

IMPACT REPORT

2023-24



**COLLABORATIVE
SCHOOLS
NETWORK**
WE PUT STUDENTS FIRST





WE PUT STUDENTS FIRST



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WE PUT STUDENTS FIRST

As we enter our tenth year, it's gratifying and exciting to look back at all that has changed.

We started out in 2015 managing one school with around 120 students. Today we manage nine schools and run curriculum and coaching programmes for a further 45 schools, benefitting 6000 students in total.



From operating only in the capital Kathmandu, we now serve students in some of the most remote regions of the country.

And to help make this happen, our brilliant staff team has grown from 2 to 28.

Despite everything that has changed, one thing has stayed the same, our commitment to always put students first.

This principle guides all our decision-making, motivates us during difficult times and is the reason we exist.

This report summarises our activities, impact and financials in the past year (April 2023 – March 2024).

We wish to express our gratitude to our team, board, partners and funders for helping us to put students first.

OUR WORK

CSN EXISTS TO TRANSFORM THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN NEPAL.

We achieve this in three ways:

1



SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

We manage struggling public schools and transform them into successful schools, in partnership with local government.

2



CURRICULUM AND COACHING

We create lesson plans and coach teachers to use them consistently and effectively. We call this work LEAP.

3



ADVOCACY AND ADVICE

We advise education organisations and local government and advocate for changes in education policy.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT



We manage existing public schools in Nepal and transform the quality of education they provide to some of the country's poorest children.

We achieve this through a unique partnership agreement with local government - the first of its kind in the country - which gives us the authority to manage all the day-to-day operations of our schools. Local government pays for up to 50% of our costs in each school.

Two of our own team are appointed as 'School Leaders', who work in each school as full-time members of staff. School Leaders teach, coach, and lead a school improvement plan alongside the existing teachers and school principal.

The plan has four priorities – improving the quality of teaching, management, community relations and infrastructure.

We focus on primary level education so that students have a strong education foundation.

Our model achieves systemic, scalable and sustainable change because we work within the existing public education system, alongside government and at a low cost.

We currently manage nine schools – six in Kathmandu and three in Abu Khaireni, a rural municipality four hours drive from the capital.



SCHOOL IN FOCUS: BALKUMARI SECONDARY SCHOOL

When CSN began to manage Balkumari Secondary School in 2020, it had just 120 students. Today it educates 435, and is massively over-subscribed.

The school, situated in the north of Kathmandu, mostly serves marginalised and under-privileged children whose parents are migrants from rural parts of Nepal.

The school's transformation is down to the hard work and dedication of its headteacher, teachers and CSN's School Leaders.

We have increased both the quantity and quality of teaching, with regular planning and new teaching techniques. Teachers have embraced CSN's lesson plans and are rigorously focused on student learning.

We have moved to grade-wise teaching, whereby one teacher takes the majority of lessons in each class. This helps them to build a close relationship with every student, which we believe is a vital foundation for learning.

Increasing student attendance has been a challenge because many children come to school on their own, since their parents leave home early in the morning for work. However, through effective communication and follow-up – including daily phone calls home when students are absent and praising the highest attending classes in front of the whole school - we achieved a 90% attendance rate among students up to Grade 5 last year.

The local government has taken notice, and is planning to designate Balkumari Secondary School as a model school in the community.

LEAP – CURRICULUM AND COACHING

Teachers in Nepal's public schools follow the government-issued textbooks line by line. But due to the poor quality of these textbooks, and the use of rote teaching methods, many students are not learning.

Our solution is to give them something better to follow.

We have written over 1000 lesson plans, along with support material and student workbooks, which

provide teachers with high quality step-by-step instructions to follow.

The lesson plans are closely aligned with the government textbooks so teachers feel comfortable and confident using them.

But just handing over our curriculum material is not enough. We, and our partners, also provide on-going coaching to help teachers use the lesson plans consistently and effectively.

This method of teacher improvement is supported by a number of studies, including a report by the World Bank, which concluded, “where primary school teaching is focused on rote learning, and teacher knowledge is low, step-by-step lesson guides as part of multifaceted instructional programs can help improve pedagogy.”

We call this project LEAP, and we are currently implementing in partnership with local government in nine municipalities across Nepal, benefitting almost 4000 students.



LEAP IN FOCUS: MAHALAXMI



When CSN began to manage Bhanodaya Basic School eight years ago, in Mahalaxmi municipality in the south of Kathmandu, we could not have imagined where it would lead.

Today, we support every government school in the municipality through our LEAP programme. Our work in Bhanodaya School has been the seed and the other schools are the fruit that has grown from it.

LEAP in Mahalaxmi has expanded rapidly. When the programme was first introduced a year ago, it involved five schools, 500 children and 32 teachers. This year, it has been extended to all 14 of the municipality's schools, benefiting over 1800 students and around 100 teachers. The aim is to transform the municipality into a centre of excellence for education.

Students, teachers and headteachers have responded enthusiastically, praising LEAP's creative teaching strategies and coaching support. They say students' engagement and achievement have increased significantly.

