A message to the generous members and donors of Dining for Women:

**Be Part of Her Dream** has transformed the lives of a group of poor women who were denied the chance to go to school as children. Trying to affect real and lasting change from halfway across the world is a daunting task filled with remarkable successes and disappointing setbacks. The nature of dealing with poor women and their families makes this so. After meeting four to five days a week for two years, a group of mothers now have a measure of financial stability they could never have dreamed of. They have access to education, healthcare, and business counseling. They are familiar with their legal rights as women. They have newly found courage to make their own decisions, and they have earned respect from their daughters. They have a caring network of support from their sisters in class who share in their joys and in their sorrows. They have their own bank accounts with money saved for the security of their families. But most importantly, they feel empowered to move forward in their lives with a clear sense of dignity and hope. They have a voice.

**Be Part of Her Dream Video**

1. **Core goal:**

   The *Be Part of Her Dream* pilot project aimed to empower marginalized mothers of Hands in Outreach sponsored girls with a small measure of financial independence and access to education, helping to break an endless cycle of poverty in inner-city Kathmandu, Nepal.

2. **Project at a glance:**

   *Be Part of Her Dream* (BPOHD) is a journey of learning, empowerment, and financial stability. The program provides poor women in Kathmandu essential skills to help lift themselves from deep poverty. The 2-year pilot project provided a supportive academic and social learning environment for a group of 48 poor women. It promoted basic literacy and numeracy skills, practical understanding of finances, best health care practices, and a robust social network that helped women build self-esteem. Obtaining access to participant’s all-important Nepali citizenship papers was a major goal for the project. This afforded these marginalized women legal rights they had previously been denied. The
success of the pilot project facilitated the program’s continuation. Many of the founding mothers have enrolled in a second session of *Be Part of Her Dream* classes, and new classes have been established for other poor, eager-to-learn women in inner-city Kathmandu.

3. **What was accomplished - key objectives:**

**A.) Obtain Nepali citizenship documents.**

Of the 48 women who completed the 2-year pilot project, 47 obtained Nepali citizenship papers to guarantee their legal rights and those of their children. This was an astonishing metric for the program.

**B.) Open a personal bank account and encourage personal savings to establish financial stability.**

A person in Nepal may not open a bank account without Nepali citizenship papers, and they’re required to sign their name. 49 women opened personal bank accounts and we opened a BPOHD program account for the one remaining mother.

**C.) Address issues of basic literacy, numeracy and digital fluency to reach an equivalent of a Nepali 2nd-grade education level.**

Eight of the project women attained a Nepali 4th grade education level, ten reached a 3rd grade level, 23 reached a 2nd grade level and seven finished the project at a primary level. The last group of women proved to be slow learners and need continual practice and help from their daughters.

All the women in the project received basic computer training. They were enrolled in a program using Waterford early learning software with applications designed to assist pre-readers up to grade three level to enhance their English language, math and science skills. Each woman spent at least four hours/month of computer time using the software.

**D.) Receive two complete health checkups and receive follow-up medical care if necessary.**

Two comprehensive health exams were provided for all the women in the project, one each year. Several of the women required follow-up care. Two had surgery, 12 received glasses, and four received regular meds for high BP and cholesterol levels. The most dramatic was the discovery of Shardha Magar’s stomach cancer. Shardha was forced to drop out of class for almost a year while she received a surgery, chemo treatments and radiation. She’s now in remission and re-joined the class halfway through the final year.

**E.) Awareness of Nepali legal rights for women, best practices for health and nutrition, guidance for small business set-up and vocational counseling, domestic violence counseling, building self-esteem, confidence and a measure of gender equality.**

The outcomes for this objective are close to 100%. The project was originally split into two groups due to the geographic locations of our partner schools. Both sections had a primary teacher, several assistant teachers and a woman who came in once a week to discuss legal rights issues. Two of the
mothers in particular received domestic violence counseling and encouragement to divorce their abusive husbands. Two women were confident enough to ask their husbands to leave, and they did. Three women started small businesses using their savings as start-up capital. Because the program has expanded from a 2-year pilot to a 4-year project, we did not heavily stress the need for women to use their saved money to start businesses. We had, therefore, less robust business counseling.

