Little Sisters Fund
2015 Annual Report
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Who We Are

Our Mission
Little Sisters Fund supports economically disadvantaged Nepalese girls to become empowered leaders through education, mentoring, and community support.

Our Approach
Poverty is multi-dimensional. So is our strategy. Our approach is holistic, but rooted in education. Long-term scholarships keep girls safe and in school, while supplemental programs deliver comprehensive support that ensures girls thrive through the end of school and beyond.

Our Vision
We aim to contribute to the development of a more equitable, just, and prosperous world where all children can claim their right to education and marginalization does not occur on the basis of gender.

[Diagram showing a circular chart with sections for Education, Quality, Safety, Independence, Health, Community Support, Mentorship, Leadership, Empowerment, and Education Through Safety.
Dear Friends,

How can we sum up 2015? Difficult. Tragic. Trying. These words barely do justice to the year 2015 in Nepal. The earthquakes, countless aftershocks, political unrest, and the ongoing fuel crisis have been challenging physically, emotionally, and programmatically.

Yet, as we pause to reflect on what was in no way an easy year, we recognize we have many reasons to feel pride, gratitude, and hope. Despite 2015’s myriad challenges, we have many achievements to celebrate. Our rapid response to the earthquakes last spring—in which we reached over 5,000 people—is by no means the least of these. That we continue to run our programs, train teachers, and mentor girls monthly despite a crippling lack of fuel is also no small feat. We celebrate with the 109 girls who passed their SLC, and 43 who finished 12th grade, and six alumnae who won scholarships for university level education.

And because none of these achievements would have been conceivable without the support of the many members of our extended Little Sisters Fund family, we are deeply, humbly grateful. At the most challenging moments, you rallied together. Your messages of encouragement, love, and solidarity lifted us during the most trying moments. Your willingness to lend a hand—whether a small one selling lemonade or a practiced one offering medical advice—inspired us. Your compassion, generosity, and loyalty weave the very foundation upon which our work is built. We cannot thank you enough.

Of course, the earthquakes and recent unrest have caused real setbacks and created new opportunities for injustice to take root, and recovery will not happen overnight. Yet, our approach has always been anchored in the belief that change takes time. We are committed to standing with those impacted by the crises for the long haul, and we hope you will be with us as well.

Thank you for your generous support, your commitment to ending injustice, and your trust that, together, we can make the world a better place. On behalf of the boards of directors in the USA and Nepal and all 2,000+ Little Sisters, thank you and dhanyabaad!

Trevor Patzer  
Co-Founder & Executive Director, USA

Usha Acharyya  
Co-Founder & Executive Director, Nepal
2015 Highlights

➢ **Growth**
In 2015, we grew—a lot! We added more than 350 new Little Sisters—an about double the growth that we have had in any year in the past, and we finished the year just shy of 2,000 girls in our programs.

➢ **Youth-Led Community Projects**
As part of our earthquake response, we began a new program that opens up the opportunity for Little Sisters and their classmates to lead small-scale community development projects.

➢ **Academic Excellence**
Even as we have increased the quantity of girls we support, we remain as committed as ever to quality, quality, quality. Little Sisters continue to excel in national and school exams, and our Primary Educator Training program helps improve the quality of education for all children in Little Sisters Fund partner schools.

➢ **Scholarships for Graduates**
Our graduates continue to amaze and impress us! Two graduates earned scholarships from our Partner Universities, Shenandoah University and Centenary College of Louisiana, and began their freshman year in the fall. Three others recently won scholarships from the Bo M. Karlsson Foundation, which supports higher education scholarships for young women in Nepal. Another graduate was selected for a leadership development program that also offers financial assistance for higher education, while six 12th graders were selected to participate in a leadership program in Kathmandu.

➢ **Partnership with Girls CHARGE**
In September, Little Sisters Fund joined the Collaborative Harnessing Ambition & Resources for Girls Education (Girls CHARGE), a global effort to address girls’ education challenges led by the Brookings Institution and the Clinton Global Initiative.

