

one to watch

**IMPACT**  
**BULLETIN *2020***





# INTRODUCTION

At One to Watch, we believe that by putting impact as one of the core values of our investment strategy we can bring about a change in Nepal and Myanmar's economic growth and productivity. We invest in businesses with strong socioeconomic impact on the livelihoods of low income and marginalized people.

2020 has been a year that demanded maximum effort and creativity from our team and portfolio companies to survive and maintain the impact we've generated for employees, suppliers, and clients. Despite the uncertainties, OTW was able to step up and fulfill our duty in the market. As investors, we increased our capital funds; as company builders, we supported companies to manage their risks and provide relief capital; and as ecosystem players, we improved the business environment by launching Nepal's first private equity association and focused on accelerating women-led ventures in Myanmar.

The following booklet highlights this year's impact achievements of our 12 portfolio companies that provide essential products and services ranging from access to clean water, renewable energy, diagnostic services, food production and more. We are proud to see our companies maintain jobs despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, further proving that impact-driven companies are more resilient than others.



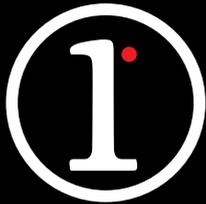
**Our Approach**

## ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Our framework for impact measurement and management is based on the Logic Model Framework approach and uses GIIN's IRIS metrics. Each investee goes through a series of workshops and follow-on discussions which starts with a facilitated workshop on the key aspects of the Logic Model – input, activity, output, and outcome. The company's teams revisit their impact goals and further clarify their roadmap to reach these goals. The outcome of this process is a list of identified metrics which appropriately define the impact of the company, which are measurable and can be properly reported.

Through its investments, One to Watch contributes towards achieving SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth and SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goals. Our partnerships, ecosystem building activities and investments also support in achieving SDGs 1 to 7.





one to watch

One to Watch believes that entrepreneurs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are best positioned to bring about sustainable development in frontier economies. Recognizing that SMEs contribute to more than 40% of frontiers' GDP on average and generate 100 jobs for every 400K Euros invested, we aim to close the "missing-middle" finance and business support gap for entrepreneurs as a means of promoting socioeconomic development in Nepal and Myanmar.

We strive to be the go-to partner for in the next generation of entrepreneurs who are leading commercially viable and impactful businesses since the beginning of their investment-seeking journey. During the pre-investment stage, we offer entrepreneurs with business development services, linkages and mentorship to address key gaps and weaknesses in their business, all while building a pipeline of investable companies. Our investments are managed by an on-ground team made up of locals and internationals who are committed to the environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards set by the International Finance Corporation and work around the challenges of the local business climate.

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

With the goal of building a pipeline of investable local companies, OTW provides a range of business development services catered to SMEs to develop the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem. These ecosystem building activities have taken the shape of multiple accelerators as well as customized business development services (BDS) to cater to the particular needs of SMEs in Nepal and Myanmar. Our BDS help growth-stage SMEs seeking equity financing strengthen their business model and create a strategic development plan to address key gaps in their business. Companies also receive support from local and foreign mentors, gain access to a wider network of entrepreneurs, instructors and relevant business workshops as part of the program.

As part our effort to invest in more women-led businesses, OTW's new acceleration booster in Myanmar is focused around closing the finance gap for female entrepreneurs. Data from the Global Accelerator Learning Initiative (GALI<sup>1</sup>) shows that women are under-represented in acceleration programs and equal access to acceleration alone does not close the gender financing gap. Together with Bopinc (an independent foundation supporting SMEs, cooperatives and multinationals to deliver value to communities at the 'Base of the Pyramid'), OTW is testing the newly developed "Women Entrepreneurs Ignite" (WE Ignite) acceleration booster. The booster provides additional modules and services to women-led businesses on top of OTW's standard BDS support. Lessons and successful pilots from the booster will be shared to other acceleration programs.

<sup>1</sup> GALI. 2020. *Accelerating Women-led Startups*

To date, our business development services in Nepal and Myanmar have:



Supported more than  
**140 companies**



Reviewed more than  
**3000 companies**



**21 accelerated  
companies**  
received equity investments



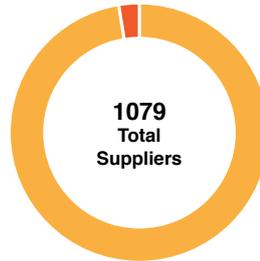
For every Euro invested in  
our accelerator program,  
the accelerated companies  
receive a capital injection of  
€5 on average