F.) Daughters of the mothers in the class to serve as project partners for learning at home.

This goal of the program worked out brilliantly during the first year of the project and diminished during the second year. A considerable number of the women have daughters in grades five and above who have a good understanding of English and Nepali language. At the outset of the project, we met several times with the girls to talk over strategies for helping their mothers at home with lessons. Many of the women reported that they did some of their class homework while their children were doing their assignments after dinner at home.

G.) Gaining a measure of financial stability with personal savings.

On average, each BPOHD mother saved $650 in her account from monthly stipends in lieu of lost wages for the time spent in class plus year-end bonuses.

4. Have the number of beneficiaries changed?

Yes - the BPOHD project finished with 48 women. We lost two women within the first six months. Anita and Manju Ghale’s mother, Sarita, left the KTM Valley to go back to live in her birth-village, taking her HIO sponsored girls too. Sadly, she realized opportunities for supporting her family were very limited in the village so she moved back to KTM. She did not re-join the BPOHD class and her two daughters, ages seven and ten, are currently not in school either. This is dreadful, but we can’t force Sarita to place her girls in school. Anita and Manju are having a great time hanging out on the street, but their lives will surely dramatically worsen as they get older.

Hiru Moote, a day laborer and mother of 16-year-old Basanti, completed the first six months of the project and suddenly disappeared. She left Basanti, her younger brother, and her alcoholic husband to elope with another man. Basanti moved in with her father who lived nearby, but he died of liver disease within two months of Hiru leaving her children. Two months later, Basanti dropped out of school.

Rajita Tamang’s mother Bimala, dropped out after nine months to take a job as a domestic in the Middle East. Before she left, she told Palmo, our coordinator, that the class had improved her English skills to the point of giving her the confidence boost she needed to apply for the job. We were very uncomfortable to see this smart and capable woman drop the class and leave for the Middle East with the care of her children left in the hands of her alcoholic husband.

5. What challenges did you face in connection with the project?
In retrospect, the challenges posed to successfully run the BPOHD project were and are enormous. Trying to improve the lives of poor women and their families is a daunting task, especially since HIO is overseeing a project from half a world away.

Regular attendance: Attendance in class by the mothers was expected unless they had good cause. For the duration of the project, we averaged 73%, which we’ve all agreed is as good as we might have expected. During the moderate months, attendance was much higher, in the range of 92%. The class was organized into two areas of Kathmandu with 25 women each. The Bal Kendra class met in the morning from 6 to 8AM and the LMV group from 4:30 to 6PM. During the winter, the early darkness was a deterrent, along with illness in the family and work pressures.

Regular attendance was our single greatest challenge. We never anticipated the extra burden this would place on our small staff. Effectively staffing for the project proved more difficult. Our two financial coordinators, one a law school student and the other a business major in college, had to leave six months into the project due to unanticipated school workloads. This was a minor setback, but we solved the problems and moved on. Also, because nearly all of the BPOHD mothers work at daily construction labor jobs, they have no stability and few options in the workplace.

In many instances, if a woman was on the job as a chosen day laborer, she was not welcome to leave work early to walk to class. Women in the Bal Kendra program generally go to construction sites early, lining up to see how many will get picked to mix cement, haul bricks and sand, or crush large rocks that day. Sometimes mothers would miss class to arrive on the building site early enough to be chosen for a day’s work. They often had to make the choice - BPOHD class or a day’s labor. In some cases, the stipend we offered was not enough to make up for a day’s lost wages. Even though they received the equivalent sum of rupees for the two hours spent in class, they still desperately needed the money for working a full day.

As single heads of household, our mothers live very much on the edge with financial margins too tight for any wiggle room. Our small staff made regular and extra home visits to see why a mother may not have come to class. Their constant personal presence was a key factor in keeping up attendance. Many of the women required daily encouragement to keep them coming to class in the face of overwhelming problems at home.

Homework assignments and daughters as project partners: This aspect of the program was a great benefit for both mothers and daughters. At the outset, the mothers needed far more instruction and they were guided by the girls in the evenings at home. We gave them more outside schoolwork to do and most complied. As the project went on, many of the mothers just couldn’t find the time to complete homework with all their responsibilities at home caring for their family.

