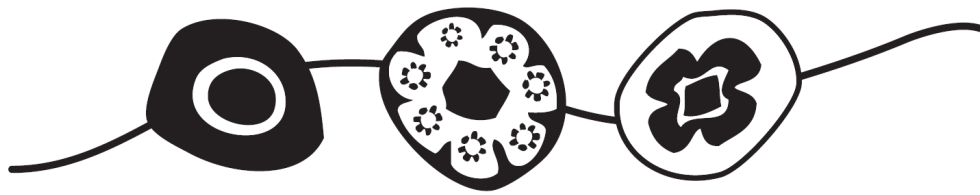


ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



Samunnat

Jewellery. Creativity. Changing Lives.

Samunnat Incorporated

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President's report 2022-23

Intro

We have had another exciting year working with Samunnat Nepal. Our fund-raising has continued to pick up since the impact of COVID lessened. We have met with our Nepalese partners regularly by Zoom and, excitingly, in face-to-face visits again. The Samunnat Nepal Board has been increasingly pro-active, and the polymer artists have grown in independence and creativity. I will describe some of the highlights below.

Samunnat Board support

The Samunnat Nepal Board has built on the ideas that came out of their strategic planning in 2022. In particular, they have developed their ideas for a Community Hub, to be developed on the vacant land opposite the Samunnat office. This is an exciting idea for the community. The board has already spent money on the preparation of the site, clearing and levelling. They are applying in the current round of Direct Aid Program funding, through the Australian Embassy, for money to carry this project forward. This followed a visit to the Embassy in which Kopila and Wendy met with the Ambassador, Felicity Volk. I have worked with them on submitting an Expression of Interest. It's an interesting and ambitious set of ideas, I have included the project description here.

Samunnat Nepal believes that by engaging with and providing for its community it can promote discussion and awareness of gender-based violence and women's rights. In this project, Samunnat will develop vacant land opposite its office as a community hub. It will be a safe, fenced open area with shelter from sun and rain. This will provide a space where young people can play and exercise safely. It is also a space where groups will hold meetings and events and the community will meet informally for discussion.

To launch this hub, we will run a 'life-skills' training package (Rupantaran) for teenage girls, developed by the Nepal Fertility Care Centre with UNICEF. The course topics include finance, health, relationships, child marriage, bullying and cyber safety. We will run this with local teachers and community leaders using a Training of Trainers model. In conjunction, Samunnat will hold a program of community engagement meetings to identify other issues the community would like included.

The hub will become a focus of community discussion and education that promotes physical and psychological health, focusing on rights of women and girls. Quantifiable outputs include the developed hub space, number of meetings held and people attending and contributing.

A visit to Nepal in November 2022

Last year, Wendy and I had our first trip back to Nepal in over three years. We spent two weeks in Birtamod. Wendy had a joyful time working with the polymer team to catch up, review, reorganise and plan. I sat with Board members and administrators to work on spreadsheets and systems for data collection and financial record keeping. We both know the roller-coaster that this can be and we were happy to ride it. Wendy will go back to her pattern of twice-yearly visits. She is also re-starting her guided trips to eastern Nepal, bringing tourists to Samunnat as part of their journey around art and craft producers in the east.

International collaborations

Wendy has continued to talk with Kopila and the polymer team several times a week. In twice-monthly Zoom meetings they have been joined by Kathleen Dustin and Christine Dumont, artists from the US and Europe. These sessions have helped the women explore creativity, work on freeing up their ideas, learn the language of design and have fun together. This collaboration has been wonderful and productive. The women look forward to these meetings with great enthusiasm. One of the outcomes of these meetings has been a bunch of new designs that are being made into jewellery as I write.

Kathleen has also taken on the responsibility of managing our online store based in the US. This has been great! There was a very successful sale for US customers that really helped with the post-COVID recovery. Unfortunately, Kathleen had a bike accident a few months ago and sustained some injuries that have needed time and rehabilitation to heal. The US shop had to close temporarily and will be reopening in August with a showcase of the new designs that the team has been working on.