Chiranjibi Poudel, the education director of the municipality, said "We believe LEAP will help us reach our goal of becoming a centre of excellence. The programme is providing teachers with vital support and I'm delighted to see our teachers doing so much."

OUR IMPACT

We have now completed the second year of a 3-year research project to measure the impact of our work on students' learning.

Students in five CSN-managed government schools and six similar government schools are assessed twice a year through 1-2-1 assessments by an independent research group. The research involves all students in Class 1 – 3 in Maths, English and Nepali.

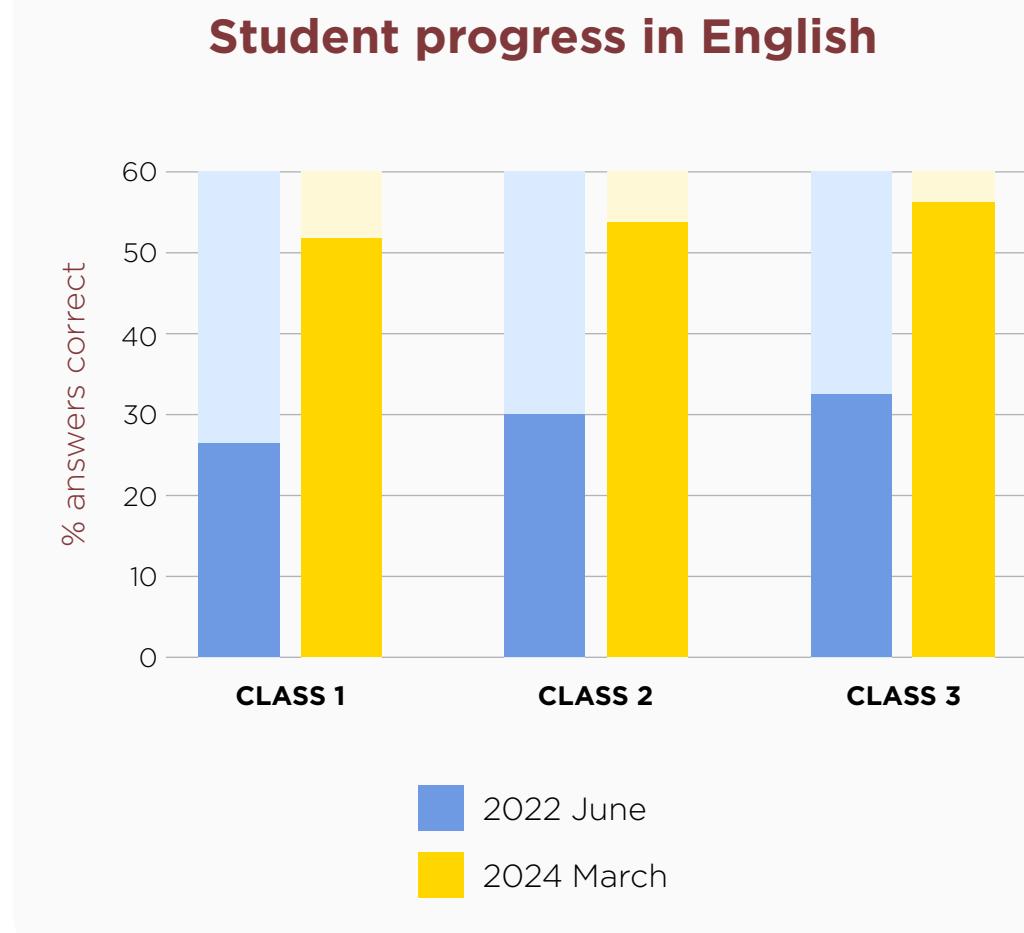
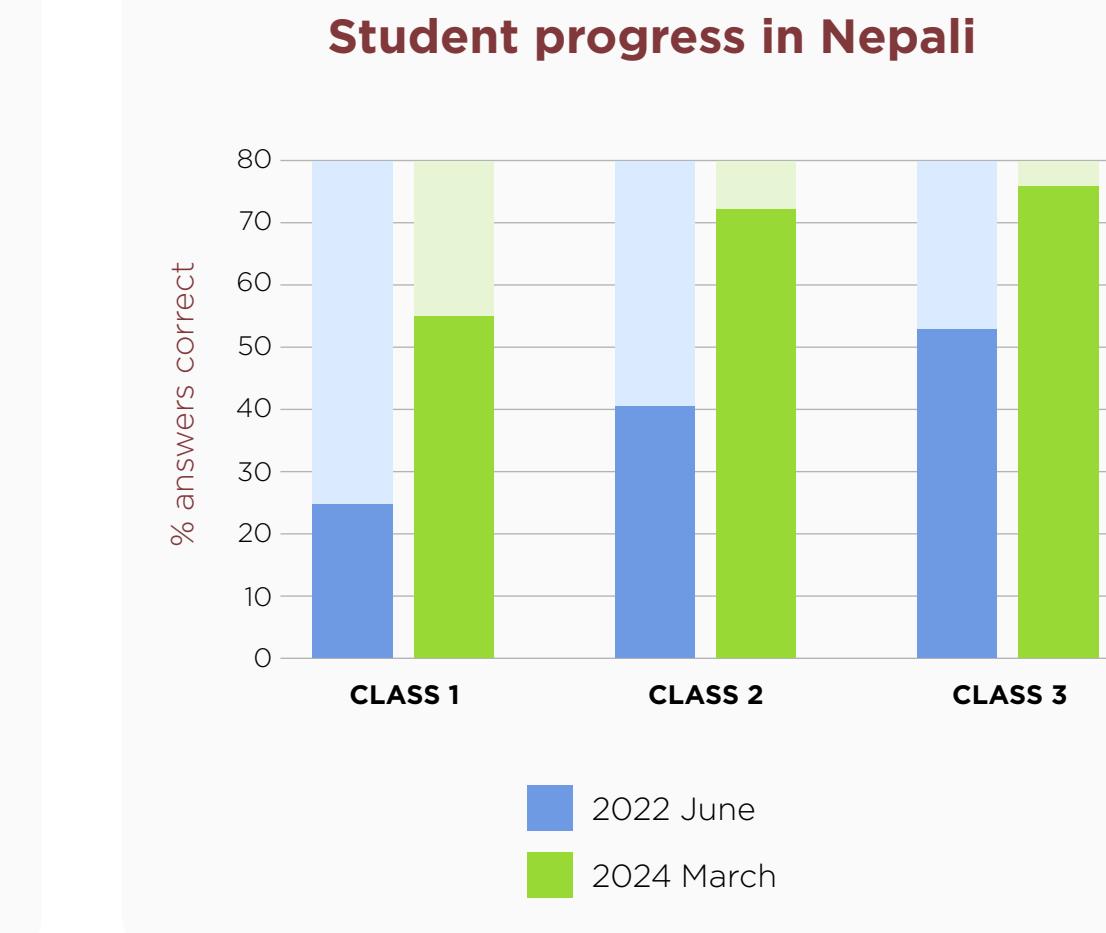
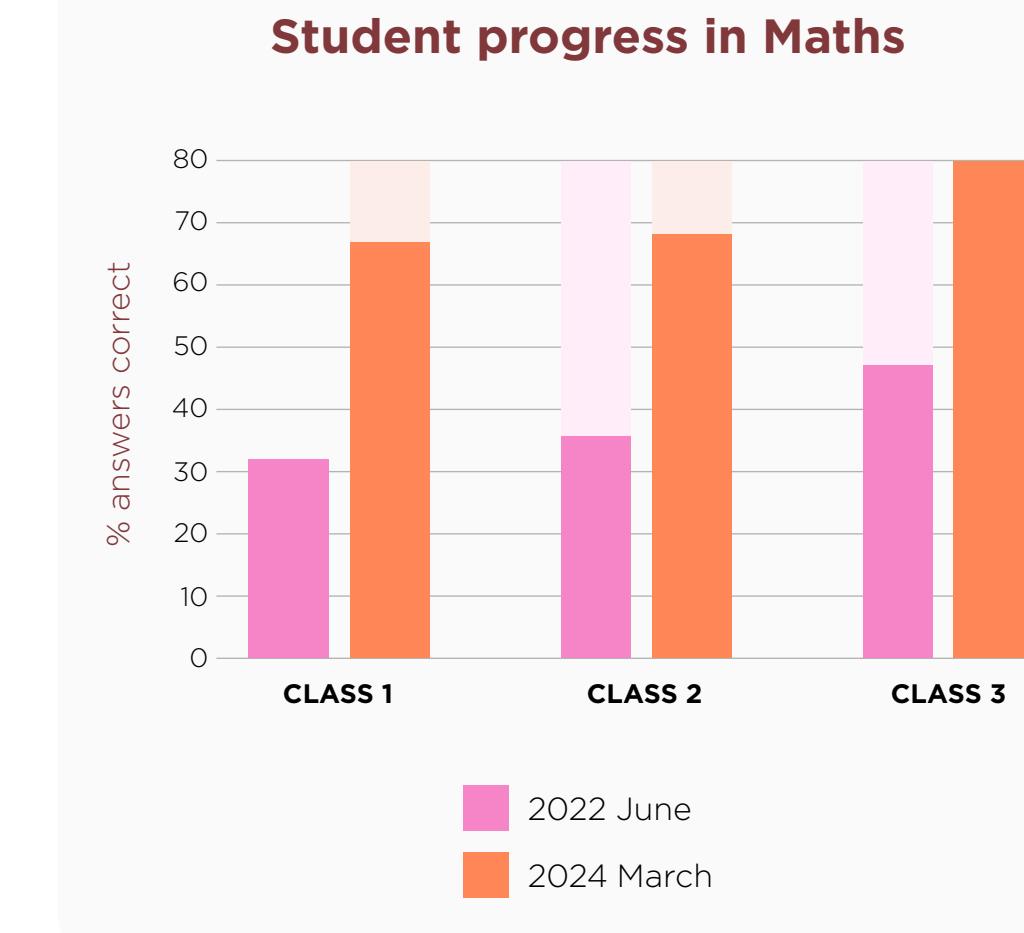
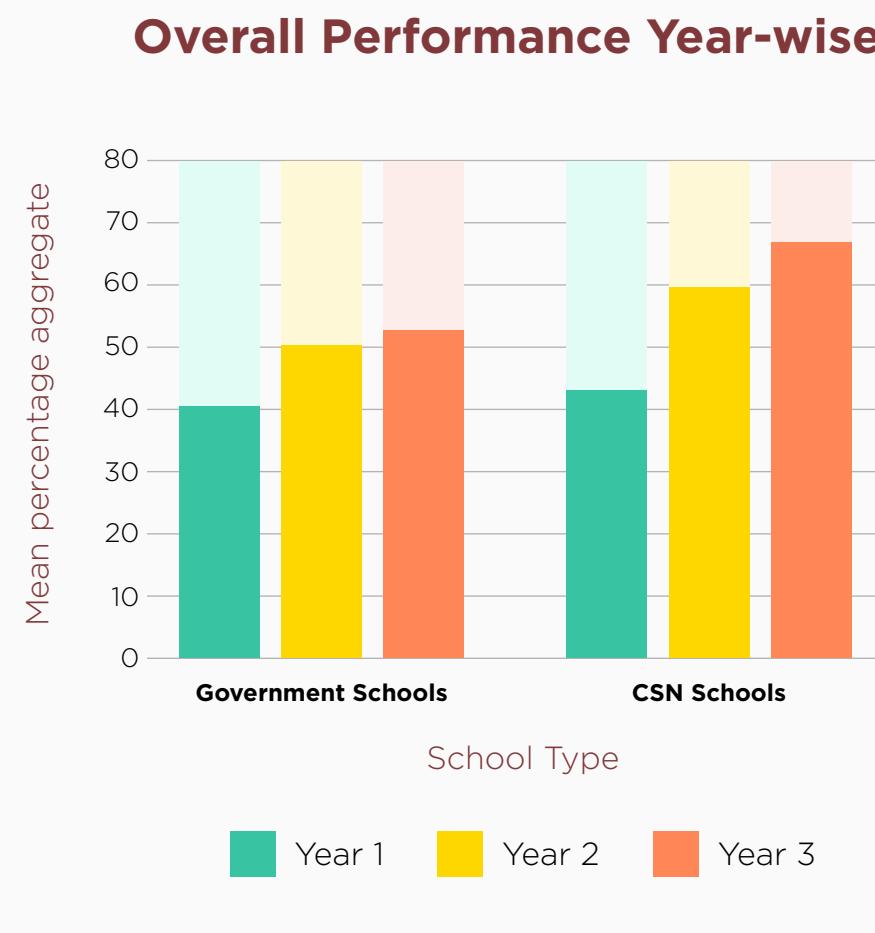
Last year's results showed students in CSN schools were progressing at twice the rate of equivalent government schools, and that rate of progress has been maintained this year.