**AGGREGATED  
IMPACT ON  
GENERIC  
INDICATORS**

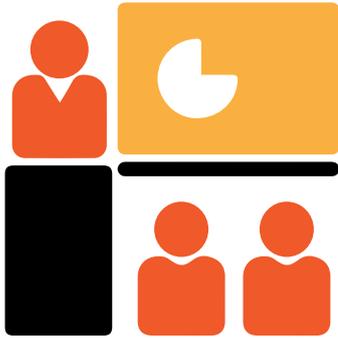
**EMPLOYMENT GENERATED**



**SUPPLIERS ENGAGED**



## PEOPLE TRAINED



Total number employees trained

**267**

Total number of people (non-employees trained)

**2647**

## CLIENTS SERVED



Client Individuals

**34,071**



Client Organizations

**4,523**

## COVID-19 MSME FUND NEPAL

Economic downturn in Nepal brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic has caused mass enterprise destruction and unemployment. According to a report commissioned by the United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP) on the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, around three in five employees have lost their jobs among enterprises surveyed with a 95 per cent fall in average monthly revenue. While it is unrealistic to try to save all enterprises from permanent closure, the ones that have the potential to return to positive cash flow relatively sooner will be instrumental in leading the overall economic recovery as their rebound would also have positive spillovers along their backward and forward linkages.

MSMEs in particular need financial support to ride out this crisis which is possible only through the availability of working capital. Ideally, licensed financial institutions would step in to provide the working capital. However, the MSME financing gap is not adequately addressed in Nepal's current institutional landscape as banks carry limited risk appetite given their fiduciary responsibilities. In the current context of demand-supply for debt capital, banks are able to expand their balance sheets without resorting to high risk collateral-free MSME lending.

As such, OTW has launched the COVID-19 MSME Fund Nepal with support from the SDC and the FMO Development Bank. The COVID-19 MSME Fund Nepal seeks to support MSMEs by providing them with bridge financing in order to meet working capital needs, and technical assistance in the form of business advisory/development services to preserve business continuity and build resilience.

The overall goal for COVID-19 MSME Fund Nepal is to help employees of MSMEs retain their jobs in enterprises that received access to working capital and technical assistance. This is to be achieved through two interlinked outcomes:

### Outcome 1

MSMEs meet their working capital needs to continue business operations. The Fund managed by OTW on-boards a commercial bank to provide uncollateralized debt financing at 'zero' interest rate.

### Outcome 2

MSMEs are able to optimize the extra-financial support received through the fund manager. OTW provides customized business advisory services to enterprises to preserve business continuity followed by business development services to build enterprises' resilience.

Our impact goals for the COVID MSME Fund are



Risk Capital Mobilized

**\$1 Million**



Number of loan disbursed

**100**



Average loan ticket size

**\$10-20K**



Number of jobs supported/created

**1000**

## PORTFOLIO COMPANIES



Producing quality, cost efficient construction materials using modern, environment friendly technology and local materials.



Building national capacity to produce vaccines for chickens and providing innovative solutions in animal husbandry.



Providing interest based, practical, and cost-effective education to support and empower the future leaders of the country.



Providing eco-friendly and economical solutions to the water issues in Nepal.



Managing waste locally and at low cost by implementing waste segregation (at source) and composting.



Producing organic dried ginger slices, ginger powder & turmeric powder for the local market and for export to Europe.



Developing solar micro grids and commercial off-grid systems in developing countries for large industries, small businesses & households.



Agricultural inputs and services supporting high yield in different topography, soil, water and agro-climatic conditions.



Developing CAD based engineering software to design safer and better roads and irrigation canals in Nepal.



Developing the coffee culture of Nepal and promoting coffee grown in Nepal.



Manufacturing home textile made of 100% cotton fabric woven and hand printed in Nepal



Producing quality saplings through tissue culture to support the farmers of Nepal.



**BAJRA BRICKS**

[www.bajrabrick.com](http://www.bajrabrick.com)

## About

Bajra Brick and Tiles Industries, strives to change the way bricks are traditionally made in Nepal. Since 2015, they are producing new age bricks and tiles that are on average 40% stronger and 20% cheaper than traditional bricks. Currently, their product segment includes concrete bricks, hollow blocks and interlocking blocks. The manufacturing of Bajra Brick's products does not involve baking the brick; as a result, no greenhouse gases are released during the manufacturing process.

After securing investment from OTW, Bajra has acquired new technology from Germany. With this, Bajra Brick and Tiles Industries will be the first company in Nepal to manufacture light weight LPAC (Lithopore Aerated Concrete) bricks.

## Vision

The vision of the company is to transform the brick industry through the use of advanced manufacturing processes thereby eliminating the use of fossil fuels and fertile top soil that could otherwise be used for farming.

