

**STORIES OF
TRANSFORMATION**

CHILD-FRIENDLY LOCAL GOVERNANCE: THAMINA'S DREAM AND EXAMPLES OF RAUTAMAI



Child leader Thamina

Rautamai - 6 in northern Udayapur has been officially declared a child-friendly ward, meeting all government indicators for protecting children's rights. But how did this rural ward achieve what even some developed areas struggled with? Ward Chairman Prithvi Kumar gives credit to community engagement and support from World Vision International Nepal. *"At first, we didn't fully understand what it meant to be child-friendly. Work was happening, but we weren't sure if it truly protected children's rights. Only after training and programmes from World Vision International Nepal did it become clear,"* he explains. A key leader in this journey is Thamina, president of the ward-level child network. *"Declaring our ward child-friendly wasn't easy,"* she says. World Vision International Nepal helped to form the child clubs and child networks, guiding them to identify key issues. Thamina and her friends debated child rights, spoke with parents and teachers, and raised concerns with local representatives.

The child clubs held forums to address vaccination, birth registration, school enrollment, nutrition, child labor, child abuse, and child marriage. By consistently advocating and pressuring local authorities, these issues were gradually included in budgets and plans, helping the ward meet all child-friendly indicators. Thamina emphasizes that their work continues even after the official declaration. *"We don't stop at the announcement. If a child marriage is about to happen, we report it immediately. We also stay alert on issues like child labor or children out of school."* Through this, she and her friends have become guardians of children's rights, not just participants.

The experience also built Thamina's confidence. *"I used to be afraid to speak to elders or stand up in school. Joining the child club changed that. Now I encourage my friends to speak up too,"* she shares. Her father, Dipendra adds, *"I no longer worry when she goes out. She learns and teaches at the same time."* Today, ward budgets increasingly prioritize children, and no programme proceeds without their input. Thamina concludes, "World Vision International Nepal helped me rise from an ordinary farmer's daughter to leading social change. Our responsibility now is not just in the declaration but in ensuring these actions continue."



Wall painting with CFLG indicators

KOPILA'S COURAGE: FIGHTING GENDER DISCRIMINATION AS A POLICE OFFICER

Kopila, a 17-years old girls from Udayapur, is studying in Grade 12 and coordinates the ward level child network. She inspires many children in her village. Yet her childhood was full of hardship. Born into a financially struggling family of six, Kopila struggled from an early age. Her family could barely secure daily meals. Her community was socially and culturally disadvantaged, and she had no brothers. *"It hurt me when neighbours criticized my mother for not having a son. She would cry, and I cried with her,"* Kopila recalls. Their small hut was destroyed in a landslide during the rainy season, along with their goats and chickens. Homeless and desperate, her father left the family, leaving her pregnant mother to raise the children on her own.

Later, her mother also left home for work, Kopila became responsible for her younger sisters. *"I would go to school, but had to take my sisters along. Often, I worried more about them than my studies,"* she explains. During this period, World Vision International Nepal introduced Transformational (RUPANTARAN) Classes in her school. These classes focused on child development, leadership, and rights. *"I used to think my mother's suffering and the arguments at home were normal. After the class, I realized it was a form of domestic violence. I learned about child rights, early marriage, and discrimination, and even explained to my mother why early marriage is harmful. She listened to me,"* Kopila says. The knowledge boosted her confidence. She began speaking openly about child marriage, caste discrimination, menstrual hygiene, and women's rights. She quickly emerged as a leader in school and community activities, representing children and advocating for child rights.

Kopila excels academically and participates actively in extracurricular activities. She dreams



Local representative Manoj Kumar

of joining the Nepal Police to fight discrimination and violence against women and children. *"I have seen my mother suffer. That injustice motivates me to seek justice for others,"* she explains. Ward Chairperson Manoj Kumar praises her: *"Kopila speaks confidently and advocates for child rights issues. She is a symbol of hope for our community." "Our society looked down on us because we had no brothers, but now I will show them that daughters can bring change too,"* Kopila says. While her dream is still unfolding, her determination and voice reflect a young leader ready to create justice and equality in her community.



Child leader Kopila

BETTER THAN FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT: A STREET CART AND A SHOP



Phanindra working in his grocery shop

Phanindra, from Udayapur, runs a thriving vegetable and meat business today. His journey, however, was full of challenges. Born into a financially struggling family, he struggled to complete his school education. At 18, he went abroad to Malaysia to earn money. *"The foreign country was not what I imagined. I didn't understand the language, and the climate and food didn't suit me. I was promised 8-hour duty in a day, but it was ended up working 12 hours standing all day. It was very tough,"* Phanindra recalls. While working, he developed health problems and medical care was hard to access.

