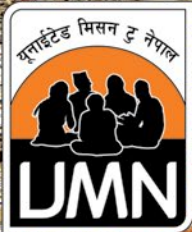


UMN News

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Fullness of life for all, in a transformed Nepali society

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Dear friends

As we work on our 2020-25 Strategy over the coming year, we will be reflecting again on UMN's Fullness of Life model-our understanding of poverty's opposite, of the shalom and abundance to which God invites us. Two key aspects of fullness of life are peace and justice. We need to keep these goals in mind as we grapple with the conflict and inequity that so often keep people trapped in poverty.

While peace and justice should be pursued hand-in-hand, the Bible also attests to the danger of letting our pursuit of "peace" become merely the pursuit of stability, where conflicts and injustices are ignored or suppressed rather than named and worked out in genuine reconciliation. The prophets warn us not to be like leaders who 'dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. "Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace.' (Jeremiah 6:14)

Nepal continues to bear the scars of civil war, of nation-building by suppressing minorities, and of a long history of laws and policies designed to privilege some groups and exclude others. As the Nepali people work toward a more just future, there is an urgent need for reconciliation-a need not to ignore past injustices, but to face them and work through them in pursuit of an authentic, lasting peace.

Please pray for the UMN staff who continue to work in these areas, some of whose stories are shared in this issue. And give thanks for all the areas where the work of UMN and our partners has already helped the poor to claim their rights and brought about reconciliation between former enemies.


JOEL HAFVENSTEIN
Executive Director

Produced by: the Communications Team, UMN
Editorial Team: Vijeta Shrestha, Hailey Brenden and Nistha Rayamajhi
Design: Ramesh Man Maharjan
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RESISTING

the so-called

"Karma"

In December 2007, I set out with my Sony VX2000 video camera to Rukum, mid-west Nepal. The reel tapes era, of course. So, I was armed with a good supply of extra tapes – no memory cards for back-up those days. At times my heart was racing, I was going to meet a group of widows in Rukum.

Young war widows, some with toddlers or babies in their arms. I braced myself to hear their stories. The harsh realities of widowhood brought about by a very cruel so-called people's war. It was a learning experience for me, a city girl, that widows were a source of bad luck. Their face, persona, shadow and everything is wrapped up in a curse-sending vibe. Restrictions are imposed on them by the community and family heads (example, not to show their face early morning, not to cross the path of people, not to be near a wedding ceremony). Complex societal rules, rituals and expectations make us think which is a greater curse – to lose your life partner or the rules and restrictions that instantly convert into a low form of human existence. How extremely strong are these women, I thought, as I struggled to get a grip of my emotions.



In this gathering for UMN's trauma healing session, the widows shared their stories. At first reluctantly, suspiciously. But then they opened up their hearts, full of sorrow about their "karma". For the first time, their emotions and internal wounds were paid attention to by someone. For the first time they discovered that their sorrows and suppressed feelings were worth listening to and worth some sympathy by a listener.

All humans have a God-given right to life. Issues of injustice are a biblical issue because they are in direct conflict with human dignity given to all mankind by the creator God. UMN is not only sensitive, but actively involved in addressing these issues. To reach out to the poorest, to the weakest, to those suffering the pain of rejection and injustice. We sit and hear, we tell them they are loved and that they have hope in life.

VIJETA SHRESTHA
Communications Manager





13 YEARS OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

Bal Kumari Gurung, UMN's Peacebuilding Team Leader, looks back and shares some of the major accomplishments in peace and reconciliation work.

UMN ventured into the peacebuilding area in 2005 and has come a long way in its journey towards promoting equality and inclusion, healing broken relationships, breaking the barriers of structural conflicts and helping to establish newly developed social infrastructures through varied projects. After the nation's civil war (1996-2006) and with the peace agreement, it was imperative to focus UMN's work on delivering justice, peace and reconciliation to the most conflict-affected and impoverished groups and communities.



Joe and Janet Campbell from Northern Ireland joined UMN in 2007. Joe's leadership in building and training the team was significant in moving the work forward in peacebuilding.

Building a team: A strategic plan on peace and conflict transformation was developed but there wasn't a team or capacity to do this. So, the next step was creating a team who had the appropriate skills through internal training on conflict transformation and community peacebuilding. This was a very important achievement. Joe Campbell from Northern Ireland devoted several years to UMN to accomplish this well.

