

January - June 2021

Foundation Care for All (FCFA) has been a close partner of Samaanta Foundation, providing us regular financial support as well as guidance since our inception in 2012.

FCFA has also helped mobilize funds from Rotary Oostburg to provide a full scholarship to Dipesh Bhujel, Legal Together Foundation to provide a full scholarship to Sharmila Tamang to pursue a bachelor's degree in Nepal for a period of four years and the ongoing program support by Hanneke Verduyn's Kin San Tai Chi Academy.

This report provides an update about Samaanta Foundation's activities covering the period from January to June 2021 and additional updates on Dipesh and Sharmila.

1. COVID-19 update

Nepal has been under a second lockdown amidst a second wave of COVID-19 since April 2021. Although a few members of the Samaanta family caught COVID-19, thankfully no one has had serious symptoms. We continue to remain cautious, and hope for the safety and wellbeing of everyone around us.

While a few fellows chose to go home, 21 fellows are staying in hostels in Kathmandu because they do not have access to internet facilities back home in their villages. Fellows are taking regular classes online, though this has not been easy because our fellows do not always have good internet connection and many fellows do not have laptops or smartphones. During the first lockdown in April 2020, we had to send all the fellows home and it was challenging for them to attend their online classes, therefore this time some of them decided to stay back and study from the hostel.

Even during the lockdown, the fellows are keeping busy helping each other prepare for their exams and even trying to learn new skills every day. 9th cohort fellows are taking computer lessons from their seniors. Further, they organize quiz competitions, speech competitions, recite poems and watch documentaries to keep themselves engaged.

We are also pleased to report that many of our fellows have teamed up with their hostel to prepare, package, and provide meals to needy community members who have lost their livelihoods during the pandemic. They take their commitment to our values of service, leadership, and paying it forward very seriously, especially during these difficult times when so many are suffering.



Fellows helping pack meals at the boys' hostel

We would have expected to complete our selection of a new cohort of fellows by the end of June, but the selection has been delayed due to the lockdown. The 10th grade (SEE) exams were delayed. We expect the Examination Board to publish the SEE results by the end of July. We have gathered nominations of candidates and have begun administering written exams and interviews. We hope to make significant progress by the time the SEE results are published.

2. General update

Samaanta has supported a total of 63 fellows over the last nine years. We currently have 35 active fellows (13 male and 22 female), including four fellows abroad who have secured scholarships to pursue higher education abroad in Norway and the US. In addition, we have five fellows on partial support in Nepal.

	High School	Undergraduate
Current fellows (in Nepal)	18	17 (+ 5 partial support)
Colleges	VS Niketan College Pentagon College Mega College	Thames College St. Xavier's College King's College Nobel College Patan Campus
Courses	Science Management	Computer Science, Information Management, Healthcare Management, Dental Surgery, Social Work, Accounting, Business Administration

9th cohort: We were able to finally welcome the [9th cohort fellows](#) in person in January 2021. The 9th cohort consists of 11 fellows from Lalitpur, Sindhupalchowk, Kavre, Lamjung, Dang, Dhanusha, and Humla districts.



9th Cohort at Samaanta office

We are pleased to introduce **Grace Wright**, our intern, who has been facilitating English language sessions for our 9th cohort fellows, helping with fundraising strategies, and supporting us with other projects.



Grace facilitating an English class online

3. Academic Performances

Samaanta fellows have consistently performed well academically. Below are the most recent grades of some of our fellows:

Fellow	GPA	Fellow	GPA
Suraj Parajuli (4 th cohort-BHCM)	3.8	Ankit Giri (8 th cohort-Management, 12 th grade)	3.68
Pemacheoden Lama (4 th cohort-BBA)	4	Rachita Shrestha (8 th cohort-Science, 12 th grade)	3.6
Sharmila Tamang (4 th cohort-BBA)	4	Prerana Tamang (8 th Cohort- Management, 12 th grade)	3.47
Archana Giri (5 th cohort-BBA)	3.8	Dawalamo Tamang (8 th cohort- Management, 12 th grade)	3.97
Kumar BK (5 th cohort-BIM)	3.2	Sunita Nepali (9 th cohort-Humanities, 11 th grade)	3.27
Hishila Danuwar (7 th cohort-Science)	3.33	Jaykumar Sahani (9 th -Management, 11 th grade)	3.13
Rajan Shrestha (7 th cohort-Science)	3.36		



Rajan Shrestha

Hishila Danuwar

- 7th Cohort College Placements for Bachelor's:** Two 12th grade graduates from the 7th cohort have been selected to continue the fellowship to pursue their Bachelor's degrees. Rajan Shrestha has been enrolled to study Bachelor's in Computer Application at Thames College, Kathmandu and Hishila Danuwar is currently preparing for the entrance exam to study Pharmacy. Rajan and Hishila both completed their +2 in Science for Pentagon International College. In addition, Pramila has received partial support to study BIM at Thames College.

- Prajit Giri** (6th cohort) has received a full scholarship to pursue Bachelor's in Business Administration at BRAC University in Dhaka. He is our first fellow to receive this scholarship, and we are very excited about what the future holds for him as he extends his education journey internationally.
- Sunita Nepali** (9th cohort) has been selected to pursue International Baccalaureate Diploma degree in UWC Red Cross Nordic in Norway on a full scholarship. She will be starting in fall 2021, where she will join Asmita Mandal, our 7th cohort fellow.
- Susmita Giri** (6th cohort) has finished her IB diploma from UWC Mostar and **received scholarship offers from five colleges** in the US for her undergraduate degree. She chose Luther College for her degree, and although she had to defer for a year because of the pandemic, she is currently in the process of securing her US visa so she can begin in August 2021.
- Biwastha Khadka** (3rd cohort) has graduated with a Bachelor's degree from Luther College, USA. She will be moving soon to Minneapolis where she will be working as a community resource coordinator with indigenous communities in the US.



