

Increasing Participation in Education and Learning.

Introduction

Kidasha is a UK registered charity supporting the most disadvantaged children living in urban poverty in Nepal. The children we support experience neglect, abuse and exploitation as the norm. They are invisible and ignored, with little hope of a better future. Our mission is to increase aspiration, resilience and opportunities for these Nepali children.

Through our local Nepali team on the ground, we understand children's real needs. We develop and pilot our work directly in the community in partnership with local government and organisations. We reach as many children as possible by building evidence to scale-up successful models, driving long term systemic change throughout Nepal.

Our vision is for all children growing up in urban Nepal to be assured of a safe and bright future and we work towards this goal by:

- Improving children's health & well-being.
- Enabling their education, learning & employment.
- Protecting them from neglect, abuse & exploitation.

We have a proven track record and in the last twenty years Kidasha has:

- Contributed to reducing child labour in under 14-year-olds in Pokhara by 73%
- Reintegrated over 2000 street-connected children, child labourers and abuse victims.
- Enabled over 12,000 of the poorest children to go to school or alternative education.
- Provided training, employment or business support to over 1,500 young people.
- Provided life skills education to over 15,000 at-risk adolescents.
- Delivered training on case management to officials from all 75 districts of Nepal.

Needs to be addressed

Nepal is one of the least developed and poorest countries in the world and is also one of the 'fastest' urbanising countries in South Asia, with large numbers of migrants from poor rural communities moving to the cities in search of work. Many end up in worse situations than in their villages, without the necessary skills to secure stable jobs, they are pushed into make-shift housing in densely populated slums, with poor safety and sanitation. Limited access to quality services further exacerbates their marginalisation, invariably trapping their children in chronic poverty and at risk of long-term harm from neglect, violence, abuse and exploitation.

There are a number of practical, emotional & financial issues which prevent many of the poorest children growing up in urban slums in Nepal from enrolling in school, attending regularly or cause them to drop out early. Challenges include:

- Inability to afford uniforms/books/supplies and school fees.
- Living in chaotic households with a lack of parental care and guidance.
- Previous negative experiences of school (bullying, lack of attainment, excessive discipline)
- Pressure to work to supplement family income (exacerbated by slow recovery from the pandemic and the ongoing global economic crisis)
- Need to stay at home to care for family members,
- Child marriage/early parenthood.

Our Solution

We recognise that every child's circumstances and abilities are different and therefore work to ensure every child has access to learning opportunities that align with their individual needs. We actively engage with vulnerable communities and closely collaborate with local schools to identify out-of-school children and then work with their families to understand and address the barriers preventing attendance.

If the problem is simply affordability, then we help by providing uniforms and books and negotiating fee waivers with schools. However, in many cases there is a multiplicity of issues to be overcome and a need for more intensive support and guidance. We provide this through regular home visits and facilitating both parent support groups and school visits to meet with teachers. We also provide extra learning support through community-based after-school clubs (right), invaluable for children struggling at school and/or lacking parental support with their studies or space to do their homework.



For some children and young people going to school is not a realistic option e.g., those forced to work to survive, child brides/parents or those for whom the school system has previously failed, such that they lack belief in their ability to learn. We support these young people by helping them create the time, space and motivation to access non-formal learning opportunities available within the community. This includes the option to complete a functional learning course which we have developed to improve basic literacy and numeracy skills in ways relevant to daily life e.g., filling in forms, reading maps, calculating weights and measures. (Above: Functional Learning Course teaching Motorbike Repair and Maintenance)



Impact

- After three years of support, 95% of families were able to support their children's education themselves.
- Average school attendance rates for children supported increased from 55% to 75%.
- 73% reduction in number of out-of-school children in one municipality.
- 286% improvement in adolescents' literacy and numeracy through our 35-hour functional learning course.

Plans for 2024/25

- Comprehensive support up to 500 children to enrol and attend school.
- Providing remedial education for 560 children at risk of drop out through community-based homework clubs in slum communities.
- Delivering bespoke alternative education to 100 adolescents unable to return to school.



Project Management

All our work in Nepal is delivered in partnership with local NGOs. Our small programme team, unlike many other UK charities, is based in Nepal and provides day to day technical support and capacity-building to our local partners and actively monitors the delivery and effectiveness of projects to ensure they produce the expected results. Every project is developed with a detailed monitoring framework including plans for baseline and endline data collection to assess the impact and effectiveness of investment.

All our work is governed by formal agreements with our partners and comes under the umbrella of an operating agreement we have with the Government of Nepal, progress against which is reviewed bi-annually with local and national government line agencies. Formal reviews are conducted on a quarterly basis after submission of narrative and financial reports by our implementing partners. We only transfer funding to partners after receipt and satisfactory review of quarterly financial reports and regular spot checks and audits by our Financial Controller in Nepal. All fund transfers from the UK to Nepal must first be authorised by our Chief Executive and reported to our Board.

Safeguarding

We take our safeguarding responsibilities very seriously, both internally and in our projects. Our internal child protection procedures (including recruitment, storage of information, media and communications, behaviour guidelines and response to concerns) are governed by a policy which we originally established in 2004 and revise every two years. In 2019 we also developed and implemented a Safeguarding Policy to cover issues related to exploitation, harassment and abuse of beneficiaries, staff and community members. We have also supported our local implementing partners to develop their own similar policies and ensure they are applied.

Funding Requirement

The annual cost for 2024 is £50,798 of which we have already secured £15,000 and have been promised £7,742 of CSR contributions from local businesses in Nepal. We are therefore seeking contributions from several Trusts and Foundations to cover the balance.

Case Study – Pawan (age 12)

Pawan left home to escape his alcoholic and violent father. Whilst living on the streets Pawan collected scrap to survive and sniffed glue to avoid hunger pains.

"Before I got support from Kidasha I always wanted to sniff glue but now even the smell makes me feel sick"

Kidasha identified Pawan's challenges and helped him using our case management system to come and live in our shelter. Pawan's life was dramatically transformed, and he started attending school.



"I've improved myself and they enrolled me back into school and I started to go. Initially I said I wouldn't study because I wasn't interested. But Miss said we should go to school. After a while you make friends and you actually want to go. It's now been nine months that I've been living in a positive way".

Watch this short video to learn more about Pawan and others like him: <https://youtu.be/90yJzh8NjeA>

Thank you for your time and consideration.