



UPHILL BOTH WAYS
EDUCATION AND
RELIEF FOUNDATION

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



Hello from the team at Uphill Both Ways! This year marks a significant milestone for UBW as we celebrate our 15th anniversary! As we turn our gaze to the

year ahead, our team is invigorated with renewed energy after taking time to regroup over the past couple of years. As many of you know, we are a fully volunteer-run charity, and some of our members needed to step back briefly to focus on our growing families and careers. This newsletter is the start of us bringing Uphill Both Ways back to the forefront and keeping everyone informed on projects and things to come.

While many of our board members stepped back, two of our dedicated members continued to push forward. Norbu Lama, our dear friend and leader on the ground in Nepal, continued to collaborate with community leaders and provide essential support funded by direct donations made by trekking clients wanting to contribute. During a trip in 2019, Norbu, alongside two of our board members, were introduced to the work being done by the organization Days for Girls. Since then, Norbu has been actively working with his family and colleagues to eliminate the stigma surrounding women's health in rural areas, by offering menstrual health educational sessions and supplying women with reusable menstrual health kits. His unwavering strength of character and commitment to helping others has created a ripple effect, inspiring further appeals for assistance across various communities.

Fellow board member, Murray Pritchard, has been instrumental in strengthening our partnership with the Rotary Club of Lethbridge. He has been collaborating with them to fund a highly successful health camp that took place in the latter part of 2024. Siddhi Memorial Hospital, in Bhaktapur, has been essential in delivering these health camps, and we continue to foster our relationship with them. Discussions are under way for future collaborative projects so stay tuned for further details on what's to come.

This past year presented numerous challenges for Nepal, with natural disasters wreaking havoc across

the country. However, it has also been another year of progress, bringing Nepal closer to its goal of graduating from the United Nations' list of least developed countries. With graduation set for 2026, this milestone highlights important achievements in health, education, and the economy's resilience to natural shocks, including disasters and agricultural instability. While many challenges remain, Nepal continues to make significant strides towards providing a stronger future for the next generation.

On behalf of our UBW family, thank you for your ongoing belief and trust in our mission. Reflecting on the projects and communities we have supported fills us with immense gratitude for all who have contributed to our journey. Our achievements would not be possible without the unwavering dedication and care of our volunteers, friends in Nepal, donors, and partners who work tirelessly year after year to create positive changes that uplift countless peoples' lives. Together we can continue to make a lasting difference in Nepal.

Nina Pritchard
Board Member



Health Camp Highlights

December 5 -7, 2024

- Over **1,800** men, women, and children treated during the camp
- **19** Team members
- Up to **3** hours was travelled by many to reach the camp
- **165** patients referred for further treatment

INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

EARLY INTERVENTION

In December 2024, Uphill Both Ways, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Lethbridge, Siddhi Memorial Hospital, Peak Endeavour Nepal Trek and local health post staff, organized a three-day health camp in the remote Ramechhap district. Our mission was to provide residents with access to essential primary medical and dental care without the need to travel to larger

healthcare facilities, which is often not feasible for many individuals. By improving access to primary care, we aim to effectively treat illnesses, identify and prevent health issues, and ultimately reduce the risk of severe health outcomes. This initiative not only addresses immediate healthcare needs but also fosters long-term health benefits for the community, ensuring that residents receive the care they deserve.





Improving Access to Health Care

The three-day health camp proved to be an overwhelming success, offering essential health services to more than 1,800 patients. Our team observed that over 3,000 villagers attended the event, with many coming to assist friends and family to reach the camp, while others were curious to learn more about the activities taking place. This remarkable turnout highlights the community's eagerness to engage with health initiatives and underlines the importance of promoting accessibility.

Initial consultations with the local health post and stakeholders highlighted the need for a primary focus of several key medical specialties: pediatrics, gynecology, obstetrics, orthopedics, and dental care. In response to this need, Siddhi Memorial Hospital assembled a dedicated team of six specialist doctors: a pediatrician, two obstetrician/gynecologists, an orthopedic surgeon, an internal medicine specialist, and a dentist. Additionally, the team was joined by a pharmacist, a lab technician, three nurses, a nurse's assistant, two dental assistant students (which included Norbu's daughter, Preity) and an outreach team leader.

Patients journeyed from various corners of the region to attend the health camp, with some individuals walking over three hours to reach the venue. The dedicated medical team worked diligently from dawn until dusk, managing to treat nearly 650 patients a day. All patients received complimentary medical care and medications, and those who travelled longer distances were also provided with a meal.

