



Little Sisters Fund
Education for Empowerment



**2019
ANNUAL
REPORT**

Safety

Education

Mentoring

Empowerment

Leadership

★ 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.

★ OUR MISSION ★

Little Sisters Fund helps Nepalese girls to become empowered leaders through education, mentoring, and community support.

★ OUR APPROACH ★

Poverty and injustice are multidimensional. Little Sisters Fund takes a holistic approach anchored in child protection and education. LSF's scholarship programs increase access to education while our ten supporting programs address the additional barriers to girls' achievement and women's empowerment in Nepal.



COORDINATING MENTORS • COUNSELING AND AWARENESS RAISING
PREVENTATIVE AND EMERGENCY HEALTHCARE • PRIMARY EDUCATOR TRAINING
LITTLE DAUGHTERS SAVINGS FUND • MOBILE LIBRARIES
MENSTRUAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT • GIRL-LED COMMUNITY PROJECTS
HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY FUND • ALUMNI DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Letter from the Executive Directors: Trevor & Usha

2019 was a great year for Little Sisters Fund! Over 2,000 girls in our program are transforming their lives, the lives of their families, and positively contributing to their communities. Our holistic approach to safety, education, mentoring, empowerment, and leadership is the foundation of this life-altering achievement.

Beyond child protection, social justice, and safety rooted in education, girl-led community projects continue to be a highlight of our program. Through the experience of identifying a need in their communities and finding ways to fill that need, the Little Sisters understand firsthand the impact they can have by giving back. They also get a glimpse of how one small project can have a ripple effect far beyond the intended recipients. It is awesome to watch the Little Sisters become part of finding solutions that will benefit their entire community, from water purification to playgrounds, bathrooms, science labs, and libraries.

As always, the academic achievement of the Little Sisters is outstanding. Not only are they performing well on standardized tests in Nepal, they are also excelling in their pursuit of higher education. Our Higher Education Opportunity Fund was hugely successful, assisting 87 graduates with college opportunities that were unthinkable even a couple of years ago. Three of our most recent graduates received near-full scholarships to universities in the United States. We now have Little Sisters pursuing degrees in medicine, dentistry, education, engineering, auditing, MBAs, law, and much more.

None of this would be possible without the leadership and guidance of our Nepal Team. This group, led by Usha and including Ramesh, Yashoda, Sangita, Trimuna, Neeti, Juni, Susmita, Lama, Indira, and Januka, is second to none. Their passion and dedication keep everyone striving for

excellence in every aspect of our efforts. The care and compassion shown to all Little Sisters are what allows Little Sisters Fund to change the lives of so many girls, their families, and their communities.

Please take a moment to review our 2019 results and achievements. Your support and contributions have been, and continue to be, integral in making a difference for each Little Sister in our program. Together, we have been able to ensure over 2,000 current Little Sisters and more than 600 graduated Little Sisters have the opportunities to realize their dreams and reach their full potential.

Thank You! Namaste!



Trevor Patzer and Usha Acharya
Co-Executive Directors, Little Sisters Fund (LSF)



Voice of a Little Sister: In Her Own Words



Educate me and I will fight for equality. Make me capable of fighting my own battles.

-Slesha



One should never spoil the chance of getting more education.

-Samjhana



LSF planted a seed of inspiration in me. I have found I am more capable than I ever realized.

-Binita



We have to make the world a better place so we can show our children they can do anything.

-Savyata



With Little Sisters Fund, I feel like I belong somewhere. I always have someone looking after me. I feel safe and loved.

-Poonam



Little Sister Spotlight: **Rejina**

When Rejina was four years old, she was hit by a vehicle that crushed her leg, fracturing it in seven places. Doctors questioned whether she would survive. She underwent four separate surgeries to save her leg. Rejina has never let her physical impairment hold her back.

Since joining LSF in 7th grade, Rejina has excelled in her schoolwork and become an inspiration to other Little Sisters. In 2019, she was selected as one of 30 young women to participate in a one-year course with Women LEAD (Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Advocacy, and Development) Nepal. This course is the perfect complement to LSF's program for a Little Sister. In it, Rejina learned professional and personal skills such as public speaking, time management, team building, interview skills, and self-defense.

