocacy projects can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Advocacy

District Level Conferences

Our SAFE Justice activities in 2017 were wrapped up with two District Level Adolescents' Conferences in Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha districts. These events brought together Her Turn and His Chance workshop graduates, their mentors and teachers from different schools and Rural Municipalities, members of Girl Support Committees and School Support Committees. The District Level Adolescents' Conferences lasted three days and were a platform for the participants to share their experiences, discuss the challenges they have been facing and to come up with solutions together. The conferences were also a platform for participants to enhance their knowledge and skills and to prepare them to tackle various forms of sexual and gender based violence in schools and in their communities. One of the major outcomes of the conferences was the recommendations for education policies the participants prepared for their respective Rural Municipalities to make their schools safe and child friendly. They advocated to allocate local resources to the schools and students. In both events representatives from district's Women and Children Offices and representatives from the Police were present as panelists in the "Ensuring Access to Justice" session, where they shared their knowledge about the existing provisions and protocols to address violence occurring in schools and communities.

In Sindhupalchowk, 97 participants from seven Rural Municipalities and 22 schools took part in the conference. In Gorkha, 58 people participated from five Rural Municipalities and 11 schools. During the conference in Sindhupalchowk we organized a rally to mark 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence. During the conference in Gorkha, we organized [a flash mob at a local bus station](#) to mark 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence and International Human Rights Day. The participants danced and sang songs highlighting the need to end violence against women and girls. Adolescents also recited poems about safe schools and elimination of discrimination based on gender.

During the conferences, as a part of SAFE Justice project, we have created two videos that highlight the approach and some of the adolescent girls and boys we work with. You can find them [here](#) and [here](#).

Girl students have learned many important issues from these workshops, but boys are left out. So I request you bring His Chance for boys.

HT participant

National Conference on Gender Based Violence - Urban Voices for Rural Issues

The National Conference on Gender Based Violence was held on December 22nd as a part of the fellowship program supported by MATCH International Women's Fund. The purpose of the conference was to bring all the fellows together in one platform where they could share their insights with a wider audience and focus on the issues faced by the girls in villages and to continue evidence based advocacy on these issues. We invited like-minded organizations to share their insight and expertise and to seek possible collaboration for future initiatives. During the conference, the fellows shared their reasons for joining the program, their experiences, and the objectives of their field work. They shared the activities and advocacy activities done in the field and their challenges and lessons learned in the field.

At the conference, Program Officer of Central Children Welfare Board Ms. Namuna Bhusal gave a presentation on the effects of the 2015 earthquake on children's welfare, and the initiatives of the Central Children Welfare Board to tackle them. After her presentation, Ms. Bhusal answered questions from the participants. We also held an interactive session with Ms. Chari Maya Tamang, the founder of Shakti Samuha, an anti trafficking NGO. Ms. Tamang shared her own story about being sold to and later rescued from a brothel, filing a case against the person who was involved in her trafficking and finally establishing Shakti Shamuha. At the conference, two fellows and some of the students from K and K International College performed a flash mob with an aim to raise awareness on gender based violence. We also had a musical performance by Barta Gandarba, an artist well known for her powerful voice and sarangi (traditional bowed string instrument) skills.

#HerTurn Day of the Girl 2017 Campaign

On the International Day of the Girl on October 11th, we wanted to bring attention to the discrimination and violence many girls face through situations like early marriage, in emergencies, or in access to education. We also wanted to celebrate girls' potential, creativity, courage and determination. To celebrate the International Day of the Girl, we paired up with People in Need to introduce

After the His Chance workshop I have seen lots of changes in my school. Boys and girls have started to respect each other. Before, boys used to tease and bully girls but after participating in His Chance workshop, we have changed. From the school safety project fund, we purchased material for toilet reconstruction and a water supply facility, which has made it easier for the girls to use the toilet, especially during menstruation.

HC participant

some of the girls we work with. We think all girls are important all year around but on this day, we especially wanted to highlight these amazing girls' ideas for the future. We asked 14 rural girls what they would do if they were in charge of their family, community, village, country or the world. We posted [their plans and their photos on social media](#) in the two weeks preceding the International Day of the Girl. These quotes and photos later were featured in a calendar for 2018 and are presented in this report.



