



## December 2021 Sustained Grantee Spotlight: BlinkNow Foundation

The pandemic forced BlinkNow to shift to crisis assistance in 2020 and into 2021 – a role its women’s center handled with great success. Though the school and center had to close during lockdown, women filled an important need by sewing PPE. The staff also served the community first by providing emergency food kits and then by moving to a food bank model to meet immediate needs.

This summer, a surge of COVID cases nearly overwhelmed the region where BinkNow works, resulting in an astounding positive test rate of nearly 65 percent. The team continued to serve the community in several ways:

- The Health and Wellness team tracked the mental and physical health of children and students daily, administered COVID-19 tests and general health screenings, offered mental health counseling and a therapy helpline, reopened the emergency food bank and provided deliveries to the most vulnerable students and their families.
- The Children’s Home team continued to care for 40 children on a locked down campus.
- The Kopila Valley School team returned to a distance-learning curriculum, providing home learning materials to students.
- The Big Sisters’ Home continued to be a safe residential space for at-risk girls.
- With gender-based violence also on the rise globally due to the pandemic, the Women’s Center team remained in regular contact with the women enrolled in BlinkNow’s programs even while employment and literacy programs paused.
- BlinkNow was able to keep 100 of its Nepali staff employed during the waves of lockdowns.

Finally, there is an end in sight. The team is gearing up to reopen the campus, with staff vaccinated and layers of safety protocols in place.

“Social workers are heroes at Kopila Valley and everywhere. I’m so grateful for our Health and Wellness and Education teams for working every day to keep our students safe and well during these challenging times.” – Maggie Doyne, Co-founder and CEO.