Rejina plans to study law and journalism and she wants to use her experience as a member of Women LEAD to advocate for human rights. Rejina has experienced discrimination firsthand as a physically-impaired person. She wants to become a social changemaker by challenging stereotypes and speaking out to end the exploitation of women and girls, and physically-impaired individuals. Rejina explained her life motto: *"I want to be the voice of silence and survival. I want to stand up for the rights of the disadvantaged and make sure everyone has the opportunity to live their life with dignity and happiness."*



Little Sisters Fund **Makes a Big Impact**

LSF's direct support changed the lives of **2,030** at-risk girls in Nepal in 2019.

These girls now have **a chance to beat the odds and succeed** in school, and in life.

Over **98%** of Little Sisters graduate from high school compared to **25%** of their peers nationally.

Over **99%** of Little Sisters passed the School Education Exam (SEE), with 3X the national average of top performers (A+, A, and B+).

Over **70%** of graduated Little Sisters have pursued a tertiary degree and **over 92%** of current graduates are in an undergraduate or graduate program.

Graduates become **teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers, and NGO workers**, to name a few.

Little Sisters earn **over 50%** more in their careers on average than their peers.

Little Sisters delay marriage on average by over **5 years** compared to their peers.

Higher Education Opportunity Fund Expands ■■■■

Little Sisters Fund's Higher Education Opportunity Fund (HEOF) offers graduates small, interest-free loans to expand college-level educational opportunities while encouraging independence, responsibility, and sound financial habits.

87 graduates received financial assistance from the Higher Education Opportunity Fund in 2019. The HEOF program has allowed graduated Little Sisters to pursue further, specialized education in the following areas:

Nursing

Dentistry

**Medicine/
Surgery**

Engineering

**Laboratory
Science**

Architecture

Public Health

**Physical
Therapy**

**Computer
Science**

Pharmacy

Education

Law

Teachers. Bankers. Lawyers. Leaders.



When you educate a girl, you educate a family and the next generation.

- Usha Acharya

One of the presiding principles of our program is paying it forward. The Little Sisters alumni take this principle to heart and are changing not only their lives, but also the lives of their families and their country. They are doing this by becoming Coordinating Mentors to current Little Sisters, teaching Nepal's youth, and challenging stereotypes. They are giving back to LSF, their communities, and their country by sharing the knowledge they have gained through their own journeys to become educated, employed, and empowered female leaders.

Teacher:

Anima was on the verge of dropping out of school in 6th grade. With the support of LSF, she was able to finish her education, receive a master's degree in English, and become a teacher. She is also a Coordinating Mentor for 44 girls in two participating schools. "LSF not only changed me, but also my family," said Anima. "I believe education is the most powerful positive force in a person's life. I want the Little Sisters I mentor, and the students I teach, to be real leaders, role models, and empowered women who can pay it forward and positively impact their community."

Banker:

Sabita, a Little Sister since the 3rd grade, is now finishing her Bachelor's Degree in Business Studies and plans to go into banking after graduation. "LSF gave me resources to pursue higher education and counseled me to make better decisions," stated Sabita. Now she is passing on that knowledge as a Coordinating Mentor for 22 current Little Sisters.

Lawyer:

Binita is a strong role model for current and future Little Sisters. In addition to pursuing an undergraduate degree in law and interning at a law firm, she is also pursuing a better Nepal through her involvement with the Youth Thinkers' Society. This organization empowers Nepal's youth to seek out innovative ideas and collaborate with one another to break stereotypes and create opportunities for youth in Nepal.

As a member of the Youth Thinkers' Society, Binita was able to take part in the Everest International Model United Nations. "We learned public speaking skills and were able to discuss and analyze current global and national affairs. I met a lot of wonderful young people who were really determined to work together to contribute something to society," explained Binita.