Little Sisters give a presentation during a workshop on project design

A student takes advantage of a new Classroom Library implemented as a result of LSF’s Primary Educator Training Program
2015 by the Numbers

1,911 Little Sisters in 20 districts

Nearly 2,000 girls received full scholarships covering tuition, fees, uniforms, books, and supplies. All Little Sisters also receive comprehensive support that covers health, awareness raising, and mentoring.

97% SLC Pass Rate

112 Little Sisters took the 10th grade School Leaving Certificate exam, and 109 passed—a rate more than double the national rate.

Stronger Teachers for 4,000+ Learners

The poor SLC results at the national level are indicative of the overall quality of education in Nepal. To address this challenge, Little Sisters Fund offers Primary Educator Training to all partner schools, ultimately impacting many children beyond the Little Sisters.

95% Transition to University

After graduating from Little Sisters Fund upon completion of 12th grade, about 95% of Little Sisters Fund graduates go on to university education. Those who don’t typically complete technical training and can be just as successful.
Faces of the Little Sisters Fund

Rama

Rama lives with her family in Bhojpur, in Eastern Nepal. The main occupation of her family is farming, but they do not have sufficient land to produce food for survival. Her father left in search of work in Kathmandu and stayed for two years, but could not find a steady job as a laborer. Rama became a Little Sister in 2015, so that she can go to school despite her family’s financial challenges. She is a sweet girl who likes to study hard. She lives close to school, so she rarely misses a day. When she’s not studying, she helps her mother with the household work.

Benajil & Benita

Benajil and Binita are Grade 12 Little Sisters, classmates, fast friends, and winners of our 2015 Community Service Award! They volunteered at a local hospital nearly every day for more than two months after the earthquakes. Benajil explains: "Originally, it started because we collected old clothes from people in our locality -- those clothes that were old but still in good enough condition. Then we went to donate them. But when we got there, we found the opportunity to volunteer. We helped take donations from different organizations and distribute them to the victims. We distributed clothes, food, and medicines. We also helped patients who didn't have guardians, especially those who were brought to Kathmandu by helicopter. Many were very young or very old, and we helped take care of them and stay with them.

Pooja

“I come from a small village where girls are considered a sin. People started talking about my marriage right after my birth, but my parents encouraged me to study. Little Sisters Fund provided me the opportunity to study and accomplish my dreams. Now, I have completed my bachelor’s in Business Administration, and I work as an administrative assistant in an NGO called Ki Nepal that works against human trafficking. I have been to different borders of Nepal/India as a Counselor. I have met with survivors of trafficking, and their stories are more horrible than you can imagine. I believe that no one has a right to sell the innocent and economically fragile girls as they are the future of an economically well-built country. I want to do my master’s as soon as possible so that I will set an example to my society that even girls can become leaders, they can study and change the society towards development.”
Earthquake Response Overview

On April 25, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal with an epicenter northwest of Kathmandu. Heavy shaking throughout much of the central part of the country caused massive damage, and aftershocks continue into 2016.

Thanks to the support of generous friends like you and the dedication of our staff, we were able to respond quickly to the massive need caused by the disaster. In the immediate aftermath we focused on pressing humanitarian needs, distributing food, water, and medical supplies and supporting hospitals that were treating the injured with both financial and human resources.

In the second phase of our response, our goal was to support survivors as they adapted to the post-disaster environment. We continued to distribute material support, but focused on providing the information and resources for individuals and families to lead their own recovery—for example, cash grants for rebuilding and water purification supplies coupled with educational sessions on sanitation and disease risks.

We continue today with the third phase of our recovery efforts aimed at the long-term goal of “building back better.” Our efforts now include securing education for girls whose future was put in jeopardy by the quakes and helping schools and communities recover.
Earthquake Response by the Numbers

640 Families
benefitted from financial assistance, primarily to rebuild damaged or collapsed homes.

5,000+ People
were reached through awareness-raising sessions on sanitation, hygiene, trafficking risk, etc.