Overall, students in CSN schools improved their test scores by 23.8% from the baseline, compared to 12.8% among students in equivalent government schools.

Researchers concluded that the findings, "not only demonstrate consistent improvement in learning outcomes in [CSN] schools, but also underscore the potential of CSN's model to enhance educational quality in public schools."

The research has also highlighted areas we can develop further. Last year, we identified gaps in some students' literacy and numeracy skills, and so we began a special focus on these basic skills to ensure all students reach the minimum expected achievement level by the end of Class 3.

We have also identified a slowing of progress as students move from Class 1 to Class 3, and so we will design interventions to ensure students maintain rapid progress throughout their primary education.



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

**173%**

average increase in number of students since we began to manage our schools.

**23.8%**

average improvement of test scores by students in CSN-managed schools compared to 12.8% in equivalent government schools.

**91%**

average student attendance in CSN-managed schools.

**6000**

number of students benefitting directly from CSN's work.

**13**

number of municipalities where CSN's lesson plans are in use.



MEET LEAP PROJECT MANAGER, RAMNATH TIWARI

When I started my teaching career, as a Teach for Nepal fellow, I was shocked to see how my students struggled with even basic literacy and numeracy skills. Despite this, many walked one to two hours every day to attend school. I realised that students were keen to learn, but the system was failing them.

That is why I joined CSN. I want to be part of a movement transforming the quality of education in Nepal's public schools. I lead our LEAP programme in rural Udayapur district, a very remote place with no paved roads – which makes traveling during the monsoon a real challenge! I live here full-time, with my CSN colleague Sundar Tamang, because we believe you can only change a community by being part of that community.

Community collaboration is at the heart of what we do. By working in partnership with local government, headteachers and teachers, we have been able to have a real impact. We now work with 13 schools – up from five last year – and support around 500 pre-primary and primary students, along with their teachers. We have seen real changes in teaching methods, behavior management and student achievement.