Leaders:

The future looks bright for Little Sisters who will follow in the footsteps of Binita, Sabita, and Anima. The leadership qualities instilled through our programs give all Little Sisters a chance to pay it forward. As more and more Little Sisters graduate and become leaders in their chosen fields, the ripple effect of their leadership will be felt in their families, communities, and country.



Keeping Little Sisters Connected

Since the founding of Little Sisters Fund in 1998, over 600 alumni have begun navigating a new world of choices and opportunities. In 2015, we established the Little Sisters Alumni Association to help graduated Little Sisters as they expand their education or enter the workforce. But the support doesn't just come from LSF. These alums come together to support each other, having followed a similar path before high school graduation, and they gather to support the girls who come after them, often volunteering to serve as role models to current Little Sisters.

Once a Little Sister, Always a Little Sister

Engaged alums make positive role models

▶ **627** alumni are furthering their education and pursuing careers which would not have been possible without the support of Little Sisters Fund throughout their primary and secondary school years.

▶ **150** alumni attended the 2019 Alumni Annual Meeting where they reconnected with other alumni, welcomed new graduates, and learned how they can help further the mission of Little Sisters Fund for future generations.

▶ **19** alumni are acting as Coordinating Mentors to guide and advise current Little Sisters along a path of education and enrichment.

▶ **30** alumni are financially supporting the education of current Little Sisters.

Giving Back. Building Community.

2019 brought an exponential increase in the number of community projects as Little Sisters found new and exciting ways to answer the challenges faced by their schools and communities.



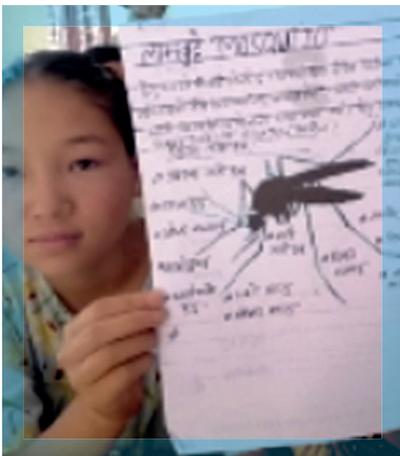
Little Sisters and community members get their hands dirty as they break ground at the site of a new water tank that will supply clean water to their school and community.



Srijana and Sabina worked with community members, school management, and their classmates to set up and fully stock a child-friendly community library.



The new filtration system and water tank at Vijaya Samudayik School Nawalparasi provides clean drinking water to all of the students and teachers and ultimately will help prevent water-borne diseases.



Little Sisters teach their families and friends how to prevent dengue in a community awareness raising program.



Installing science labs in our partner schools provides a hands-on learning experience and helps students put scientific theory into practice.



130 Little Sisters contributed to the completion of **29 Community Projects** in 2019.

2019 Community Projects



6 Science Labs



7 Community Libraries



3 School Libraries



5 Safe Drinking Water Projects



2 School Bathrooms



3 Playgrounds/Assembly Grounds



2 Community Awareness Programs



1 Playground Retaining Wall



Little Sister Spotlight: Ruby

Ruby was at risk of dropping out of school when she was in 2nd grade. As a government worker, her father's salary barely covered rent and basic necessities for his family of four, and, as a girl in the family, Ruby's education was on the line.

With the support of Little Sisters Fund, Ruby was able to stay in school and graduate in 2019. Today, Ruby is a disciplined and hard-working young woman who is intent on using her voice to raise awareness on and fight against gender-based violence.

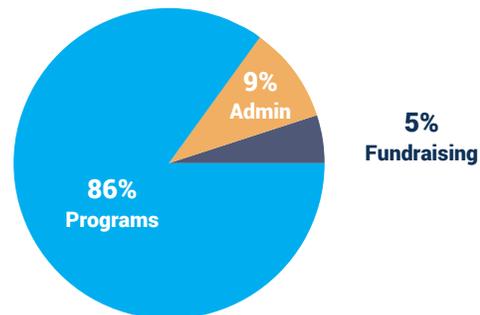
"The moral lessons given by our Coordinating Mentor every month inspired me to be a better person. While in the LSF program, I had the opportunity to think about and share new ideas," explained Ruby. "I came to truly understand the importance of education for women and I developed a passion for helping those who are in need."