The citizenship process: Without Nepali citizenship documents, a woman has no legal rights and it’s far more difficult for her children to get citizenship when they turn 18. At least half of our mothers faced intense pressure from family dissuading them from completing the citizenship applications. Since women, once married, go to live with their husband’s family, if there is a divorce and the daughter-in-law has citizenship documents, she may be entitled to half of her husband’s property. There’s a great
incentive then for the husband and his family to keep the woman from becoming a citizen and thereby gaining her legal rights. The program provided transportation funding for any official appointments involved during the process, whether traveling to a remote village or locally in Kathmandu. All but two of the BPOHD mothers filed for citizenship papers.

**Domestic violence and dealing with alcoholic husbands:** The number of alcoholic, abusive husbands is substantial and growing. We have to mitigate this problem and learn how to better protect our HIO mothers and their children. The problem is not going away any time soon so we have to deal with it as best we can so long as our social work intimately involves poor, at-risk families.

6. **Is your organization situation different than presented in the approval proposal?**

No major changes to report.

7. **What were the most important lessons learned?**

We recognize that developing a strong support system for women living in abusive relationships helps them develop a sense of emotional safety, the optimal state of mind to gain benefit from the program. Improving our support system for women living with abusive, alcoholic husbands is among our key program goals moving forward. Conducting screening interviews with newly enrolled women enables us to be more proactive in providing needed support. Sofia Riva, a Columbia University, HIO summer 2018 intern and Dining for Women Chapter leader with her mother Lesley Riva, took initiative for conducting screening interviews at the outset of HIO’s new *Be Part of Her Dream - Strong Roots* program in the Balku slum.

We also know that providing opportunities for women to learn with and from one another, regardless of academic ability, promotes learning and growth for all. Originally, the class was separated into sections of more advanced learners and a beginner group. Teachers reported that the advanced group progressed rapidly in their studies, but the beginner group failed to rise above a primary level. To mitigate this issue for future programs, teachers have decided to divide the class during specific academic work periods. They will keep the group together for issue teaching, such as discussing women’s legal rights. Teachers felt that this shift would greatly improve group morale and learning.

Offering classes at a time period that participants have identified as being most convenient resulted in increased attendance. HIO’s Nepali team has responded to women’s expressed needs when developing new *Be Part of Her Dream* programs. The results of participant surveys led to classes that are held in different locations being conducted at different times of the day in order to accommodate the women’s schedules.

In a large city with choking traffic and frequent power outages, coordinating monthly planning meetings provides logistical challenges. Planning effectively for day-to-day operations requires collaboration among key program leaders - the Nepali project coordinator, teachers at different locations, and the US-based steering group. Implementing a monthly meeting schedule to coordinate broad curriculum goals and exchange information about the effectiveness of daily lesson plans has become a priority. The team embraces creative ideas for communicating regularly across the program.
8. What has changed within your organization as a result of the project?

Our sponsors and donors have a far greater awareness of how challenging it is for poor women in Nepal to navigate through their daily lives. The scope of HIO’s mission has expanded and grown to include educating poor women, in addition to their daughters. BPOHD has fostered the notion that a holistic family approach to education is vitally needed for anyone in the family to succeed at breaking their cycle of poverty. Daughters need the support and understanding of their mothers, who must have a modicum of education to appreciate how tough it is for the daughters to make it through high school and on to college. Educating women is now a major part of our five-year strategic plan.

9. Describe the unexpected events and outcomes, including unexpected benefits.

HIO girls’ overall respect and appreciation for their mothers increased substantially, with a newly-found awareness and appreciation that their mothers were smarter than they may have thought. Mothers and daughters could now meet with teachers at school, as the mothers understood far better the reports being generated by teachers. And the teachers’ respect grew immensely for the women in the program. Before BPOHD began, most of the women were shy in public and would not go to their children’s school for parent-teacher conferences. When recently asked, nearly all of the women reported that they now felt confident to visit the school and speak with their children’s teachers. Many of the mothers reported that when they learned to sign their name, it was a very fulfilling moment.