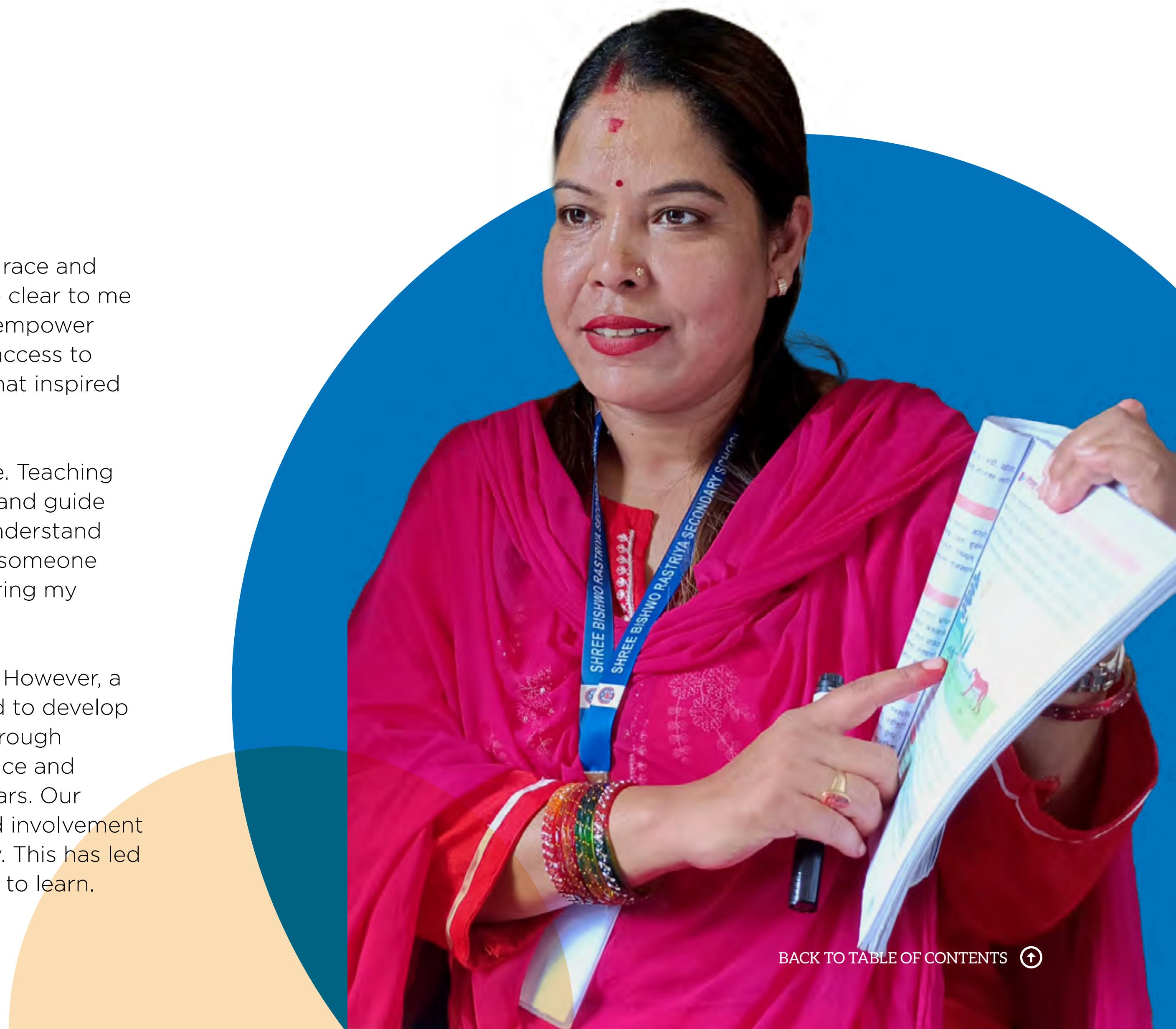
This work is not easy. I need to balance the demands of political leaders, officials, headteachers and parents, encourage teachers to change their ingrained teaching habits, as well as manage the challenges of dangerous roads, regular power cuts and water shortages. But when I see the impact we are having on children's lives, I feel it's worth it. I'm motivated to continue contributing to CSN's vital mission of bridging the education gap and empowering teachers and students alike.

MEET TEACHER, SUNITA BISTA

Growing up, I witnessed a lot of discrimination based on poverty, gender, race and other factors. Much of this injustice targeted the uneducated. It became clear to me that education was the key solution: it could help poor people secure jobs, empower women and reduce racism through awareness. As a fortunate woman with access to education, I felt a deep motivation to provide education to others. This is what inspired me to be a teacher.

Becoming a teacher has been one of the most satisfying decisions of my life. Teaching allows me to help people gain education, motivate them for a better future and guide them along the way. I love working with my students and always strive to understand their psychology first. Some students prefer a friendly teacher, others want someone who can teach effectively and some seek a safe environment to study. Tailoring my approach to their needs brings me immense satisfaction.

For almost a decade, I tried to do this based on my own limited knowledge. However, a few years ago, CSN's involvement in our school opened my eyes to the need to develop our teaching methods. Teaching should be practical, motivating students through rewards and hands-on activities rather than just lectures. With CSN's guidance and resources, our school has seen drastic improvements over the past three years. Our students are excelling, teachers are empowered through role delegation and involvement in school activities and primary students' results have improved significantly. This has led to higher enrolment, and more importantly, happy students who are excited to learn.