## Impact



**Environmental Impact:** Disuse of top soil despite its ability to reduce production costs



**Waste reduction:** As a result of using stone dust, 85% of materials can be recycled.



**Employee benefits:** Direct and indirect employees receive capacity building support to enhance their skills.

## COVID Response

Because of the global pandemic, Bajra had to shut down their operations for 8 months. At the beginning of the lockdown in March 2020, Bajra Bricks kept all their workers inside their facility and provided them with all the necessities, despite their production being stalled. As the lockdown was prolonged, majority of the workers decided to leave for their home. Bajra bricks continued to support those who chose to stay in the facility.

## 2021 Outlook

If situation allows, the focus of Bajra Bricks remains with introducing highly efficient technology from Germany- LPAC (Lithopore Aerated Concrete Bricks) for the first time in Nepal. Depending upon the marketability of this product, CEO Bikram Prajapati plans to expand its factory considerably.

## Key Personnel



### **Bikram Prajapati, Founder & CEO**

As a Mechanical Engineering student in Tribhuvan University, Bikram received an opportunity to work on a technology that could separate smoke from dust and make the brick production dust free. After graduating, he migrated to Japan to work for Honda. He returned to Nepal after carefully contemplating his desire to implement what he learned at Tribhuvan University. Upon his return he founded Bajra Bricks. Bikram aims to promote sustainable construction practices and provide an ecofriendly construction material for urban and rural development.



**BIOVAC**

[www.biovacnepal.com](http://www.biovacnepal.com)

## About

Biovac is a vaccine research, development and manufacturing company based in Nepal which aims to create long term, sustainable vaccine production to meet the local and international demand. Using the latest technologies, Biovac studies disease burden and dynamics, evaluates novel vaccine targets and manufactures vaccines that have high efficacy rates and are cost effective. It specializes in field-based disease surveillance, molecular diagnostic and genomics-based disease detection and vaccine target evaluation, stabilization and manufacturing. The company aims to produce thermostable animal vaccines at competitive prices which can be supplied to remote areas.

## Vision

To produce poultry vaccines - initially focused on Newcastle diseases and in time focus on making animal vaccines which are easily accessible for use.

## Impact



**Research & innovation:** Developed portable handheld pathogen detection device which detects virus real time, providing more time for intervention and mitigation of transmissible diseases.



**Local engagement:** Local production and research of vaccines reduce international dependency and create employment opportunities.



**Women's leadership:** 8% of the employees in mid to senior level are women.

## COVID Response

This year, Biovac anticipated to secure the distribution license by May 2020 and launch its vaccine in December 2020, but this was disrupted by the lockdown. Securing the distribution license requires collaboration with government officials, which they conducted virtually. The company also secured permit to operate amid lockdown and continued their trial production.

## 2021 Outlook

Biovac now has the most advance development and research facility in Nepal. They are currently at the testing stage of their vaccines and securing the distribution permit from Department of Drug Administration, Nepal. They have also introduced diagnostics services as one their product line. They envision 2021 to be the year for full-fledged production and promotion of their vaccines and diagnostic services. They have target production of 6 million does for 2021.

## Key Personnel



### **Dibesh Karmacharya, Founder & CEO**

Mr. Karmacharya has a Conservation Biology degree from Wayne State College, USA and a PhD in Conservation and Microbiome Genetics from Griffith University, Australia. He worked extensively in the US for Caliper Lifesciences in New Jersey as a research scientist (transgenic animal models). He promoted Genomics and Proteomics technology platforms for GE Healthcare Lifesciences in the US and Canada. He founded the Center for Molecular Dynamics Nepal (CMDN), a wildlife genetics and clinical epidemiology research center and is the Chairman and Executive Director of the Organization. He also founded Intrepid Nepal Pvt. Ltd.-a molecular diagnostics-based Biotechnology Company, and Intrepid Cancer Diagnostics-a leading cancer diagnostic laboratory. He leads several innovative research projects in Nepal including building Nepal's first genetic database of wild tigers through Nepal Tiger Genome Project.



**BLOOM NEPAL SCHOOL**

[www.bloomn.edu.np](http://www.bloomn.edu.np)

## About

Bloom Nepal School is an educational institution that focuses on providing affordable interest-based education to students from various parts of Nepal. Students get structured mentorship in gradual refinement of the natural abilities to the extent that they emerge to become leaders in the field of interest. The school started its interest-based institution with 18 students in 2013 and aspires to become the largest chain of residential schools in Nepal. In 2019, Bloom Nepal School acquired another school in Itahari. With this, they now have over 500 students enrolled in both of their schools.

## Vision

To create future leaders of Nepal. The school envisions to create a society where everyone has expertise in at least one field of interest and where these skills are being used to constantly upgrade technology, innovation and knowledge base.