The health care team departed the camp in high spirits, with many expressing eagerness for the next project. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, as they acknowledged that the multi-day format significantly enhanced their ability to treat patients when compared to the single-day camps they had participated in previously. The collaborative efforts of various organizations and the dedication of the healthcare team made this initiative an overwhelming success, paving the way for future projects aimed at improving health outcomes in underserved areas.





Menstrual Health Training Highlights

March 5, 2025

- **594** The average number of menstrual products removed from the environment yearly per female
- **\$17CAD** The cost of providing one female with everything they need to have a safe and healthy menstrual cycle
- **3 Years** Average lifetime of reusable pads

It is what is referred to as period poverty. Period poverty, like other forms of poverty, can be debilitating and have serious consequences.

CHANGING THE STIGMA BEHIND WOMEN'S HEALTH

What is Period Poverty?

Menstruation is a natural and healthy process that billions of females around the world go through, yet millions of women and girls cannot afford menstrual products or access to safe water and sanitation to manage their monthly period. This interrupts their lives, and can affect their rights in many countries, which can negatively affect their physical and mental health.





Nepal's Period Taboo

In Nepal, menstrual health is a health issue with physical, psychological, and social dimensions, that is affected by cultural and religious taboos. Some believe that menstruating women are impure and must be excluded from participating in typical daily and community activities including exclusion from schools, work, and their own homes. This contributes to practices that sustain inadequate menstrual hygiene such as a lack of access to information regarding menstruation, safe water, private sanitary toilets, and menstrual products. These barriers that women and girls face contribute to gender inequality and reduce their ability to reach their full potential.

Making a Sustainable Difference

In 2021, UBW representatives Norbu Lama, Preeti Lama, Kopila Lama, and Papila Tamang took part in the ¹*Days for Girls (DfG)*¹ - *Ambassadors for Women's Health*, training course. This course qualifies them to deliver educational sessions that accompany the distribution of DfG's patented reusable sanitary pads. The curriculum has been developed to help promote menstrual health management while also working to break the cycles of shame many women and girls are made to feel about their bodies. It has also been developed to educate men and boys on the topic and to help equip them with the knowledge to become crucial partners in shattering the stigma and limitations associated with menstruation.

In 2025, UBW will be working with schools in remote regions not reached by Days for Girls. We will be providing educational sessions to both girls and boys while also providing menstrual health kits to students and teachers of menstruating age.

For less than \$20 Canadian, menstrual health kits will contain:

- 2x Waterproof shields
- 8x Absorbent liners (4x reg, 4x heavy)
- Antibacterial hand soap
- 2x Under garments

- Water-proof bag to hold used items.
- Calendar to track cycle.
- Towel for cleaning
- Directions for use
- Discretionary bag to carry all items.



Our goal is to provide women and girls with the knowledge and resources to be able to have safe and healthy menstrual years. We also hope to educate men and boys on what menstruation is and how to be supportive fathers, brothers, husbands, and teachers. This project will also alleviate the financial burden on families while significantly reducing the environmental waste associated with single-use menstrual products. In Nepal, many villages are remote and lack adequate waste management infrastructure, leading to growing environmental concerns. The introduction of reusable sanitary pads, which have an average lifespan of three years, can potentially eliminate nearly 600 menstrual products per female each year.



¹ Days for Girls is a global non-profit working to eliminate the stigma and limitations associated with menstruation through education, products, social enterprises, and advocacy.

LOOKING AHEAD

Since the launch of Norbu Lama's initial distribution project for reusable sanitary pads, the initiative has garnered substantial positive feedback. This success has prompted requests for support from additional schools, like Shree Surke Deurali Secondary School in the Ramechhap district, highlighting the project's impact and communities desire to break the cultural and religious taboo's well also addressing sustainable menstrual health solutions.

Our team at UBW hopes that through your support we can continue to empower more women and girls and contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable future for Nepal. For as little as \$20 you can provide a young woman the means to have a safe and healthy period for up to three years.





THANK YOU!

We are excited to introduce this newsletter as part of our renewed commitment to keep you informed with annual updates on our activities and upcoming projects. Uphill Both Ways is steadfast in our mission of helping empower children, families, and their communities to reach their full potential. We invite you to consider making a donation, as every dollar counts, no matter how small, and directly supports our initiatives. Your generosity plays a vital role in our efforts to

create a positive impact to the people of Nepal. You can also support UBW by spreading awareness about our work. Consider using your networks, social media platforms, and social connections to share our mission. Together, we can create a ripple effect of kindness and generosity that reaches those in need. Thank you for being an integral part of our community; we look forward to continuing this journey together!

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