Biwastha at her graduation



4. Employment and Internship opportunities

Samaanta fellows often take on part time roles to build their professional skills as well as to support their families. This list below gives some more information about some of our engagements this year.

- **Sharmila Tamang** (4th cohort) is currently working part time as Facilitator Coordinator at [Canopy Nepal](#), which is a team of visionary youths working in the field of education, skill and leadership development, diversity and inclusion.
- **Suraj Parajuli** (4th cohort) is currently working part time at Media 9 Pvt. Ltd., in Kathmandu as Digital Content Manager. His major roles and responsibilities are managing the Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Viber community, Youtube and Tiktok) of two magazines viz. Business 360 and WOW (World of Women), planning and developing the social media content, closely working with editors and designers, and updating website of Business 360 and WOW magazine.
- **Kumar BK** (5th Cohort) and **Meghnath Dulal** (6th Cohort) are currently working part time at [Proclus Data](#) as Data Analysts. Their work is currently home based and major responsibilities include removing corrupted data, performing initial analysis to assess the quality of the data, performing further analysis to determine the meaning of the data, and performing final analysis to provide additional data screening.
- **Sanumaya Bholon** (6th Cohort) is interning at NIC ASIA Bank in the marketing department. Her responsibilities focus on area mapping to open new branches.
- **Manisha Desar** (4th Cohort) is working part time at Samaaj Dental Hospital as a Graphic Designer.

5. Extra-curricular activities

At Samaanta, we are committed to the overall development of our fellows, so we place particular emphasis on extracurricular activities. We present some highlights below.

- **8th Cohort and 9th Cohort:** Fellows in high school conducted programs on different topics such as Public Speaking, teamwork, Gender equality, Women abuse, Meditation, and spirituality during the lockdown.

- [Hishila Danuwar](#) (7th Cohort) participated in a workshop called “Our Turn” provided by **Hamro Palo**, an NGO. She received training on community facilitation, and then was sent to a village in Sindhupalchowk district along with the group for 15 days. She facilitated sessions to married girls age between 16-24 focused on women empowerment, goal setting, superstitions and their influence in society, mental health, menstruation, child nutrition, etc.



Figure 1 Hishila at Our Turn

H

- **Prerana Tamang, Thuli Tamang and Dawalamo Tamang** (8th cohort) will be completing their year-long [WomenLEAD](#) Leadership Training Program in summer 2021. The course provides young women with intensive leadership training; skills-building opportunities; mentoring and a peer-support network; and university preparation. The Course trains 30 young women annually, who in turn train another 450 students in their schools and communities using the tools provided through the School Leadership Program.



- **Dipesh Bhujel** (4th Cohort Fellow) conducted “Art and Craft” other fellows. He managed to facilitate 3 hours session for 2 days in March 2021.



Art & craft session

6. Financial Status

Assuming we take ten new fellows in the 10th cohort and retain four fellows from the 8th cohort to continue to undergraduate level, the estimated expenses for next year from Jul 2021 - Jun 2022 is about USD 92,000. This figure assumes the same number of staff and the continued use of the same office space.

The estimated funds for the year including our operating balance and commitments for the year is about USD 72,000. We have a gap of USD 20,000 for the year, and we would welcome any support as well as ideas to address this gap.

In addition, with more funds available, we could take more fellows in the 10th cohort and expand our office space. We present a summary of our estimated expenses below.

Estimated Expenses (in USD)			Estimated Funds (in USD)		
1	Hostel	33,000	1	Operating Balance for the year	25,000
2	Office rent & utilities	3,200	2	Home Loan Experts (HLE)	18,000
3	Salary	7,000	3	Foundation Care for All (FCFA) + Rotary + Kin San + Legal Together	10,000
4	Fellows academic expenses	37,000	4	Franks Family Foundation (FFF)	4,000
5	Stipend	3,800	5	Individual contributions	15,000
6	Workshops & recreation	1,200		TOTAL	72,000
7	Compliance, recruitment & misc. expenses	3,000	Financing gap for the year 2021-22: 20,000		
8	Laptops	2,000			
9	Communications & PR	2,000			
	TOTAL	92,200			

Updates on Dipesh Bhujel (4th cohort)

- From Sisneri, Lalitpur
- Pursuing bachelor's in Computer Science and Information Technology at St. Xavier's College

Academics:

Exam	Scores
3 rd semester finals	72.2%
4 th semester finals	71%

He completed his contract at Karkhana Inc. where he worked as Content Generation Associate. Since the lockdown, he has been taking online classes from home and is also working part-time as a Mathematics teacher at Bloom Nepal School.



Dipesh organized two three-hour “Art and Craft” session for other fellows in March 2021.

Updates on Sharmila Tamang (4th cohort)

- From Tikabhairab, Lalitpur
- Pursuing Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration at Thames College



Academics:

Exams	GPA
3 rd semester finals	3.9 out of 4
4 th semester finals	3.7 out of 4
5 th semester pre-board	87.33%

Sharmila is currently working part-time as Facilitator Coordinator at [Canopy Nepal](#). Canopy Nepal is a team of visionary youths working in the field of education, skill and leadership development, diversity and inclusion.



She is very interested in this area of work and she is sharpening her soft skills such as communication, coordination, report writing, and planning. She is satisfied with her work.

She has also been actively participating in Samaanta’s programs including fellow led programs on content writing, personal finance sessions, gender equality, etc. During the lockdown, she has been helping her juniors in their studies and other extra-curricular activities.