MEET STUDENT, SUSHILA KUMAL



When Sushila, 11, arrives at school late - as she often does - her teachers praise her. It's remarkable that she turns up at all. Her mother, who cannot speak, works as a domestic helper in other people's houses and Sushila is expected to put in hours of work each day to help her out.

Sushila may be late from time to time, but she never misses a day. "Her resilience and determination are remarkable," says Trishna Kandel, who is CSN's School Leader in Annapurna Primary School, in Abu Khareini municipality, where Sushila is a student. "She has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her studies, despite facing significant challenges in her personal life."

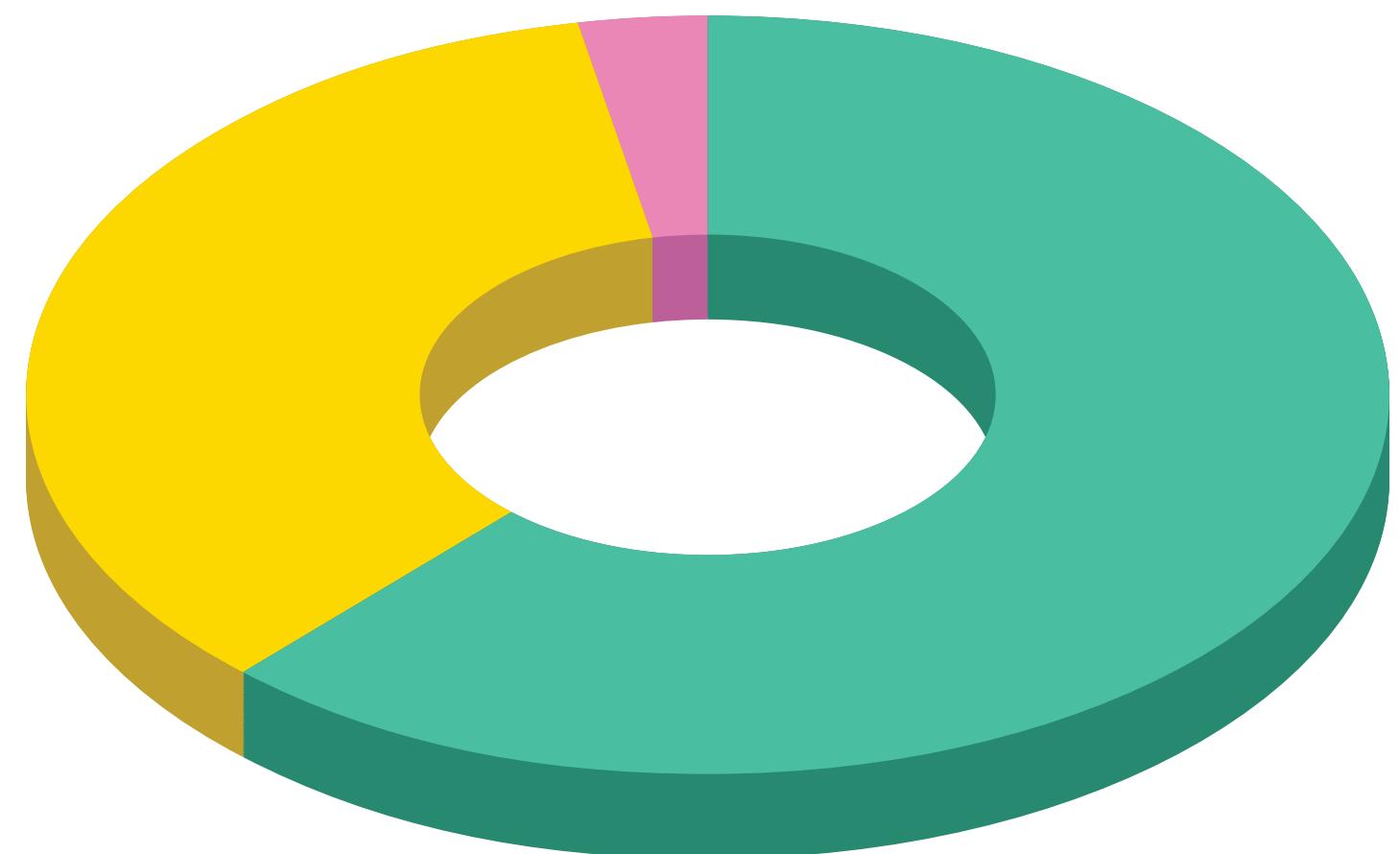
Sushila has a special talent for art. At a recent summer camp organised by CSN, and supported by the municipality, her paintings captivated everyone. This recognition has boosted her confidence and fuelled her aspirations to become a painter.

"Sushila's story is a testament to the transformative power of education and community support," says Trishna. "We are incredibly proud of her."