When he could no longer work, the company sent him back to Nepal. After recovering, he started selling vegetables from a street cart in his village. The income was small but enough for basic needs. World Vision International Nepal supported him through a livelihood enhancement program. Phanindra received business training and assistance to expand his vegetable trade. When he got support a fridge and generator, he moved from a street cart to a proper shop and began selling meat. *"With the fridge, I no longer worried about meat spoiling. The business became more organized, and I felt proud of my progress,"* he says.

Today, Phanindra sells up to 10 kg each of buffalo and chicken meat daily, and 100 kg of fresh vegetables. On buffalo slaughter days, meat sales reach 40–50 kg. His daily turnover is 20,000–30,000 NPR, with about 2,000 NPR profit. From the agriculture producer groups formed with the facilitation of World Vision International Nepal's support, he buys vegetables and meat directly from local farmers.

Using his earnings, he has even purchased an auto-rickshaw to collect produce from farmer's field. His wife helps run the shop, and their two children go to school. The family is thriving. Phanindra dreams of expanding further, establishing a large vegetable collection and sales center, and organizing a proper meat shop in local market. *"After wandering far and wide for work, World Vision International Nepal helped me to find self-employment. I am truly grateful,"* he says.



Phanindra selling vegetables

SEEDS OF HOPE AT HOME: MANBAHADUR'S STORY



Entrepreneur Manbahadur

Manbahadur from Udayapur, once faced a life full of struggle. His small plots of land barely produced enough food, and meeting basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter was a constant struggle. Like many young people in his village, he went abroad in search of work, hoping for a better future. *"I worked day and night under 40-degree heat, but the income was far from what I expected. My family was here, and I was there. I suffered a lot, yet I saw no progress,"* he recalls. After five years, the money he earned barely reduced the debt he took to go abroad, and it did little to support his family. Frustrated, he returned to Nepal. Back home, Manbahadur joined World Vision International Nepal's Farmer School Program, which provided training on commercial vegetable farming. *"The training opened my eyes. Our land is not useless. By planting vegetables in tunnels, we can achieve better yields,"* he says.

The program provided him agricultural tools, improved seeds, and a greenhouse tunnel. Today, he cultivates tomatoes in six tunnels. Every ripe tomato represents income and a reminder of how far he has come since his years abroad. Manbahadur and his wife, Naumaya, manage the tunnels together; watering, pruning, harvesting, and taking produce to the market. With guidance from agricultural technicians, pests are efficiently controlled, and tomato cultivation now generates over 5 Lakh annually.

To ensure fair market access, World Vision International Nepal established a vegetable collection center near the ward office. Traders now buy produce at fair prices, and Manbahadur is also a member of that center. *"Previously, traders decided the price. Now, we sell at fair rates,"* he says. In addition to vegetables, the family raises around 40 goats. Livestock income adds stability, and goat compost enriches vegetable production. *"A few years ago, supporting the family was hard. Now, with farming and goat rearing, we have a sustainable livelihood,"* says Naumaya. Manbahadur has no plans to return abroad. *"The seeds of income are right here in our own land. I will continue this profession for life and adopt new technologies,"* he affirms. His story is a powerful example of how working on one's own land can be more rewarding and sustainable than years of labor abroad. Through local agriculture and entrepreneurship, Manbahadur and his family have transformed their lives and created a model for others in the community.

DREAMS LOST ABROAD: FOUND AT HOME



Entrepreneur Balbahadur picks tomatoes in his farm

Balbahadur, from Udayapur, once faced a life he could never have imagined. Hoping for a better future for his family, he went to Qatar, but things quickly turned harsh. Incomplete legal processes left him undocumented, forcing him to do risky jobs. His health suffered, and even simple daily tasks became hard. *"I was barely surviving there and couldn't get proper treatment,"* Balbahadur recalls. Finally, with help from the embassy, he returned to Nepal. But even at home, medical care was limited, money ran out, and doctors could only suspect he had a genetic health issue. Life at home was also equally challenging. Caring for small children, managing household work, and worrying about his family kept him awake at night. *"I constantly worried about my children's education and surviving my family,"* he says.