## Impact



**Access to education:** Access to education for students, especially from rural areas, the students from Bloom currently hail from 60 districts of Nepal.



**Sustainability:** Recipient of Zayed Sustainability Prize for a proposed project to utilize food-energy-waste nexus framework through installation of biogas units with participation from students and community.



**Women's employment:** 48% of its employees in management, teaching and operations are female.

## COVID Response

The school has been running virtual classes since the beginning of the pandemic. Currently, 60% of the students are benefitting from online learning. Each of the students are provided with unique user login and the teachers are able to administer attendance and the assessments online. Students pay reduced amount of fees to access online classes. Bloom has also been providing training to the teachers on the best ways to conduct classes online.

## 2021 Outlook

With the challenges put forth by the global pandemic, Bloom School intends to continue running virtual classes until the students are vaccinated fully and can return to school.

## Key Personnel



### **Ram Krishna Rijal, Founder & Chairman**

Ram has been involved with Bloom Nepal School in the capacity of Chairman since its inception. He has prior experience of working with World Bank, Thomas Herzfeld Asset Management and IFMR India. Upon graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US in 2012, he returned to Nepal to set up Bloom Nepal School.



### **Surya Bahadur Karki, Director**

With a mission to transform the educational landscape of Nepal, Surya returned to Nepal in 2015 having graduated from Tsinghua University in China under the Schwarzman scholarship. He founded Diyalo Foundation and UWS Nepal-organizations which are working to uplift education standards in Nepal. Through these organizations he has constructed 25 schools in rural Nepal. Because of his contribution to the education sector, Surya was listed in Forbes 30 under 30 in 2017. In the same year, he joined Bloom Nepal School as a Director.



**GHAM POWER**

[www.ghampower.com](http://www.ghampower.com)

## About

Founded in 2010, Gham Power is a renewal energy focused enterprise aiming to reduce the burden of excessive power outages posed on Nepal's population. Having played its part in the urban electrification, Gham Power shifted its focus to the under-served rural market in 2013 by offering products such as solar pumps and micro grids in off-grid communities to increase economic activity and improve the livelihood of those communities. Gham Power has installed over 3,000 solar projects that cumulatively generate around 3.5 MW of electricity.

## Vision

To develop rural Nepal by bringing solar energy via micro grids to the most remote places, providing people with affordable and reliable energy while promoting income generation through electricity powered entrepreneurial ventures.

## Impact



**Access to clean energy:** By providing remote areas with solar energy, Gham Power has supported access to education, information and financial services.



**Increased affordability:** A unique financing plan is being set up in collaboration with local commercial banks to help clients and farmers finance upfront costs of installing a solar system.



**Reduced emissions:** This year, Gham produced 1,144.80 MWhr of energy, displacing 1,227.23 tons of CO2 emissions and 457.92 KL of diesel.

## COVID Response

To help rural communities adapt to the crisis while securing their cash flow, Gham developed and deployed several projects associated to community-based irrigation and rural health posts in remote Nepal. Gham continued their digitization efforts during lockdown, building in-house digital solutions which will assist Gham to expand its operation and improve the service delivery.

## 2021 Outlook

Gham is moving from an engineering procurement company (EPC) to an energy service company. In addition to EPC, Gham aims to concentrate more on commercial power purchase agreement (PPA) deals, financing agro-processing systems and solar power plant.

## Key Personnel



### **Sandeep Giri, Founder & Chairman**

Following his passion to build tech solutions with high impact, Sandeep founded his first start up- a software company in the San Francisco bay area which was later acquired by Oracle. Post this deal he took a short vacation in his homeland. When he encountered the energy crisis in Nepal which had hit an all-time high in 2009-10 (with up to 16 hours of daily load-shedding), Sandeep decided to launch Gham Power as a provider of solar PV systems at prices comparable to diesel generators. A graduate in Computer Science from the University of Nebraska, he has lead Gham Power to be the fastest growing off-grid solar company in Nepal, specializing in solar micro grids to power rural communities, and in providing solar-powered agro-processing solutions that benefit farmers and raise their income. Currently, he is also leading the product management department at University of California, San Francisco for Digital Health Innovation.



### **Anjal Niraula, CEO**

Anjal is an off-grid solar expert. At Gham Power, he oversees R&D and product strategy- including business development, design and engineering. He thrives to develop solar micro grids along with productive end use loads. Anjal was a Chevening scholar at the University of Edinburgh where he studied energy systems. He is also a member of the Future Energy Leader's group with the World Energy Council where he works on the Energy Access taskforce. He was listed in the Forbes 30 under 30 in 2018.