FINANCIALS

REVENUE

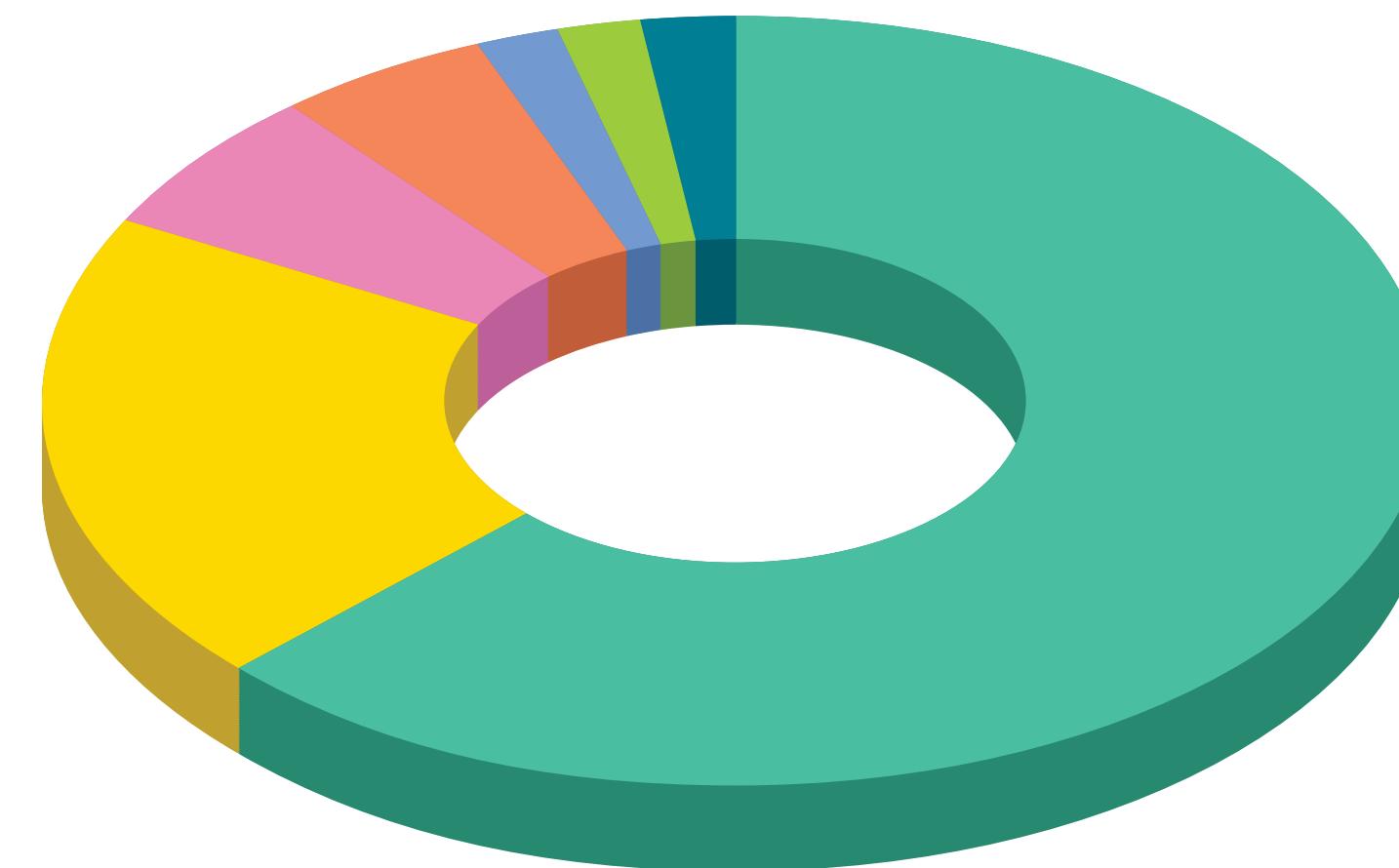
NPR 2,43,65,756 / \$181,404



Grants Local government Other

EXPENDITURE

NPR 2,41,52,175 / \$180,054



Salaries Curriculum material Operations
Training & Events M&E Administrator
Other

OUR TEAM

School Leaders

Bikash Dangal, Rojina Heka, Alish Gurung, Saloni Dangol, Biswas Regmi, Rashna Shrestha, Bina Bhattarai, Richa Shahi, Jyoti Acharya, Sangita Rokka, Usha Rai, Tek Bahadur Karki, Manoj Chaudhary, Trishna Kandel, Pawan Budha & Aruna Kumal

School Managers

Suraj Karki & Namrata Neupane

LEAP

Ramnath Tiwari, Sundar Tamang, Rajendra Kumar Deshar, Kamal Khatri, Suroj Maharjan

Programme Managers

Rojee Maharjan & Mandira Rijal

Co-Directors

Sagendra Shrestha & Rajan Maharjan

Board & Advisors

Stuti Basnyet (Development expert and consultant)

SP Kaluanee (Country Representative, Blink Now Foundation)