Determined to achieve the dreams that foreign work could not, Balbahadur started small businesses, but profits were low. Then he tried tunnel farming for vegetables. *"The first tunnel yielded well, and I realized I could build my future in farming,"* he smiles. Around this time, World Vision International Nepal, through its local partner HURUNDEC, enrolled him in a farmer school for professional vegetable cultivation training. This marked a new chapter in his life. Today, Balbahadur is a leading farmer in his village. He grows vegetables every season without pesticides or chemical fertilizers, inspiring other farmers. He no longer worries about market access or fair prices. A local vegetable and fruit collection center, established under the farmer school program, allows him to sell his produce at fair rates. *"Now I don't worry about selling my vegetables, and I feel motivated to increase production,"* he says.

He now earns up to 5 lakh rupees a year, covering household expenses, sending his children to school, and improving family nutrition. *"I went abroad and returned with illness, but farming in my village has given me respect and income,"* he says emotionally. *"I will dedicate my life to agriculture and keep experimenting with new techniques."* With support from World Vision International Nepal and local organizations, many others in the community have become self-reliant through vegetable farming, goat rearing, poultry, or pig farming. Local ward chairperson Prithvi Bahadur notes, *"World Vision International Nepal has introduced our community to new practices. This program is a successful example of using local resources for the community's benefit."* Balbahadur's journey is not only about personal struggle; it is a symbol of community transformation. The hope he lost abroad has been rediscovered in his own village, lighting the way for his family and neighbors.

CHILD LEADERSHIP FOR CHILD RIGHTS: THE STORY OF ASMINA

Asmina Thapa from, Sindhuli is still a teenager, yet her thinking and leadership skills are remarkably mature. She studies at Shree Kaushika Secondary School and also serves as the president of the ward-level child network. Her proactive work on child rights has impressed even the senior members of her community. Currently, her ward is preparing to be declared a "Child-Friendly Ward", a process that requires completing 51 indicators. To expedite the process, create a child-friendly environment, and hold local representatives accountable, Asmina and her team have been continuously raising their voices and to advocate for change.

During fiscal year 2025/26, when budget planning began, Asmina launched a campaign through her child network. She explains, *"When we learned that the ward was preparing its annual plan, we organized a ward-level child gathering. Through this meeting, we identified the real needs of children, such as safe and child-friendly drinking water in schools, sanitation, opportunities for play, and awareness programs. Based on these, we prepared concrete demands and formally submitted them to the ward office."* The ward office took their demands seriously and incorporated them into the budget and programs. Ward Chairperson Krishna Prasad Pokharel remarks, *"When children themselves come forward with their demands, it makes our work easier. These issues could have been overlooked due to our daily workload. But their activism has helped us prioritize child-friendly programs."*

Moreover, Asmina and her team maintain regular interaction with local representatives, tracking on the progress of the child-friendly declaration. This ongoing monitoring has boosted their confidence. Today, they bring issues such as school challenges, violence against children, and child labor to the attention of the ward. This has further strengthened their leadership skills and visibility in the community. Ban Kumar Karn, principal of Shree Kaushika Secondary School, notes, *"When children are aware and organized, we see a noticeable difference in the school. They speak up about their rights, pay attention to cleanliness, and even educate their peers."*

World Vision International Nepal has played a significant role in this transformation. The organization supported children in forming child clubs and networks and guided them in running rights-based programs. It also assisted schools in creating child-friendly structures. Students now have access to safe drinking water, separate waste bins for proper sanitation, and junk food restrictions in classrooms. The active participation of children in Sindhuli offers a glimpse of a bright future. Their engagement in child development programs has also helped local authorities become more accountable. The proactive leadership demonstrated by Asmina and her friends increases confidence that the ward will soon be officially declared child-friendly local governance.



Child leader Asmina

SCHOOL KITCHEN GARDEN TRANSFORMS LEARNING AND NUTRITION

At Shree Jansewi Primary School in Sindhuli, unused land has been turned into a thriving kitchen garden. Once barren, the school grounds now produce fresh vegetables and fruits that provide healthy snacks for students. While the government of Nepal provides day meals for primary students, the limited quantity and variety were not enough to meet children's nutritional needs. Many children from marginalized families still lacked balanced meals at home. To address this, World Vision International Nepal introduced the Green School concept, which has become a model for the community. Principal Chudamani Bastola praises the effort: *"We are farmers ourselves, but we never thought of using school land this way. After World Vision's training, we began growing vegetables at school. Teachers and students now work together during free time, and the harvest has been excellent."* The fresh produce now makes school meals more nutritious.