NEPAL THOPA SINCHAI

[www.nepalthopasinchai.com.np](http://www.nepalthopasinchai.com.np)

## About

Nepal Thopa Sinchai (NTS) provides effective drip irrigation systems and greenhouse solutions for farmers and institutions working in technology based modern agriculture. Being a market leader of drip irrigation systems in Nepal, NTS provides cost effective agricultural services which can help increase a farmer's productivity. Together with drip irrigation systems, NTS is also engaged in construction of greenhouses and delivers its services all over Nepal.

## Vision

To be a catalyst in Nepal's transformation from subsistence based farming to modern commercial agriculture.

## Impact



**Capacity building:** 40 employees have received on-the-job training. Small holder farmers also receive demonstrative trainings on usage and efficiency of drip irrigation systems and greenhouse installations.



**Water conservation:** NTS clients can reduce the water usage by up to 70%.



**Yield improvement:** NTS' drip irrigation system contributes to 50% improvement in yields.

## COVID Response

Despite several projects being delayed, NTS established more than 50 greenhouse projects for smallholder farmers this year. The company utilized their downtime by promoting urban farming and pushed it during the lockdown period. Urban farming quickly gained huge popularity especially in households within Kathmandu Valley. NTS also invested in relevant technology to automate their operations.

## 2021 Outlook

The prominent focus of NTS remains with expansion. Currently, they have 2 sites under negotiation for branch establishment. With this, they will have presence in 4 different locations in Nepal.

## Key Personnel



### **Khojraj Katuwal, Founder**

Mr. Khojraj Katuwal worked in the agricultural sector in Israel for 6 years. Upon witnessing the increase in productivity through the drip irrigation system in Israel, Khojraj decided to return back to Nepal and introduce the same irrigation system in Nepal. With the newly learnt skill which was completely new and highly beneficial for Nepalese farmers, Mr. Khojraj founded Nepal Thopa Sinchai Pvt. Ltd in the year 2014. Currently, Mr. Khojraj is engaged in providing strategic inputs to the company. He is also the President of Nepal Tunnel Farmer's Association and he continues to work towards the welfare of the agricultural sector in Nepal.



### **Paras Katuwal, CEO**

Motivated by the vision of his father, Mr. Khojraj Katuwal, Paras strives to develop the agricultural field in Nepal through modern technology and smart irrigation services for the farmers. He was the recipient of the Global Student Entrepreneur Award, 2016 for the best innovative business in Nepal. He is currently pursuing his MBA from Pokhara University in Nepal.



**SMART TECH SOLUTION**

[www.smarttech.com.np](http://www.smarttech.com.np)

## About

Smart Tech Solution is a software development company specializing in CAD engineering software. They provide optimal tech solutions to their clients through application development for desktop as well as mobile platforms. Their flagship product- Smart Road is a cost-effective hardware-based solution for road design. Smart Tech is currently developing a subscription model for Smart Road. Together with this, they also offer Smart GIS and Smart Canal software.

## Vision

To develop and implement locally developed software for infrastructural development.

## Impact



**Increased efficiency:** Government officials and independent clients can automate designs, reducing the need for manual work and its associated cost.



**Client Savings:** Smart Tech clients save at least 75% of cost compared to software being sold by international companies.



**Outreach:** Smart Tech sold 107 licenses this year and expanded sales reach to all 7 provinces of Nepal.

## COVID Response

Smart Tech was able to achieve a major breakthrough during the lockdown phase. While working remotely, they completed the development of web based service portal for Smart Road. This has opened up possibility of selling their software remotely and also launch the much awaited subscription model.

## 2021 Outlook

Smart Tech aims to pivot their business model to a complete IT services company which will be open to development services and also have multiple products in different domains.

## Key Personnel



### **Dibyesh Giri, Co-founder & CEO**

Dibyesh has been involved in sales and marketing for over 8 years. He is also a computer engineering graduate and serves as the CEO of Smart Tech Solution. He graduated from Pune University with a Masters in Computer Applications. Dibyesh, with his competent sales team at Smart Tech overlooks marketing of their principal product- Smart Road. He is also engaged with creating marketing awareness of their product and develop sales leads.



### **Serish Dhital, Co-founder & CTO**

An EMBA from Pokhara Univeristy, Nepal, Serish co-founded Smart Tech solution and has led business operation for the last 8 years. A computer engineering graduate from Tribhuwan University, he has successfully implemented enterprise software for diverse industries such as financial institutions, health sectors and development agencies resulting in over 100 clients. With an experience of over 8 years in professional software development, he has been instrumental in developing a product for road design which has been endorsed by every local government and development agencies working in road design. Currently, Serish oversees the product development and research at Smart Tech.