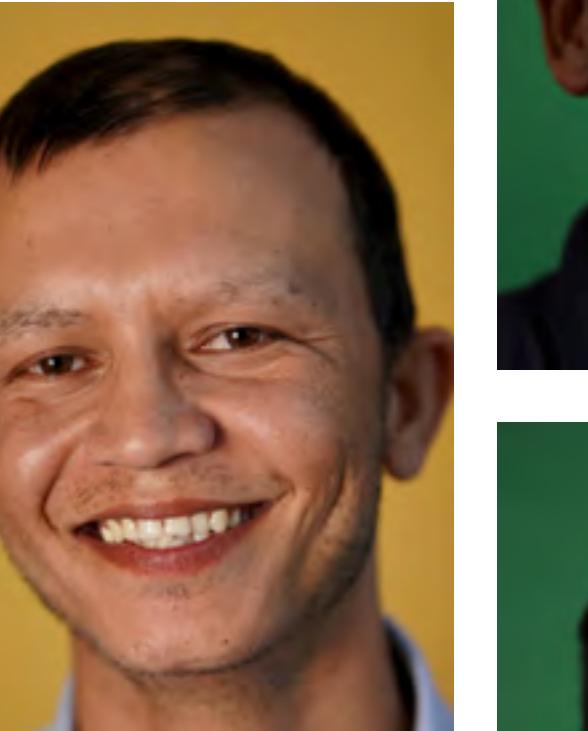
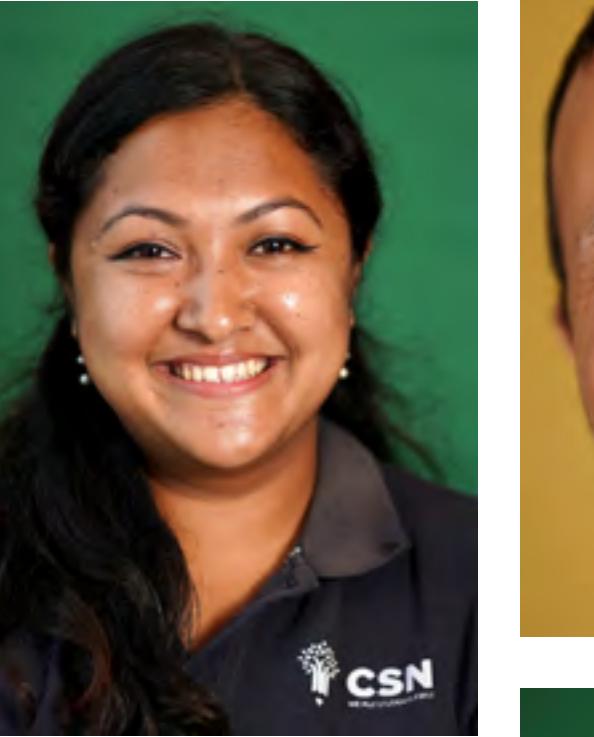
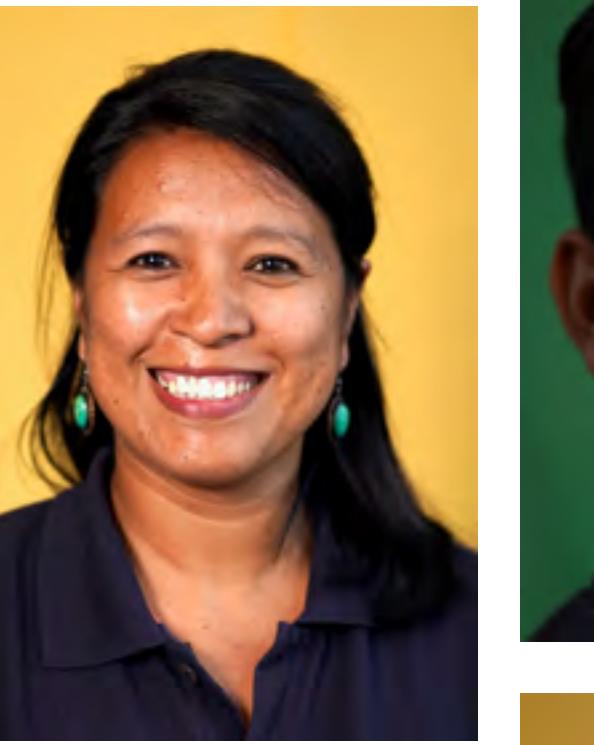
Shisir Khanal (Member of Parliament & Founder of Teach for Nepal)

Sakar Pudasaini (Founder of Karkhana)

Pete Pattisson (Co-Founder CSN)

CSN is registered as a profit-non-distributing company under the Nepal Companies Act.

For more information, visit: **www.collaborativeschools.info**





KEY FUNDING PARTNERS

We are grateful for the support of the Marr-Munning Trust, Borrows Charitable Trust, GoPhilanthropic Foundation, Progressive Education in Nepal Foundation, Woodleigh Impact and Phoenix Foundation.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



**Budhanilkantha
Municipality**



**Mahalaxmi
Municipality**



**Kirtipur
Municipality**



**Lalitpur Metropolitan
Municipality**



**Abu Khaireni Rural
Municipality**



**Limchungbung Rural
Municipality**