110 New Little Sisters
accepted due to new financial hardships created by the disaster.

4 Hospitals
supported, plus hundreds of people provided with medicine

30,000 liters' worth
of water treatment solution provided.

900+ Non-LSF Students
received school supplies

1,000+ kilograms
of food distributed

9 Tarps + 29 Bamboo Sets
distributed to people in need of shelter

For additional details on our response, please see also our 6-month Earthquake Response Report, which is available on our website, www.littlesistersfund.org.

Nisha and Nishma’s Story

Nisha and Nishma had a difficult family situation prior to the earthquake. Their family reared goats to earn a small living, but her mother often took out loans to support the family. However, she was often unable to repay them on time. The situation worsened after the massive earthquake on April 25 because the house where they had been living collapsed. All of the family’s goats—and therefore their livelihood—were buried under the rubble.

Tragically, the girls’ mother committed suicide two weeks after the earthquake. Nisha had already been receiving support from Little Sisters Fund prior to the earthquake, and Nishma was accepted to the program after. Their scholarships are guaranteed through grade 12, thus ensuring they continue to learn while removing the economic burden of schooling on the family. In addition, the family received financial assistance to construct a temporary shelter and eventually rebuild their home.

Above: Little Sisters Fund Program Officer Yashoda with sisters Nisha and Nishma in front of their temporary housing.
Financial Review

Income

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>$470,892</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>239,430</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (corporations, groups, etc)</td>
<td>15,223</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>17,010</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$742,555</strong></td>
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Contributed support includes $181,085 in donations earmarked for earthquake response.

Expenses

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management &amp; Administration</td>
<td>105,301</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>50,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$708,019</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the figures included here are estimates. Our U.S. form 990 and our audited financial figures for fiscal year 2015 will likely be complete by August.

The mother of a Little Sister offers a thumbprint to sign for cash assistance received as part of LSF’s earthquake response.
Looking Ahead

We have high hopes that 2016 will be a kinder year to all of Nepal. Our plans for the year include the following:

- **We plan to expand into our 20th district, Dolakha.** This district was severely impacted by the earthquakes of last spring, and the physical, financial, and material loss caused by the disaster will be felt for quite some time.

- **Because we increased the number of girls we support significantly in 2015, in the coming year we will focus less on growth in that area and more on deepening and strengthening our support systems for girls, families, schools, and communities.** For example, one step towards this goal will be piloting multi-day workshops through our Counseling & Awareness Raising program in places where girls are most disadvantaged.

- **We will continue to seek out partnerships and alliances with organizations whose missions complement ours.**

- **We will be supporting girls in 5 new partner schools.** Many of these new partnerships will be in areas that were hit hard by the earthquakes.

- **We will pilot a new, second-level course as part of our Primary Educator Training program.**

- **A new higher education loan program** will open up additional opportunities for graduates as they pursue education after 12th grade, the point at which scholarship support from Little Sisters Fund ends. Already, the vast majority of Little Sisters Fund graduates do go on to earn bachelor’s degrees (and many continue studying beyond that), but the high costs of certain courses of study can prevent a young woman from pursuing the career of her dreams and reaching her full potential.
Your Support Matters.

“Because of your golden opportunity, the ones who are deprived of education today get the light of education. Due to your love, support, and thinking and thought it really changed my life.

Every year Usha di, Yashoda di and many other sisters came to visit us and gave us lots of knowledge to be a good and successful person in life. I tell such things to my friends also. Maybe they can also change their habit and one day they may be a successful person.

Due to you, many girls are getting education a quality education. Our school teacher tells us only about the lesson, but you are the one who tells us about other extra knowledge, which can be in utilized in our real life.

When I get a good job then I promise I will also give golden opportunity of education to another girl from the poor family.”

- Pooja, grade 10

Thank you!