RED MUD COFFEE

[www.redmudcoffee.com](http://www.redmudcoffee.com)

## About

With a mission to promote locally produced coffee amongst the youth of Nepal, Red Mud was established in the year 2012. In line with its slogan, "Every revolution starts in a Coffee Shop," Red Mud aspires to revolutionize the coffee culture among the Nepali youth, who otherwise have limited options when it came to quality beverages. Today, Red Mud has grown to be the largest buyer of locally grown coffee. The Nepali coffee chain now has 5 stores in Kathmandu, 1 kiosk and 2 franchisees in Manang and Dhangadhi.

## Vision

To scale up the coffee culture in Nepal. Red Mud envisions to continue serving the best locally grown coffee in the Nepalese market and be an agent of change in the coffee culture of Nepal.

## Impact



**Capacity Building:** 80 non-employees and 50 employees have received barista training.



**Local consumption:** Red mud purchases around 4 tons of coffee every year, making them one of the biggest local buyers of Nepali coffee.



**Employee benefits:** 15 overtime employees who cannot afford housing in Kathmandu continue to receive housing benefits.

## COVID Response

With over 100 days of lockdown, Red Mud focused on downsizing as a measure to reduce costs. To tide over the challenges brought by the pandemic, Red Mud focused on introducing "take away coffee" and collaborated with food delivery platforms like Pathao.

## 2021 Outlook

The 5th Red Mud store in Durbar Marg, one of the posh areas of the city, is ready to start its operations. The focus for the upcoming year would be expanding its franchisee agreements and promoting food delivery alongside takeaways.

## Key Personnel



### **Pravesh Humagain, Co-Founder & CEO**

A graduate from Anglia Ruskin University, Pravesh gained his skills in food & beverages and customer services through his experience at Nando's UK where he worked as a manager for 5 years. With the skills acquired and lessons learnt abroad, Pravesh aspired to establish Red Mud as a brand in the Nepalese market. At Red Mud, Pravesh oversees the finances and administration of the outlets and also manages human resources.



### **Ritesh Adhikari, General Manager**

In an effort to support his brother Aashish in his entrepreneurial venture, Ritesh has been engaged with Red Mud since its inception. Although, he holds a degree in Computer Science, he has been passionately managing the overall operations of Red Mud's outlets. He strives to maintain the quality standards of the company and is serving as General Manager.



SMART PAANI

[www.smartpaani.com](http://www.smartpaani.com)

## About

Established by experienced technicians, researchers, and businessmen, Smart Paani provides eco-friendly and economical solutions to water issues in Nepal. The company's customizable solutions for rainwater harvesting, water filtration, water recycling, and wastewater treatment helps households and businesses reduce their dependency on groundwater, tankers and other water supplies. To date, Smart Paani has successfully installed water systems in 1500 households and 2300 organizations.

## Vision

To provide sustainable water solution in Nepal where neither the living standards nor the environment is compromised.

## Impact



**Greywater treatment:** 15,000 liters of greywater<sup>1</sup> is treated everyday by Smart Paani's treatment systems.



**Access to clean water:** 40,000 students have access to clean drinking water from its filtration system installed in 100 public schools across Nepal.



**Water recharged:** Around 170 million liters of water is filtered and recharged to the ground every year.

<sup>1</sup> Greywater includes the water from shower, laundry and kitchen

## COVID Response

With the lockdown imposed, Smart Paani's operations were completely halted. However, they were prepared to transition quickly and complete the pending projects once the lockdown was lifted. On the contrary, COVID-19 also introduced opportunities such as demand for self-sufficiency and hygiene. Aligning with this, Smart Paani introduced improved WASH education in order to change customer's behavior with a focus on hygiene.

## 2021 Outlook

Smart Paani aims to invest extensively in improving the current products in order to offer commercial and user friendly products to a wide customer base- both in rural and urban parts of Nepal.

## Key Personnel



### **Suman Shakya, Co-Founder & Managing Director**

Passionate about building the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Nepal, Suman Shakya brings in over 20 years of business experience which he acquired through his role as a consultant in the World Bank. Having co-founded Smart Paani and also engaged as an adjunct faculty at numerous business school in Nepal, he is also actively involved in interacting with students and aspiring entrepreneurs. He is also serving as a Director in Rooster Logic Pvt. Ltd. Currently, he strives to build the entrepreneurial ecosystem through his engagement in Nepal Entrepreneur's Hub- platform dedicated to foster entrepreneurship and support startups.



### **Tyler McMahon, Co-Founder & Advisor**

Tyler has spent the past 8 years in Nepal- first, as a Fulbright scholar and finally a consultant to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). As a graduate in Environmental Economics, specializing in water, he conducted research on the economics of rainwater harvesting in Kathmandu. This study helped him to understand the market and the technical components of the business. With Smart Paani, Tyler aims to provide 2 major value propositions to its clients- access to clean water and cost efficiency. Beside this, Tyler is involved as a consultant in various organizations working in the environmental sector.