Some examples of girls' ideas:

Sushma, 15: "I would work to eliminate untouchability, since it is ingrained in the community. I would set a meeting with Mothers' Groups and social clubs and post awareness messages around the public taps."

Shobha, 15: "I would mobilize female community health volunteers to help pregnant women and new mothers for two years. They could help her with domestic work, and support her pre- and post-natal care, making sure she gets nutritious food and good rest."

Sajina, 14: "Our community lacks proper roads, water supply, communication and market facilities. I get confused and want to know where the development budget goes. It does not seem transparent. I would work to make the political condition stable."

Online Safety Toolkit

In November and December, jointly with People in Need we conducted research on online safety: what are the risks and what do rural adolescents know about it. We met with almost 60 adolescents to find out how they used the internet and social media, related risks and their knowledge how to deal with them. Our research will result in an Online Safety Toolkit that will help identify and prevent online violence. It will tackle topics such as opportunities of online resources for learning, social connections, mapping major threats, scenarios of adolescents' stories, tools to stay safe and ways to report cases of abuse. The Toolkit will then be shared with our workshop participants, mentors, and will be available online in English and in Nepali.

Online presence

In 2017 we continued our online presence on social media: on [Facebook](#) with 1,479 followers, on [Twitter](#) with 624 followers, on [Instagram](#) with 146 followers and on [LinkedIn](#). You can also find us at our website: www.her-turn.org or www.hamropalo.org

In Media

Our work was featured in several media outlets in 2017. In January, 'Girls Not Brides' published [a post about our and other organizations' comic books](#) that address the topic of child marriage; the comic book we created in 2016 was featured.

On January 5th Annapurna Post (a national daily newspaper in Nepal) featured our work with child marriage in [this piece](#).

Our partner People in Need posted several articles about our work. The posts include an article about [equipping girls with tools to stay safe in post-earthquake Nepal](#). They also mentioned our work in an article about [Nepal's still ongoing recovery two years after the earthquake](#). People in Need also

When the 24 days of Her Turn workshop began at our school, we learned many things. This workshop has expanded my knowledge on legal rights and punishment related to early marriage and human trafficking. Additionally, the program also brought changes to our behavior. Many of my friends and me have started to feel more confident and can ask questions or speak publicly with confidence.

HT participant

mentioned our work in [this article](#) about what happens when girls strike back against violence at school.



Organizational Development

Policies development

In 2017, we revised existing policies and developed new policies for institutional governance. As we grow and expand, the need for strong policies and systems that guide our organization grew. We now have the following policies: Financial and Admin Policy, Human Resources Policy, Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy, Child Protection Policy, Anti-Corruption Policy, Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy. These policies were all approved by the board in June 2017 and endorsed by the Annual General Assembly in September 2017. With these policies in place we focus on strong governance, internal accountability and collective decision-making.

Staff overview

By the end of 2017, we had 17 Kathmandu based staff; five of the staff worked in administration, finance and support and 12 of the staff worked in the different programs. We also had 22 mentors working in Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha districts. We asked some of the staff to tell us about why they like working with adolescents, or their most favorite part of the job.

I used to tease girls when I was with my friends, but after taking the His Chance workshop I understood how it affects them and now I don't do it.

HC participant

Yachin Sherpa, Chief Master Trainer

"By learning you will teach; and by teaching you will learn". This Latin proverb is very close to my heart. I have been working at Hamro Palo since the beginning of 2014. I am growing each day from my lovely colleagues, from the participants, from experienced parents and from nature while travelling and walking. In every way I have been learning. I feel so lucky to work at Hamro Palo where I feel proud to be a woman.

My favorite parts of my job are meeting new people, getting to know the life of rural children, seeing them speaking like experts during closing ceremonies, being able to console them through the mentorship program and scholarship program and last but not least, travelling to rural villages of my beautiful country.