Financial Stewardship

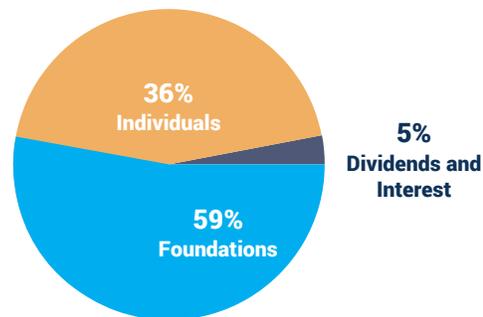
Expenses:

Programs:	\$ 546,641	■
Management & Administration:	\$ 57,315	■
Fundraising:	\$ 32,431	■
Total:	\$ 636,387	



Income:

Contributions from Individuals:	\$ 289,854	■
Contributions from Foundations:	\$ 475,589	■
Dividends and Interest:	\$ 41,400	■
Total:	\$ 806,843	



INTEGRITY. TRANSPARENCY. ACCOUNTABILITY.



What Little Sisters Fund has done for the female youth of Nepal is an inspiration as it proves what a little genius and a lot of hard work can accomplish not just for a community, but the world as a whole.

- Zeke Hetherington

Little Sister sponsor for the past 10 years

Sponsors and Students Foster Friendships

Little Sisters Fund was founded in 1998 when Trevor made the decision to support the education of one girl. His commitment to Bindhaya's full education, through the 12th grade, was the foundation for our first program—the Individual Sponsorship Program. Today, 151 sponsors are committed to the full education of 199 Little Sisters. Through regular letter writing, and sometimes in-person meetings in Nepal, sponsors and Little Sisters develop lifelong bonds. With a donation of \$3,500, as a one-time gift or over multiple years, each donor ensures the Little Sister they sponsor can finish their education and graduate from high school.

Our Work Spans 21 Districts and 95 Partner Schools

To facilitate letter writing, the girls in our Individual Scholarship Program all live and study in and around Kathmandu. Yet, the work of Little Sisters Fund reaches far beyond the limits of Nepal's capital city. In 2019, through the School Scholarship Program, LSF supported the education of an additional 1,674 at-risk girls enrolled in 95 partner schools in 21 districts of Nepal. The scholarships and support provided to each and every one of these girls would not be possible without the generous support of multiple foundations, corporations, and hundreds of individual donors.

269 Individual Donors
37 Foundations

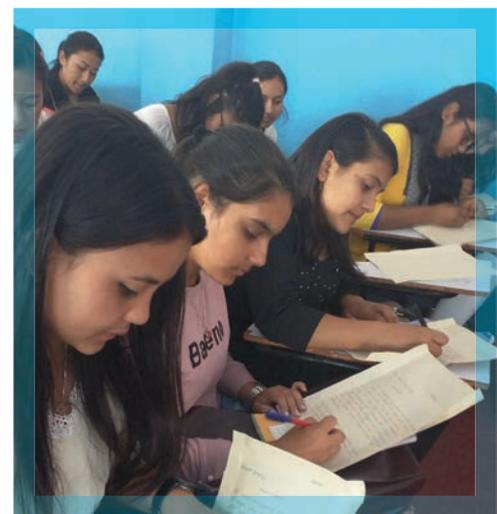
LSF's pinpointed focus on putting money where it will produce lasting results makes its impact obvious. It is so easy to want to jump on board and give! My daughters and I love LSF!

- Wendy Ghorai

Little Sister sponsor for the past 8 years



Nutan Thapa, a former LSF staff member and now sponsor, visited our office in Nepal and met Florica, the Little Sister she sponsors.



Thank you to our sponsors, donors, and the hundreds of volunteers who make our mission possible!



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