### **Hem Narayan Shrestha, Co-Founder & Technical Director**

With previous engagements in several NGOs and independent clients, Hem has an experience of over 400 rain water harvesting installations. At Smart Paani, he leads the technical team that performs installations of rainwater harvesting, bio-sand filters and the sanitary piping work for grey water recycling and wastewater treatment systems.



**WASTE CONCERN**

## About

Established in 1993, Waste Concern is one of the country's first commercial waste management companies. Through its robust waste collection services, the company aims to combat unsystematic waste management in Kathmandu valley. Waste Concern currently has 2 operating facility and 39 waste collectors operating in Kathmandu Valley.

## Vision

Waste Concern has a vision of creating a clean and healthy society by increasing awareness related to waste segregation at source and disposal of solid waste, along with marching towards a circular economy.

## Impact



**Waste disposed:** 24 tons of waste is disposed everyday by the organization, around of which 1 ton are sold to scrap dealers.



**Capacity building:** Over 500 non-employees were trained in waste management this year. 4 community-based programs were also organized together with local NGOs.



**Awareness building:** Together with Clean-Up Nepal, annual campaigns are organized to build awareness on importance of waste segregation.

## COVID Response

The operation of Waste Concern was not highly impacted as waste collection services are categorized under essential service. However, around 350 clientele of Waste Concern had halted their operations. The organization continued its services for households while limiting the collection to couple of days in a week. A COVID-19 insurance policy was initiated for all the staff. Proper safety measures were adopted, staff were trained with preventative measures, and PPE and medical kits were provided for their safety. Waste Concern was also extended this support to Clean-Up Nepal's garbage collectors.

## 2021 Outlook

Waste Concern intends to reduce the amount of waste going to landfills by composting organic waste. They plan to shift towards a circular economy by building composting sites to create manure from bio-degradable waste. It also plans to continue the waste segregation at source awareness campaigns which would further help Waste Concern to shift towards the circular economy.

## Key Personnel



### **Sulav Moktan, Co-Founder & Managing Director**

Sulav received structured education and training in Solid Waste Management from The Chartered Institution of Waste Management, U.K. He has over 10 years of experience in waste management. His proactive nature has helped to bring strategic partners into the business. Besides waste management, he has been actively involved in various social associations and organizations. He is also a chief instructor of "Chio Kwang Do"(a form of martial arts) at Nepal Martial Arts Club.



### **Rajani Shrestha, Co-Founder & COO**

Prior to Waste Concern, Rajani worked as Finance Administrator in Seto Gurans, an institution working for child welfare. A graduate in business studies, Rajani overlooks the overall company's administration and the finance department at Waste Concern.



## ORGANIC MOUNTAIN FLAVOR

### About

Organic Mountain Flavor (OMF) was established in 2013 with an objective to cultivate organic ginger and turmeric under the natural environment with a unique richness of flavor and aroma. It has the distinction of being the first organic ginger sourcing and processing company in Nepal, and is now one of the leading organic ginger exporters to the European market. With direct cooperation in the mid and western regions of Nepal, OMF thrives to improve the lives of rural farmers.

### Vision

To establish and build equitable partnership with the farmers groups & agriculture cooperatives, prioritizing women groups all the while providing sustainable income and a steady price for fresh ginger & turmeric via organic agriculture.

### Impact



**Organic farming:** Organic ginger is cultivated on 116 hectares of land with support from 765 certified organic farmers.



**Access to finance:** 500 farmers have received value chain financing and 400+ farmers now have access to bank accounts.



**Capacity building:** To date, OMF has trained 1500+ farmers in organic farming methods.

## COVID Response

OMF was able to obtain the approval from the concerned District Administration Office to continue processing ginger during the lockdown period. A purchase order of 100 tons was secured. However, the company struggled with working capital management. By the end of 2020, OMF successfully secured a soft loan.

## 2021 Outlook

OMF was recently HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) certified. They intend to expand the export of semi-processed ginger and spices. In addition, they are also aiming at offering organic finished products in the supermarkets and stores of Nepal.

## Key Personnel



### **Samir Newa, Founder & Managing Director**

With over 10 years of experience in organic farming practices and over 8 years of experience in social mobilization, Samir is leading OMF in his capacity of Managing Director. At OMF, he oversees product development, exports, market reach and local resource management. Samir was also a former member in The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM ) and of World Mountain People, France.



COTTON MILL

[www.cottonmillnepal.com](http://www.cottonmillnepal.com)

## About

Cotton Mill is a women-led home textile business- focusing on women empowerment and environment protection. The company manufactures various lines of generic and custom-made home textile products such as bed sheets, cushion covers, curtains and bath robes amongst other things. Unlike other textile factories, Cotton Mill's eco-friendly factory uses waste water treatment plant and a solar power plant to minimize its environmental footprint.