When we first interviewed teachers for the project, they were somewhat skeptical of several of the key goals. They imagined many obstacles preventing the mothers from obtaining Nepali citizenship and opening personal bank accounts. Only one BPOHD mother had a bank account prior to the start of the project, and only one had ever stepped into a bank. Once the mothers received citizenship documents and learned to write their names, teachers accompanied them to open accounts in Kathmandu banks. At first, the mothers were very nervous to even enter this totally unfamiliar setting. With practice, they began dressing up to deposit their rupees. That their money was as worthy of this banking activity as any other Nepali, male or female, instilled in them a sense of equality. The mothers began developing a sense of pride in their Nepali citizenship status.

We expected the mothers to adhere to the original project proposal, which allowed for half of their cash stipend to be used for daily living and half to be saved in a bank account. The projected savings for each woman at the end of the program was $240. At the project’s outset, the Nepal Rastra bank reported that the mean income for Nepalis averaged $275/year. The article did not specify male or female. Early on, we realized that we could divert some project funding toward increasing the monthly cash stipend from $20 to $25. To our surprise, the mothers collectively agreed to save it all. This boosted each mother’s savings to $650 at the end of the two-year pilot, nearly tripling what we’d intended.

Having money in the bank to use for whatever might be needed has made a tremendous difference in the mothers’ attitudes toward daily living. Even the bank’s management staff has been astonished to see the mothers’ newfound confidence, their ability to carry out banking functions, and their understanding of the relevance of banking institutions. The mothers now know that if they lose a job or meet with a small debt, they have a reserve to keep them from becoming destitute and homeless. For these desperately poor women looking after their families, their decision to save money has been a small
miracle. It has given them some hope and a measure of financial stability, and it has begun helping integrate poor people into the mainstream.

During the second year of the project, we organized several workshops with a Nepali organization called Putali Nepal to promote awareness and use of the Ruby menstrual cup. We had no idea what the outcome may be, considering menstruation is a very sensitive issue with deep cultural stigmas attached for centuries. Poor women can't afford to purchase disposable menstrual products. The free cups allowed the women to work all day on construction sites without fear of leakage. They were amazed. Today, 25 of the women now regularly use ruby cups.

Originally, class planning and curriculum development included only academic considerations. After a few months, the teachers decided to incorporate festival celebrations as a way to help mothers bond. Though all share the condition of poverty, the women are from different ethnic groups and castes. It’s not uncommon for one ethnic group to mistrust another. Celebrating various religious festivals together promoted bonding and religious tolerance. Many of the mothers reported that, although they couldn’t travel home to their village for important festivals, sharing with the BPOHD mothers allowed for a safe and supportive environment for religious expression.

It was very important to our US steering group to allow a healthy amount of autonomy for our BPOHD Nepali teachers and support staff. While I was on my yearly visit to Nepal, Palmo, our Nepali project director, announced that she was planning a project-wide get-together at our Bal Kendra location for Saturday morning - the next day. How in the world are you planning to get 25 women from across the city to where we are now, I asked. Palmo said, I’m not sure Ricky-dhai, but don’t worry. On Saturday morning, Palmo sent Kanchan, our financial coordinator and assistant teacher, across town to fetch the 25 women. Kanchan said she wasn’t sure what to do either. Private cabs were just too expensive. On the way to Lalitpur, Kanchan took a local bus. As the driver approached the stop, she asked him how much he’d charge to wait fifteen minutes and then take all the BPOHD mothers back to Nyabazaar, wait two hours and drive them all back to Lalitpur. He said ten dollars, and she said wonderful. An hour later, 24 women hopped off the ramshackle bus, having sung songs the entire way. Kanchan was beaming.

10. Did you change your strategy as a result of obstacles you encountered? How will they be dealt with in the future?

Our overall strategy from the start was to move forward and be willing to adapt to whatever issues presented themselves. This we did successfully. The BPOHD staff in KTM had regular weekly meetings to talk about issues that were present to solve. We had US/Nepal staff meetings via ZOOM video conference every two weeks during the first year, and monthly meetings during the second year. Going forward with the project, I expect we’ll carry on in a similar way.