Students and teachers working in the school garden

Teacher Gayatra Pahadi highlights the learning benefits of garden: *"Children may forget theories, but when they plant, water, and watch crops grow, they learn agriculture in practice. At the same time, their meals become healthier."* Parents have also noticed the change. *"Children no longer need to buy snacks outside. This reduces household expenses and improves health,"* says teacher Gayatra Pahadi. School Management Committee Chair Mahesh Pokharel calls it a *"model practice."* He adds, *"Parents used to worry about what children eat at day time, but the kitchen garden has solved that concern. If we add more variety, it will be even better."* To support schools, World Vision International Nepal has provided training, farming tools, seeds, and safety guidance. They have also helped schools become more child friendly with fencing, toilets, clean water, and waste management. Now, not only Shree Jansewi Primary school but also nearby schools are adopting kitchen gardens, moving toward becoming both child friendly and nutrition friendly institutions. Sustaining and expanding these efforts will ensure longterm impact for children's health and education.



Harvesting vegetables in the school garden



Green vegetables grown in the school garden



Teachers and students happy in the school garden

A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE: PAVITRAMAYA AND JHALAK BAHADUR

Pabitrāmaya from Sindhuli has long struggled with poverty. Her family of five including her husband Jhalak Bahadur, two children, and in-laws owned nothing but a small piece of barren land. It wasn't even enough to grow rice. *"Life was a constant struggle,"* she remembers. Like many young men in the village, Jhalak went abroad to work, dreaming of one day buying fertile land for farming. After three years, he returned and was able to fulfill part of that dream by purchasing land suitable for growing rice. But with no savings and debts piling up, he had to go abroad again.

At the same time, COVID-19 pandemic started. Jhalak returned back to Nepal when his mother fell seriously ill. Sadly, she passed away. While the family was still grieving, another tragedy struck, Jhalak fell from a tree while cutting grass and injured his spine. After surgery in Kathmandu, doctors said he would be paralyzed from the waist down. At just 35 years old, all his dreams were shattered. To pay the medical bills, the family had to sell the farmland they had worked so hard to buy. Once again, they were left nothing. Life felt like it was starting from zero. At this difficult time, World Vision International Nepal stepped in to help. Through its livelihood improvement program, they supported Pabitrāmaya start a small grocery shop. *"I had never run a shop before and didn't have much confidence," she says. "But with the training and the goods provided, I realized, 'Yes, I can do this.'"*



Jhalak Bahadur selling goods in his grocery shop

Today, the shop is functioning well. It helps support their family and saves villagers time



Pabitrāmaya's son reading at home

from traveling long distances for daily needs. Pabitrāmaya takes care of the house, farm, and children, while Jhalak manages the shop. *"Without this shop, we had no other choice. It has given us hope to live again,"* she shares. Their son, Praveen, is now in Grade 5. With help from World Vision International Nepal, he receives books, bags, and notebooks. Both parents help him in his studies. *"Our biggest dream is to provide good educate to our son. If he succeeds, he won't have to face the hardships we did,"* says Pabitrāmaya. Running the shop has also improved their identity in the community. *"Before, it was hard to get even a small loan. Now, traders trust us and supply goods on credit,"* she says proudly.

Looking ahead, they plan to open a bakery, since none exists in their village. They have already talked about this idea with the local ward office. Despite all their hardships, Pabitrāmaya and Jhalak never gave up. The grocery shop has become a new beginning for their family. *"We still face challenges, but this shop has given us a new life. We are determined to build a better future,"* Pabitrāmaya concludes.

SAVING FUTURE IN A KHUTRUK (PIGGY BANK)



Karishma

Karishma is a Grade 10 student at a local school in Sindhuli. She is good at her studies and actively takes part in extracurricular activities. Her teachers and classmates admire her for her bright mind and enthusiasm. But a few years ago, her life was very different. Her family was struggling with financial hardship. Her father had to leave home often to earn money, and her mother, Kamala, worked hard to maintain the household expenses. It was difficult even to manage enough food each day, and there was hardly anything left to support Karishma's education or personal growth.