## Vision

Cotton Mill aspires to become the leading household brand for home textile in Nepal committing itself to the principles of creating value, sharing knowledge and women empowerment.

## Impact



**Women's empowerment:** 92% of its employees are women, most of whom are working mothers. Periodic skill training is provided and remuneration is revised based on the skills developed.



**Responsible production:** Around 250,000 liters of rainwater is harvested and treated annually, and used for the dyeing and cleaning process.



**Employee benefits:** Employees are supported to bring their children to office or factory when they do not have school or are old enough to go school.

## COVID Response

Before the pandemic hit, Cotton Mill had expanded its stores at five locations within Kathmandu Valley. The COVID response of the company was to downsize; two stores were shut down. Through digital media the company was able to continue offering their products online. Cotton Mill also expanded its product segment and started producing cotton masks while abiding by the standards as prescribed by WHO.

## 2021 Outlook

Because of COVID, the company could not implement its expansion plans. In the upcoming year, they plan to go beyond Kathmandu valley and increase their customer base by offering products to Pokhara, Chitwan and Biratnagar.

## Key Personnel



### **Prasanna Basnet, Co-Founder & CEO**

After completing her master's degree from Germany in Public Policy where she majored in Strategic Management of Non-Government Organization and International Affairs, Prasanna founded Cotton Mill together with her sister in 2016. Prior to founding Cotton Mill, Prasanna worked for various International development organizations such as Save the Children and Search for Common Ground, where she gained experience of project management including overall planning, budgeting and implementation. At Cotton Mill, Prasanna oversees the overall management of the company while also building relationship clients and developing sales leads.



### **Priyanka Basnet, Co- Founder & COO**

Upon completing her studies in International Management from Germany, Priyanka was engaged professionally with Buddha Air, which is one of the largest private airline companies of Nepal. Her role in Cotton Mill involves overseeing the production facility. A lot of her time and effort is directed to designing and quality control at their facility. She is the key person who ensures timely production of very well designed products.



**FICUS BIOTECH**

[www.ficusbiotech.com.np](http://www.ficusbiotech.com.np)

## About

FICUS Biotech addresses the lack of quality seeds and plants, in the agriculture sector of Nepal, through tissue culture technology to produce commercially viable plantlets and that can ensure better output for farmers. Ficus Biotech is currently producing paulownia, banana, bamboo, strawberry and potato plantlets. In the long run, the company also plans to provide disease diagnostic services for plants – a service currently unavailable in the Nepali market.

## Vision

To produce high quality plants using the techniques of tissue culture, and to make these quality plants accessible in the market at an affordable price to farmers all over Nepal.

## Impact



**Plant types:** New plants such as indoor banana plant, succulents and aloe vera were introduced. Their disease-free saplings have helped farmers improve their yield.



**Responsible production:** Ficus limited the use of pesticide to 2 kgs per year to produce all variety of plants and all fertilizers used are organic.



**Engagement:** Till date, Ficus has worked with around 500 farmers (small hold farmers and commercial).

## COVID Response

Even with reduced production on account of lockdown, Ficus did not lay off any of its production staff. The staff were equipped with preventive measures and instruction so that health of plants will not be compromised. The production and operation remained minimal during the lockdown phase. Thereafter, Ficus continued on the plantation and promotion of disease free potato seeds.

## 2021 Outlook

In the coming year, Ficus aims to improve the capacity of its production lab. They plan to continue experimenting with different indoor plants and create additional product segments for the company. Ficus intends to invest in a new machinery which will allow them to produce in high scale.

## Key Personnel



### **Anuroop Manandhar, Co-Founder & CEO**

Upon completing his graduate studies as a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University, Anuroop migrated back to Nepal with a vision to integrate technology with agriculture. In 2015, together with his co-founders, Anuroop started his entrepreneurial journey by initiating small scale production in the laboratory in Kathmandu University.



### **Santosh Dahal, Co- Founder & CTO**

A graduate in Biotechnology from Tribhuvan University, Santosh serves as a Chief Technical Officer at Ficus. Currently, he is responsible for the management of the production process and maintenance of quality of plants in lab and in green house.



### **Durlav Karki, Co- Founder & Managing Director**

Durlav holds a Master's degree in Biological Chemistry from the University of Stavanger, Norway. Upon his return, he was involved with the Biotechnology Institute at Kathmandu in the capacity of Program Coordinator. In partnership with the rest of the founders of Ficus, Durlav is serving as a Managing Director and leads the production unit at Jhapa.

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