There was an exciting visit to Samunnat in March this year by three Samunnat supporters from the USA. Cynthia Tinapple and Ron Lehocky were instrumental in fund-raising for Samunnat's building program that started in 2011. Kathleen Dustin has, of course, become very involved in the polymer program. All three came while Wendy was there and had a wonderful time with the Samunnat family. Kopila had a full house! Kathleen stayed on to do some polymer teaching with the team. This was an emotional time for everyone, having only met Kathleen by Zoom for two years. Now it's back to Zoom...

Programs

Wendy has been very heartened by the increasing maturity of the polymer team. The women have become significantly more confident and able to put their ideas into developing and refining designs. This has a lot to do with the input of Christine and Kathleen in their regular Zoom classes. It also comes from the great feedback that they have been getting over the years about the quality of their work. I think they are starting to believe it!

The sewing program has been also making great progress. There are three women continuing to work in the Samunnat program and others who have gone to set up their own businesses. Janice Laurent continues to meet regularly by Zoom. She was all set to go over for another visit this year but this had to be deferred due to her needing significant surgery. This went very well and Janice has recovered and is planning to make that visit.

The Samunnat Nepal Board continues to work on delivering and developing programs. It is developing new income-generation programs such as incense-making. Kopila and Lila continue to work on legal assistance and counselling. The financial cooperative has a well-established role in the local community. The accommodation remains full. We will continue to provide advice or resources to the board, where needed.

Website

Our updated website has continued to be a great base for sales and a very useful source of information. We are very happy with the decision to join our two websites and have a more coherent online presence. We use Facebook and Instagram in a limited and focussed way.

Media exposure

Wendy has been busy giving interviews in various places this year. One of these resulted in a terrific article in the US art and jewellery magazine, Ornament, published in April. We have placed a link to this on our home page. Wendy has collaborated with a long-time partner organisation, Project Didi, in re-starting trips to eastern Nepal. Clare Bartram, from Project Didi, has taken the lead on organising and promotion and we are sharing fund-raising from these trips.

Thanks

Last but not least, a big thanks to all of the members of the Samunnat Inc committee. It's great to have a group of people who are always available to help and encourage. We continue to appreciate the support of our wholesale partners, particularly Sarah Bartram, Rochelle Thorpe and Sandy Hadley.

Malcolm Moore (President) 3/8/2023

SAMUNNAT INC

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2023

INCOME	\$A	EXPENDITURE	\$A
Balance as per bank statement 1/7/22	1698.46		
Donations	4550.00	Purchases (clay, equipment)	5792.54
Sales	54673.97	Donations to Samunnat Nepal	51964.00
Other (Interest)*	1020.49	Other (Bank fees and charges)	132.60
TOTAL INCOME	<u>60244.46</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>57889.14</u>

Balance as per bank statement 30/6/23 4053.78*

*Includes one-off refund (\$1020) to correct an erroneous payment from Samunnat's PayPal account



L.C. Higgins
Hon. Treasurer
July 23, 2023

Samunnat Inc. Committee

Malcolm Moore (President/Secretary)

Cathy Bucolo (Vice-President)

Les Higgins (Treasurer)

Wendy Moore (Program Coordinator)

Kate Rotherham

Christina Vett

Objects of Samunnat Incorporated

The purpose of Samunnat Incorporated is to relieve the benevolent needs or distress of women in Nepal who are victims of violence or abuse. This support empowers women to rebuild their lives.

We achieve this purpose through the following activities

- (a) To raise funds for Samunnat Nepal, assisting their work with affected women.
- (b) To provide support and advice to the board and women of Samunnat Nepal.
- (c) To assist with Samunnat Nepal's training of women who are acquiring income-generation skills.
- (d) To facilitate collaboration with organisations and individuals who share our objectives.