



What is the Earthquake Orphan Scholarship Program?

In April 2015, a devastating series of earthquakes hit Nepal, severely affecting rural communities already struggling with poverty, inequality, and lack of infrastructure. The earthquake also exacerbated Nepal's significant orphan crisis, creating hundreds more vulnerable orphans. In response, Himalayan Children's Charities partnered with three local charities to create the Earthquake Orphan Scholarship Program.

The Earthquake Orphan Scholarship Program provides educational scholarships, family support, and supplemental programs for earthquake-orphaned children who lost one or both parents in the badly affected, rural district of Dhading, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchowk, and Dolakha. Without access to an education, and a caring network of support, these vulnerable children face exponentially increased risks of being trafficked or forced into labor, and almost ensures a future mired in poverty and hardship. This program aims to keep rural communities by providing a way out of poverty for the next generation.

Over the last three years, EOSP has provided life-changing support to **100 children**, helping to keep them in school and safe from child labor, trafficking, and early drop out.

The Earthquake Orphan Scholarship Program in 2017 - Updates from Nepal

2017 was a fantastic year for the EOSP students! Despite incredible odds and continuing hardships, all of the children in the program are growing academically, socially and emotionally.

Staff from HCC and FunKids-Nepal often leave Kathmandu to visit our students in their rural villages to check on the health, well-being, family and home situation, school attendance, and scholastic performance of each child in the program. During these visits, each student received scholarship funds, warm clothes, art and school supplies, and test preparation books for exams. The staff also gave academic counseling, as well as health seminars, where they taught the importance of good



hygiene and distributed hygiene kits and washable feminine hygiene products for girls.



Each student in the EOSP program also received an anti-trafficking comic book, "Chameli Goes to School". Child trafficking has severely increased since the earthquakes, especially in rural districts. This comic helps children and youth recognize potentially dangerous situations, and helps raise overall community awareness of the problem.

Meet some of the EOSP students...



Ram

11-year-old Ram is now in grade three. He lost his mother during the earthquake, and now lives with his father and four siblings in a remote, mountainous area that is a half-day walk from the nearest road. Before the earthquake Ram's father, Dal Bahadur, was working abroad as a day laborer in the Gulf and sending money back to Nepal to support his wife and five children. Dal Bahadur returned to Nepal immediately after the earthquake to care for his

children, but leaving the family's only source of income. He says, "Now I spend all of my time cooking for my children, cleaning, and washing their clothes. I want to be there for my children and give them a good life and education. With the support of DCI, I am now sure that my children will do something great and I will be a proud father."

Kanchan

After the earthquake took her mother's life, 12-year-old Kanchan and her two siblings have been living with their elderly grandfather. The family has been living in a temporary shelter since the earthquake destroyed their house and struggle to make ends meet. With the help of DCI, Kanchan and her siblings have been able to stay in school. Kanchan is now in 9th grade and enjoys reading and studying English. When not in school, she loves to dance and cook for her family. She wants to study accounting, so she can become an accounting teacher and teach in a rural school. Kanchan feels happy and thankful for this support. She shared "This support has helped me to solve family financial issues and helped me continue my studies. I am thankful for this support."



Anjali

7-year-old Anjali is in grade two. Her mother was killed in the earthquake, and her father passed away in 2017. She and her elder sister Pushpa were living in a remote mountain village with their maternal uncle's family, but due to his own circumstances, he is unable to fully care for them. Anjali is from the so-called "untouchable" caste, and thus she and her family experience regular discrimination in their everyday lives.

Anjali enjoys reading storybooks and her favorite subject in school is Nepali. She and her Anjali are now studying at a boarding school nearby to their family where they have a proper shelter, nutritious food, access to medical care and a good education.