The next phase began with involvement in conflict sensitive programming. All staff were trained on the basic operating guidelines and Do No Harm approach to work in chaotic and conflict-affected underserved communities. Continuous risk assessments were conducted and a communication system was well established.



UMN's Peacebuilding Team, 2010.

Mediation Centres: A local-level dispute resolution mechanism was introduced under which mediation centres were set up by connecting them with the government structure. It was successful in solving small level disputes at the community level. In Sunsari and Dhading clusters, mediation centres were even able to solve some cases which the court itself was not able to. The Dhading mediation centre is functioning even after the phase-out of the project in 2015. The highway mediators in Dhading District were very active in mediating road blockades during accidents with compensation to the victim's family.

Tackling Structural Conflict: The peace and reconciliation work also transformed some of the structural conflicts prevalent in the communities. Firstly, the war widows were helped to build their self-esteem and heal from the traumas of war and discrimination against them. They were also provided with livelihood skills to help them become independent. Through that, they were empowered and able to take up leadership roles within their families and the communities. Widows are often stigmatised and denied their rights, so the project helped change the perception of the society towards them. Another discriminatory practice was towards the Dalits, the so-called "untouchable caste". Through the project, the Dalits were enabled as peace-builders by having them work together with non-Dalits in the same team and networks of our projects. The Koshi flood survivors were healed from their wounds of lost property, land and family members. Even after the project phased out, they continue to practice the circle process tool to address and deal with difficult matters in the community.



A group of widows in Rukum.

Peace Education in Schools: UMN also introduced peace education after the post-war situation and developed a peace education curriculum for Grade 6 in one of the schools in Doti. Peace education discussion materials were also published for semi-literate community groups to use as a discussion tool in their communities.



Book release of Peace Education text book by Mark Galpin.

Empowering Nepali Christian Leaders: Another aspect was empowering the Nepali Christian leaders on forgiveness and reconciliation ministry along with handling conflict in the church and community. We ran this training with numerous groups of Christian leaders which we believe has aided in forming strong networks and unity among church leaders.



National level Forgiveness and Reconciliation workshop in Kathmandu.



UMN General Assembly 2013. Marcus Walton with Balkumari Gurung at the peacebuilding stall.

Cross-border Security: UMN worked on enhancing community social security by focusing on India and Nepal cross-border issues and crimes. This has resulted in minimised crime rates and successful dialogues between the Indian and Nepali police forces as well as communities.



Bal Kumari Gurung and Ruth Clewett, together with Chandra Mukhi Club members stand at the pillar which marks the border between India and Nepal.

Interfaith Peace Work: Interfaith peacebuilding was a new concept introduced to faith leaders in bringing social harmony among five faith groups in Morang, Kapilbastu and also between Christians and Buddhists in North Dhading. The Christian partner working for reconciliation between the Pahadi and Madhesi communities after the riot in Kapilbastu was an example of reducing the dividing gaps between different faith and ethnic communities. The interfaith concept is replicated in the existing two projects in Kapilbastu. Now an interfaith peace federation has formed at the national and federal levels.



National Contribution: UMN also had its share in contributing to the national peacebuilding process. It declared schools as peace zones in collaboration with Children as Zones of Peace Coalition. UMN was an active member in the AIN Peace Working Group, where a lot of peace vigils, demonstrations and events were celebrated together with the Peace Ministry and government officials. The members played a crucial part in building and sustaining peace by tackling issues that emerged in the Nepal Peace Process. UMN supported the establishment of the Local Peace Committees under the Peace Ministry formed after the Peace Agreement.

Peacebuilding is a goal as well as a process. These achievements were possible because of UMN leadership support, committed staff and partners and, most of, all because of the felt needs addressed by the community themselves. Of course, there were a lot of challenges, especially relapses on the way, but with everyone's effort the burden is lighter.

Call for Justice

It began with home visits by a group of volunteers to ensure children are better protected in families. In partnership with the Kapilbastu Institution Development Committee (KIDC), UMN formed a child protection committee to look closely into issues of child marriage, child abuse, child labour and other forms of child violence that take place in societies.