11. Approximately how many lives have been touched both directly and indirectly by the program?

1000. If you mean just the women participants, their children, husbands, teachers, staff - then perhaps 250. Because of the tie to our Ruby cup initiative for BPOHD mothers and their teenage
daughters, we made one recent post on our Facebook page with a link to a *New York Times* article having to do with the horrors of cultural menstruation practices in Nepal. This post generated a tremendous increase in traffic to our site, reaching over 36,000 people, a strong portion of whom were Nepali men between the ages of 18 and 45. This is a tremendous boost for heightening awareness of the serious problems related to menstruating women in Nepal. Without the BPOHD program, there would have been no Facebook posting.

**12. What are the measurements used to monitor success and how was the information measured?**

The program coordinator and teachers played key roles in monitoring the pilot project’s success. They kept track of activities related to securing mothers’ Nepali citizenship papers, regularly engaging in direct discussions with participants to monitor progress and troubleshoot obstacles. Nearly 100% of participants were able to achieve this measure of success. Financial independence was measured by mothers’ active engagement with financial institutions via the opening of a bank account. Once a mother’s savings account had been established, the program coordinator monitored deposits and withdrawals, and she kept a record of total savings realized by the program overall.

Mothers’ regular class attendance was determined to be a key factor in promoting their academic growth. Teachers kept daily attendance records, and they addressed obstacles when absenteeism negatively affected a mother’s progress. Basic literacy and numeracy skills were measured through formative and summative assessments. Teachers checked in with individual participants daily to monitor their understanding of course material. Mothers engaged with computer-based learning using the Waterford Early Learning (WEL) program. Teachers reviewed and discussed WEL reports regularly to determine individual’s academic progress, and to ascertain which concepts required additional teaching through face-to-face instruction.

Many aspects of the program’s success, such as achieving a greater sense of sisterhood, are difficult to measure by metric analysis. Festival celebrations enabled mothers to demonstrate newly learned literacy and numeracy skills authentically. Teachers and the program coordinator reviewed mothers’ prepared notes for celebrations, and they used video and still photography to evaluate individual’s progress. Mothers at the International Women’s Day celebration laughed as they squeezed glass bracelets onto one another’s arms and stood tall in their school uniforms while performing skits they had prepared. One mother recited a poem she had written in which she shared the many reasons why she is proud to be a woman. The warmth one might have measured in each attendee’s heart could have risen right off any chart.

**13. If the program is ongoing, provide plans and expected results - projected timeframe.**

The program in its current form will continue for 25 mothers at Bal Kendra for an additional two years. A new beginners’ section of 15 women is expected to start on August 1, 2018. We will also provide funding for at least 12 mothers from the pilot project at LMV to continue with vocational training and/or continuing academic education with more advanced skills. A new class for 25 mothers began on May 1, 2018 for 25 women at our Strong Roots preschool, located in the Balku slum. We are expecting this new expansion at Strong Roots and the new section at Bal Kendra to be a four-year
project. A primary goal is for all of the women to reach the equivalent of a fourth-grade education, commonly thought of as a marker in the developing world for having enough educational skill to improve job prospects, not be cheated in common transactions, and allow for increased self-esteem. While the pilot program was offered only to mothers of HIO sponsored girls, new programming has been expanded to include other marginalized women associated with the school communities.

14.) List of all expenses during the DFW grant cycle.
   See Appendix B

15.) Did the DFW grant and relationship with DFW assist our organization in obtaining other funding. Partnerships or public recognition?