Kamal Kshetri, Master Trainer

It's been a year full of adventures for me working for Hamro Palo. Being a master trainer at Hamro Palo gives me the great platform of understanding the issues of adolescent boys and girls. Especially providing training to local youth, community members and adolescent boys and girls helps me to learn and enhance my own potential. One of my favorite quotes is from an interview with a parent: "One day my son came home after school and asked me - Papa how old were you when you got married? Clueless, I said 18. He replied - You did wrong. I just learned today in the morning workshop that no one should marry before the age of 20." Seeing the changes in the boys gives me a great amount of happiness working with adolescents. This is why I love to work at Hamro Palo.

The workshop has empowered and motivated adolescent girls and boys. We are aware of our legal rights now and know how to get help when there is a problem.

HT participant

Wongmu Sherpa, Admin/Logistics Officer

I have been a part of Hamro Palo since 2012. I feel very fortunate to work with this organization because of its mission to equip girls with empowerment by educating them in the workshops. The workshops provide leadership skills and make adolescents responsible to their community. Hamro Palo gives adolescents the opportunity to show their talents and advocate to their community. I am learning each day through the work with my team at Hamro Palo. It gives me immense happiness to work with adolescents.



Way forward

As we grow, we increasingly need a strategic plan to guide our future work. In May 2017, we organized a joint workshop together with People in Need to discuss strategy for the next five years. Back in 2016 we had discussions among the board, staff and mentors about issues that we want to work on in coming years. During our meetings with Girl Support Committees, we also asked the girls how they would like us to prioritize our work. Based on the girls' feedback and inputs from board and advisors, we are planning a strategy development

workshop with the board and staff. We have already started our coordination with the local government and in coming years we would like to closely work with Rural Municipalities and municipalities.

We will also be going back to schools where we have conducted the Her Turn workshop and are yet to work with adolescent boys.

Challenges and lessons learned

The effects of the earthquakes on the communities where we worked were still prominent in 2017. Many people who were affected by the earthquake in Sindhupalchowk and Gorkha districts were still living in temporary shelters, and many of the students were still studying in temporary learning centers and forced to study in schools where there are no proper classrooms.

After years of political turmoil, Nepal finally held a federal election in 2017. Following directives from the Election Commission of Nepal for I/NGOs to stop any ongoing activities and not to plan any new activities until the elections, we had to postpone all our activities. This delayed our projects somewhat.

In 2017 the monsoon season made our work difficult in remote areas. Landslides and floods damaged the roads and foot trails and disrupted the transportation and communication system, which made coordination and planning difficult. A big landslide led to suspension of the workshop in four schools of Bhotekoshi. Other roads in the areas where our workshops were conducted, were also affected by landslides, and sometimes our staff had to walk for hours.

Sometimes dates of exams change and it can impact the implementation of our projects planned prior to the changes. We need to pay special attention to the school calendar and the harvest season, when many students we work with support their families in the field work and have limited time to participate in other activities.

This year we have also experienced a lack of available qualified young people, who could work as trainers and observers for the workshops. With limited professional opportunities in the villages, many young people migrate to cities or abroad – a phenomenon sometimes referred to as the “brain drain.” This process affects our activities in some places where finding qualified young people who would meet our criteria is difficult.

Finances

In 2017, our expenditures amounted to NPR 30,296,101 (USD 294,136.90) with 85% spent on direct program costs. These included Her Turn and His Chance workshops (64.15%), Safe School and youth adolescent trainings for mentors and teachers (5.08%), School Safety / Community projects (7.26%), District

Level Conferences (4.27%), Refresher Workshops (1.34%), and Youth Women Fellowship Program (2.90%) The remaining 15% was spent on support and administrative costs – office rent, staff salaries, equipment and supplies, registration and audit costs, logistics and communications.

There are different organizations working on different fields in rural areas and I found the working strategy of HP is different than others. I can see my students are attending their classes regularly and they are more active these days. They give more importance to hygiene, sanitation, health and are more aware about issues like violence, trafficking, child marriage, and menstruation than before.

Principal of Shree Rameshwor Secondary School