One of the homes they visited was of Budhi Prasad Kalwar in Kapilbastu, whose three sons are wage labourers in India. The group was shocked to find out that the youngest son, Sunil, was also not spared. At the age of 12, Sunil was cleaning and washing dishes in a restaurant in India. The NRP 2000 (USD 20) that he earned monthly and sent back home helped his poor family to make ends meet. After several visits and counselling, the father finally agreed to go and bring his son back home.

Sunil shares: "When I saw my dad come to get me and he said I am going back home and will start school, I cried. I always wanted to go to school and be home with my family. I used to watch the children in India march to school with uniforms and I never thought I would one day go to school wearing a uniform." He later shared with KIDC how hard his life in India was, and that he never got enough to eat.

Something Sunil never dreamed was happening. Not only was he with his parents, but he was actually going to formal school. He is a happy 12-year-old studying in Grade 1 in Basudev Janata Secondary School. Sunil's father is happy with this decision and is determined to see him finish school. The Child Protection Committee is also working on a scholarship for Sunil.





restoring PEACE

The Himalayan Community Salvation Society (HIMS) is a local NGO in Dhading District. Previously it worked as an informal civil society serving the community in North Dhading in various social issues at the local level. Silas Tamang, the Executive Director of HIMS, is passionate about serving and creating opportunities for his people, the indigenous Tamang group in North Dhading.

About a decade ago there was conflict between the Christian and the Buddhist communities in North Dhading. The monks were reluctant to join the community programmes organised by HIMS as it was led by a Christian. The Christians had negative thoughts and held grudges against the Buddhists. There was growing tension between the authorities of these groups too. However, they found that the main underlying cause of the conflict was power play politics, rather than religious intolerance. The tension escalated. Religious identity triggered quarrels in the village. In one incident, a dispute ended up in a physical fight where a pregnant lady was manhandled.

Because of such conflict, UMN's partner HIMS stood up as one of the main contributors in bringing peace and reconciliation in this situation. As Silas had received training on forgiveness and reconciliation and the Do No Harm approach from UMN, he took up the necessary steps to stop the advance of religious conflicts in North Dhading. After careful steps and discussions to settle misunderstandings and change perceptions of the people, the two parties began to communicate, negotiate and make peace. Later Silas also helped to mediate in inter-religious conflict within the churches of Dhading.

Today he proudly shares that the churches in Dhading are recognised as formal institutions and that they receive a yearly budget from the local municipality for their good work.

Silas says, "The biggest achievement is probably the positive changes in people's minds about each other and how they appreciate differences in their religions and practices."



When a 14-year-old girl was raped, a local women's group supported by UMN decided to fight for justice.

A group of women banded together to pursue justice in Rupandehi District. They live in a community where physical and sexual abuse of girls is high. A community that needs change.

Many people from the poor and marginalised Dalit community live in this area. Their livelihoods depend on farming on rented land, daily wage labour and going to India as a migrant worker. People generally don't approach the local police and government agencies for help, as they don't believe they will listen.

But things are changing. Recently 23 women from the Sakchhyam Women's Group took a stand. The group formed under UMN's Anti Human Trafficking (AHT) Project and they work actively against human trafficking, abuse and violence.

One day group member Bina B.K.* shared a story about her 14-year-old daughter. "She was raped by a 25-year-old man," Bina said. "I didn't report it anywhere as I knew that no one would listen. My daughter needs justice and the offender should be punished."

The group decided to take action. They reported the case to local police, but were discouraged at first as they didn't help. With the support of a local partner, they reported the case to the district police, a higher-level authority and district court. Eventually the district police was successful in catching the rapist and sending him to prison. The group also helped send Bina's daughter to Maiti Nepal, a NGO where women who are trafficked and victims of violence are cared for and empowered.

The women's group shared, "We are delighted that with the support of UMN and its local partner SCDC-R, we have been successful to send the rapist to prison and support the victim."

* Name changed

YOUTH HELP ELDERLY WOMAN FIND Joy

75-year-old Phul Maya from Morang District has had a difficult life. But, thanks to youth in a UMN-supported Interfaith Peace Youth Group (IPYG), she has reasons to smile today. Raj Kumari Tamang, a member of the group, shares how Phul Maya's life was transformed.

Phul Maya's life has been full of challenge. She has two daughters, but one struggled with an intellectual disability and one disappeared many years ago. As the breadwinner of her family, Phul Maya worked hard selling firewood to provide for her family, but it wasn't enough to provide good living conditions. They lived in an open house where they could see the sky through the shed roof. This meant little protection and difficult circumstances when it rained. In addition, she and her family were deprived of government services because she didn't have citizenship.