   YES. On the basis of being awarded a relatively large grant from DFW, we applied for and received several other significant grants for related projects. A $5K grant was received in 2017 from the FoN organization (Friends of Nepal), a group of former peace corps volunteers who served in Nepal. Funding from their Let Girls Learn initiative was used to construct a new children’s library at our Strong Roots preschool in the Balku slum area. A $3.7K grant from GENDAP (Gendercide Awareness Project) was received for the Strong Roots mothers project as well. A $20K grant from the Berkowitz Family Foundation provided initial funding for the new BPOHD mothers’ class at Strong Roots and helped with food distribution to our HIO families. A fourth grant was from the Rollins/Jose family trust and the Pearson family Foundation for $10K each. These also helped fund the first year of the new BPOHD class. Our 2018/19 target goal to run the BPOHD program for 65 women is $40K. We’ve managed to raise that amount and are now seeking BPOHD funding for 2019/20 and beyond.
### Hands in Outreach - *Be Part of Her Dream*  
**Project Budget**

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Addendum

Faces of the *Be Part of Her Dream* Pilot Project  
2016-2018  
Funded by Dining for Women

Palmo, the *Be Part of Her Dream* project coordinator, makes it a point to regularly connect with each mother who participates in the program. As the pilot project unfolded over two years, she noticed a greater sense of trust developing within the group. While social barriers are not easily broken down, somehow the program inspired the mothers to treat one another more as a family.

One day, Palmo’s field notes included a story about Apsara, a student at LMV who had to be rushed to the hospital because of appendicitis. Apsara’s mother, Kabita, had reached out to her BPOHD friends when Apsara first fainted in their home. Kabita was, understandably, quite frightened. Without BPOHD, she may not have known where to turn for help.

A couple of quick phone calls by HIO staff meant Apsara and Kabita soon had the comfort of friends by their side. LMV’s principal contacted one of his former students, a doctor who provided Apsara’s initial emergency care. Two BPOHD mothers spent the day in the hospital speaking with doctors, dealing with paperwork, and offering emotional support to Kabita, a clear application of skills they had learned in the BPOHD classroom.

Other BPOHD mothers showed up with food, financial support, and a sense of concern. Kabita’s own family members were nowhere in sight. Palmo’s eyes filled to see this worried single mother being helped. The strong social safety net that held Apsara and Kabita that day is one of many intangible measures of the pilot project’s overall success. This outpouring of sisterhood far surpasses any of the project’s initial goals to help poor women lift themselves out of poverty and despair.

Kabita’s daughter, Apsara, underwent emergency medical treatment for appendicitis. Mothers in Kabita’s *Be Part of Her Dream* class were extremely supportive in managing Apsara’s care, showing even more concern than her own family did.
Kabita is pictured at the far right. Palmo, in the center with the bright smile, is the *Be Part of Her Dream* project coordinator. All of the other women are from the LMV mothers’ class. They provided love and support for Kabita as she navigated Aspara’s emergency medical treatment.

Deepa with her 49-year-old mother, Dhan Kumari, who had never held a pencil before the *Be Part of Her Dream* project began. Dhan Kumari can now read street signs and books at a 2nd-grade level.

*A Be Part of Her Dream* gathering of all 48 women from our two locations taking part in a workshop for Nepali women’s rights.
Mena, who now serves on the HIO Nepal Board, with her two HIO sponsored daughters, Ishmita and Ishani. The respect Mena earned for her leadership capacity encouraged the HIO board of directors to invite her to be a trustee.

Kabita saved all of her monthly Be Part of Her Dream stipend, as well as money she earned from her small tea-shop business. She proudly shows her bank passbook deposit records to Palmo, the project coordinator.

Bishnu Maya learns to write with her daughter, Shreejana. Daughters serve as project partners, helping teach their mothers skills they have developed in HIO affiliate schools themselves.
Dhan Kumari and Meera visit Jasmine one afternoon at the corn roasting business she started with funds from her Be Part of Her Dream stipend. In addition to this cash transfer, the project fosters strong social networks among women in the program.

Sital and Hemu use hands-on materials to practice math skills they are learning in class. Hemu is plagued by issues of domestic violence from her abusive husband. The Be Part of Her Dream staff are working hard to mitigate this ongoing problem.

Shardha engages in computer-based learning at the LMV computer lab. During a Be Part of Her Dream health screening, she was diagnosed with stomach cancer. The project funded Shardha’s chemotherapy treatments so she could rejoin the class.
Ragita’s mother, Meenuka, gained self-confidence by participating in Be Part of Her Dream classes. She developed the strength to ask her alcoholic husband to leave the family’s household, and she is now managing well on her own with her two children.