My experience as a member of the IPYG inspired me to get Phul Maya the government services she

deserves. UMN and its partner Community Development Forum (CDF) have been implementing the IPYG programme since 2016. The training I received sparked my passion to work for poor and marginalised groups in society. To help people like Phul Maya.

I visited her home with some journalists and they published her story. This led to local and international support. The local authorities visited her home to provide Nepalese citizenship and senior citizenship allowance. Her daughter received disability allowance too. We were able to collect and establish a saving fund of NPR 100,000 (EUR 783). The youth group also helped with maintenance on the roof and provided basic necessities like clothes, bedding and rice.

I felt an inner peace seeing this change in her life. Phul Maya was very thankful and said, "I never expected experiences with such happiness in my life."

RAJ KUMARI TAMANG,
Member from Buddhist religion
Interfaith Peace Youth Group





UMN Change PROCESS

We are grateful for your continuous prayer and support as we go through the Change Process and we are happy to share an update:

- ➔ Various small teams have been working to define/clarify what the "Bottom-up/Participatory Approach" means to us, how we practice it and what it looks like.
- ➔ Various single cluster-focused projects have been developed and implemented through local partners and some are in progress, so that projects are better adapted to local needs and priorities. As a result, cluster officers are gradually replaced by cluster-based project managers.
- ➔ We have rolled out the accountability and feedback mechanism in four of our clusters to hold ourselves accountable to the people we serve. There are two more clusters to go.
- ➔ We are very grateful that the recruitment of seven competent cluster team leaders for the expanded and empowered role has been done successfully. This has been a very challenging task to accomplish.
- ➔ Technical teams have identified UMN areas of excellence within each sector and are now working to come up with a plan for how they will do more of their work in the areas of excellence.
- ➔ Redesigning of the Annual Performance Review was done to focus more on the impact. A leadership course called "Ignite" has been in progress to enable team leaders/line managers within the organisation.
- ➔ Restructuring of the organisational structure was done to express the goal of the Change Process, i.e. Poorest of the Poor communities served by UMN more effectively to bring about community transformation.

HAPPY FEET

We are delighted and encouraged with the response we have received so far for UMN's HAPPY FEET Appeal, in which we are raising funds to treat children with clubfoot in Nepal. Sophisticated medical services are not available in all parts of the country. Many people from far-flung regions have to travel to the capital for operations, treatment, rehabilitation and therapy. We reach out to the poorest people located in remote and challenging regions.

Read Sheetal's story – she has received clubfoot treatment from UMN. Life wasn't very easy for her. First she is a girl, which means she is treated as second class in many Nepali families. She also belongs to a Dalit community (so-called "lower caste") and she was born with a disability, which is seen as a curse from the Gods.

Through your help we want to give hope, freedom and dignity to as many Nepali children as possible.

Sheetal's story

18-year-old Sheetal was born with clubfoot on her left leg. Her parents could not afford the treatment costs, but of course they loved her and gave her all of their support. Her mum says that the most important thing she did for Sheetal was to send her to school, no matter what. Sheetal went to school with a limp and with time it became severe. It wasn't easy at school for her to look and walk differently, but she stayed strong.

When Sheetal was 13, she was identified and supported by UMN through one of its partners, Nepal Disabled Protection Forum in Rukum District. This changed her life forever. After a series of casts, correction boots and surgeries to straighten her foot, Sheetal recovered well and now has a normal active life.

Currently studying in Grade 11, she would like to get involved in disability work later in life.

Children like Sheetal are a testimony in their society to challenge the traditional belief that children born with disabilities are a curse in a family. UMN shows love and care to people whom everyone else disregards and sees as powerless and least important.

Here is the link to Sheetal's video.

<http://bit.ly/sheetal-video>



Getting support and treatment for children with disabilities as early as possible is important. Please join us in transforming lives by supporting UMN's HAPPY FEET Appeal.

We have the funds to treat about 60 children, but the need is so great.

Can you help us treat more children with clubfoot?

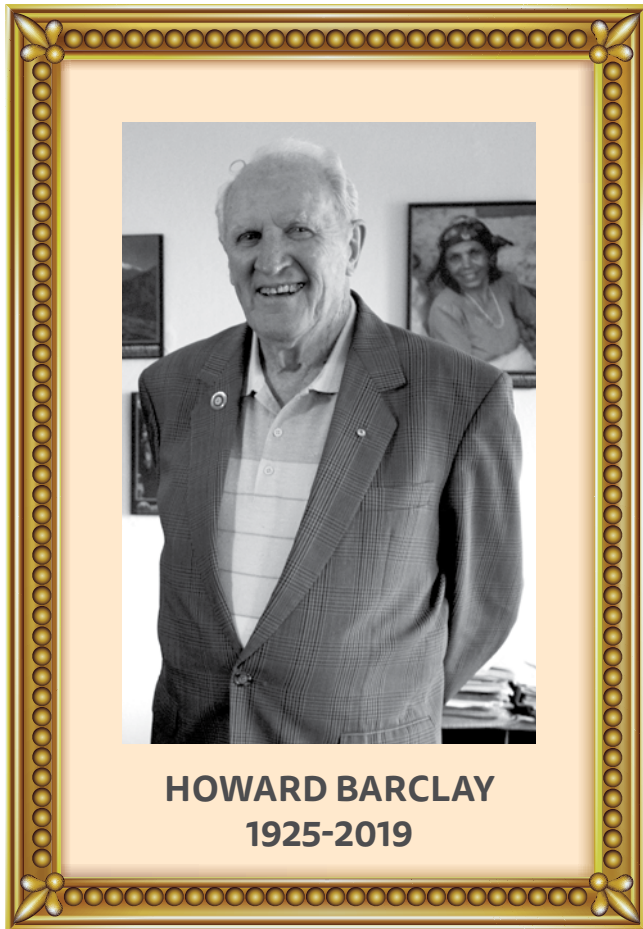
- ➔ Fit a child with a pair of clubfoot boots at **\$10 (£7)**.
- ➔ Fund the travel expenses which cost roughly **\$100 (£70)**.
- ➔ Help pay for an operation. Surgeries start at **\$600 (£400)**.



HOW TO GIVE A ONE-OFF DONATION

- ➔ Make out a cheque or money order payable to United Mission to Nepal. Make a note indicating how you would like your donation to be used (i.e. HAPPY FEET Appeal). Post it! (to: UMN, PO Box 126, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal)
- ➔ Use your credit or debit card and give via PayPal.
 - ➔ Go to www.umn.org.np/page/give-paypal and follow the instructions and you will be redirected to the PayPal page.
 - ➔ Use your PayPal information to donate from your PayPal account.
- OR
- ➔ Don't have a PayPal account? Follow the instructions above and click on [Don't have a PayPal account?](#) to make a payment using your debit/credit card.

Gone to Glory



We are sad to inform you of the passing of Howard Barclay on 10 February, 2019. He was suffering from cancer and numerous health issues and was receiving 24/7 nursing care and support from his family and friends.

Howard's condition was deteriorating in the last few months as the cancer had spread to other organs. His son, John Barclay, told us in December that Howard knew about the situation and said he was looking forward to going "home" and seeing Betty. He was 93.

Howard was the 6th Executive Director of UMN. He joined UMN with his wife Betty in 1960, serving in Amp Pipal as a teacher and Project Director until the early 70s. During this time, he also served as the Education Secretary at the Headquarters in Kathmandu,



Betty and Howard Barclay.



Howard Barclay's key role in the founding of Gandaki Boarding School is recognised in this presentation during their 50th anniversary celebration..

and was Acting Executive Director during Jonathan Lindell's furlough in 1966. He and Betty returned to UMN in 1980 as Personnel Counselors. Howard later worked in Jumla as the Project Director from July 1982 until March 1983. In 1984, he returned to Kathmandu as the Executive Director of UMN until his retirement in May 1990.

Joel Hafvenstein, UMN's current Executive Director shares: "I grew up in UMN during the years of Howard's leadership and I am personally grateful for his kindness and generosity of spirit. He led UMN boldly and faithfully through a season of many challenges. We praise God for the gift of Howard's presence and pray for all those who are now feeling his absence."



Howard's 90th birthday tea and cake at the UMN garden in 2015.