The following stories, which were shared by mothers from Bal Kendra and LMV at the program’s closing celebration, are indicative of the growth they experienced and the impact Be Part of Her Dream had on their lives.

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**My Motherland: Udaypur**

Renuka Moote

I was born in 2043/11/22 in a beautiful place called Naretar situated in Udaypur. I love my motherland a lot. My village is very beautiful all surrounded by greenery all around as well as rivers. I was born in the place where there is greenery all around and I am one of the citizen of Nepal and for that I am very proud. I have a small family. I have two mothers and I am daughter of my first mother. We are three sisters and my mother has no son due to which my father married to second mother. My mother faced a lot of discrimination in the house. So she took all her daughters to my maternal house and brought us up there. I am the second daughter among the sisters.

Being the second daughter, I was married at the age of 15 due to which I could not complete my study despite of keen interest to study. After marriage I gave birth to daughter and in the interval of four years I gave birth to son. Things were good but after some years, my husband started to drink heavily and all the savings were finished. So it became very difficult for me to refund the loan as I had very small children. So I decided to leave my motherland and move to city to earn some money and pay the debt.

Now I am living in Kathmandu city and I have left my drunkard husband. But I am very happy with my children. Although I am residing in Kathmandu, I miss my motherland where I was born and grown up. I sometimes go there and feel like I have come to heaven. But I will never forget my motherland and always love my motherland.

Poem

“We have to search the soil of our motherland
We should never forget the way that we walk”
Fortune for me

Nabina Nepali

It was very long ago, when I was in great grief. At that time, I was so fortunate that I heard about BAL Kendra. I admitted my daughter in this organization since we were suffering from financial crisis. She got many opportunities there to read and write which I could not give her before. From BK, I knew about HIO and also I was chosen as one of the mother to admit my child to HIO sponsorship program which is another fortune for me. From HIO, I got opportunity to join the mothers’ literacy class conducted by it and I got the very precious opportunity to learn with many HIO mothers. So, I think that the time is fortune for me.

The mothers’ literacy class have also helped me a lot to learn many new things which I haven’t learned before. I could read simple Nepali before but now I can read both Nepali and English. In this class, there are both upper class and lower class people but being a lower class I haven’t felt any kind of discrimination from mothers due to which I think this is fortune for me. We respect each other’s festivals and celebrate together. We all live in unity and help each other. Being one of the member of HIO literacy class and sharing and living with the mothers are all fortune to me. The most important thing is being a women, we have to face many difficulties during our period but HIO provided me ruby cup which I can use for 10 years. This has replaced various problems during period and is very easy to use. Hence, this is another fortune for me.

Hence, by living in Kathmandu, if I haven’t met this organization my family would have to live a very miserable life which I couldn’t think of but now my family is happy to admit our child to BK and next year to HIO and due to this I think this is the fortune for me.

The Story Of My Life

Dhan Kumari Sunar

I am Dhan Kumari Sunar. I was born in a small village, Tanahu of Nuwakot district. As we were five sisters along with me, we were never sent to school so that we were deprived of education. Although there was a school nearby of my house and despite of a keen interest to study, I never got an opportunity to go to school. So never learnt how to read and write before I came to this mothers’ literacy class. In the village I had to work in the field as well as in jungle to collect firewood, likewise I also need to help my mother in the kitchen in doing household works. After that, when I was fifteen, I was married to Chun Bahadur Sunar of Dhading. Then I gave to three daughters. My family suffered from financial crisis in Dhading. So we decided to migrate to Kathmandu. As the time passed, I heard about free learning in Bal Kendra and I enrolled my two daughters there. In 2008 A.D., my husband suffered from paralysis and then the economic condition of my house became very critical worse than before. So I would like to thank Bal Kendra that helped our family in such a worse situation and gave us a relief at the situation when the whole responsibility of my house was on my head. At such critical situation also I didn’t lose any hope and tried to move on to rear and care my two daughters. Today, I go to mothers’ literacy class conducted by HIO organization. As I was keen interested to study HIO has given me the chance for me who even don’t know how to hold the pencil. Now I can write my name and read and write some words. I am very much grateful to HIO who provided me this golden opportunity from inner core of my heart.

Thank You