PRAY

- ➔ We thank God for our hospitals in Tansen and Okhaldhunga (United Mission Hospital Tansen and Okhaldhunga Community Hospital) that are serving and responding to the needs of many poor people in the district. 2018 has been the busiest year for Tansen Hospital with over 100,000 outpatients and the highest number of deliveries. Read the latest news of Okhaldhunga Hospital on pg 15.
- ➔ Please remember in your prayers the cross-border security project in Sunsari through our partner Chandra Mukhi Club. They have been working with Local Peace Committees to improve cross-border security. Read more on pg 6.
- ➔ Pray for the seven newly recruited Cluster Team Leaders who will start their new role from the first week of March, 2019. Pray for God's wisdom and direction as they begin work with a new approach. Also pray for the ongoing strategy plan process of all the clusters – for strong guidance, knowledge and good decision-making. A group of staff are traveling to all UMN cluster locations for this task. Please pray for safety as they travel to remote places.
- ➔ Child labour is still a glaring concern in Nepal. Pray for the community groups like the mother's groups and child clubs in our project areas that discuss these issues and run awareness activities to help understand what child labour is and what roles the community members can play to stop this. Read a success story on pg 7.



JOIN US

UMN's cross-cultural teams provide opportunities for suitably skilled expatriates to work with Nepali colleagues, sharing technical skills and demonstrating God's loving concern for all people, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable.

Expatriate team members do not receive a salary or remuneration from UMN directly, but are self-supported volunteers, or supported by a sending mission or church in their home country. If you are interested in any of these positions or if you would like to ask about other opportunities for service in UMN, please contact Becky Thorson at expat.recruitment@umn.org.np to learn more. Send your CV or resumé with your email.

PRIORITY NEEDS

DOCTORS OF ALL KINDS – Tansen and Okhaldhunga.

For **United Mission Hospital Tansen**: General Practitioners, OB/GYN, Surgeons, Paediatricians, Internal Medicine, ENT and Urology.

For **Okhaldhunga Community Hospital**: GP with Public Health experience. Flexibility, the ability to work in a resource-limited setting and an interest in teaching and mentoring junior Nepali doctors are required for all doctors. Long-term applicants preferred. For OB/GYN & Surgeons, short-term or long-term.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT ADVISOR - KATHMANDU BASED – to support the preparedness of UMN staff and partners for disasters; advise on organisational systems and structures for disaster preparedness and response; support the effective implementation of disaster response, especially after a large-scale disaster.

GRANT MANAGEMENT ADVISORS - CLUSTER BASED – to play a key role in advising, providing hands-on technical support to, and building capacity of one or more Cluster Teams in developing high-quality competitive project grants/ proposals in line with UMN's strategy.



WE ARE THANKFUL, ROOM TO READ!

The children of Shree Chandi Basic School in Nuwakot now have lots of story books to read and enjoy. Room to Read has used Christine Stone's memorial donation to set up a library corner in this school in her memory which was inaugurated on 19 December, 2018. At the event, Joel Hafvenstein, Executive Director of UMN, who also inaugurated the library, shared about

Christine's background and contribution in Nepal and what she meant to him as his teacher some decades ago. A special part of the programme was also to have Joel and Ujjwal Pokhrel, Country Director of Room to Read, sit with the children and hear them read out the stories. Christine's "Tommy Tempo" series continues to amuse the children of Nepal.



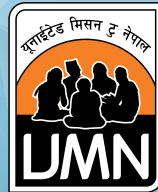
FUTURE NURSES IN THE MAKING

It's a moment of celebration for UMN's Okhaldunga Community Hospital (OCH) as it has finally received approval to start a nursing school. Since it is the first one in the region, it comes as a great opportunity for the locals who are anticipating a career in nursing. An agreement was signed between OCH and the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) to officially begin the course. After getting the accreditation from the Nepal Nursing Council, some people from the nursing council have also visited the hospital as a part of the training site approval from the council. As of now, 20 eligible students will be provided with places for the course.



SPEAK UP FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT
SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES;
ENSURE JUSTICE FOR THE
DESTITUTE.
SPEAK UP FOR THE POOR AND
HELPLESS,
AND SEE THAT **JUSTICE.**
THEY GET

Proverbs 31:8-9



Fullness of life for all, in a transformed Nepali society

UNITED MISSION to NEPAL

PO Box 126, Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone: +977 1 4228118, 4268900

Fax: +977 1 4225559

communications@umn.org.np

www.umn.org.np