During this time, World Vision International Nepal started a child protection program in Karishma's community. Because of her family's difficult situation, Karishma was enrolled in the program. She participated on the training sessions where she learned about child rights, the importance of education, good nutrition, and saving money. As part of the program, she received a small savings box, locally known as a *khutruke*. *"At first, I thought saving money was only for adults," Karishma says. "But when I started putting in small amounts, I saw how even tiny savings can grow into something big."*

She began saving money she received during festivals and the pocket money meant for school snacks. Her father, Purnabhadur, says, *"She didn't need anyone to tell, she started saving on her own. I'm very proud of her."* Last year, Karishma saved 4,000 rupees in her *khutruke*. She used the money to manage all her school books and notebooks. *"I could have asked my parents, but I know how hard things are for them. It felt good to buy my school supplies with my own savings,"* she shares.

Karishma's discipline has inspired her younger siblings and other children in the community. Her mother, Kamala, says, *"provide knowledge to children for saving is important things instead of spending carelessly has brought a real change."* At the same time, World Vision International also supported the family's livelihood. They provided training, good-quality seeds, farming tools, and

helped build a goat shed. Now, her parents are involved in commercial farming and goat raising. Kamala shares, *"We no longer struggle to manage daily meals. Our farm and animals help us cover household expenses."* With increased income, the family can now focus better on their children's education, health, and nutrition. Karishma's efforts have been recognized by her school and the community, encouraging her to dream even bigger. *"I want to become a doctor and help families like mine with health care,"* she says with confidence.

For Karishma, the 4,000 rupees she saved in her *khutruke* means more than just money. It represents independence, confidence, and hope for a better future. Her story shows that small steps, taken with determination, can lead to big changes. Just like the coins in her savings box, small dreams when nurtured with effort can grow into lasting success.



Karishma and her mother counting money

FROM SAVINGS TO NUTRITION: KAMALA'S TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY

Kamala, from Sindhuli, grew up in a financially deprived family where even basic needs were hard to meet. The little money she earned from occasional wage labour was never enough, and there was no stable income to rely on. With not enough food at home, it felt impossible to take care of her children's education, health, and nutrition. Kamala says, *"I was always worried about how to feed and educate my children."* During this difficult time, World Vision International Nepal helped to form a women's farmer group in her village. Kamala joined the group, which focused on empowering women by promoting income-generating activities, encouraging savings, and helping them build a better future.

Each member of the group started small businesses. Even small earnings made it possible to save money. Weekly contributions, though little at first, slowly added up to a good amount. The savings group also became a space for women to share their experiences, talk about problems, and take loans when needed. Kamala shares, *"At first, we didn't trust the process."*

But later, we saw how small savings can grow into big amount." With support from the group, Kamala took her first loan of NPR 4,500 to buy a piglet. After a few months of care, she sold it for a good profit, which increased her confidence. Then she used the money to start goat farming. Today, she owns over 50 goats and also raises chickens. Kamala grows crops such as maize, wheat, millet etc. on her land and she also cultivates green grass to feed the animals.

The project also provided her with useful farming tools like a hand tractor, maize threshing machine, goat shelter, and grass seeds. Kamala says, *"With training and proper tools, our work became easier, costs went down, and production has increased."* Now, Kamala's family is fully engaged in these activities of livelihood. Her husband, who had been working abroad, has returned to support the business. They have also learned how to sell their products effectively and get the best price. *"Earlier, we ate whatever was available at the market. Now, we enjoy vegetables, fruits, and grains from our own farm. We are healthy and well-nourished,"* Kamala says proudly. Her daughter Karishma, currently studying in Grade 10, is also enrolled in World Vision International Nepal's programs for education



Kamala taking care of a pig



Kamala attending a S4N meeting

and nutrition support. Kamala dreams of helping her daughter become a doctor. Beyond Kamala, the program has boosted the confidence of women across the entire community. The group, named Laligurans Savings Group, is now registered with the rural municipality. Kamala shares, *"We will save more systematically, provide loans transparently, and seek budgets for women-focused programs. World Vision International Nepal showed us the way, and now we are determined to continue on our own."* Kamala's journey is not just a story of one family; it represents the transformation of an entire community. A small start in savings has made her self-reliant, secured her family, and inspired courage among women throughout her village.

THE STORY OF ABHINASH'S LEADERSHIP JOURNEY



Abhinash interacting with child club members

Abhinash from Mahottari district is the president of a child club. After joining the club, he gradually became known as a child leader in community. His family's economic condition was weak. His daily routine was to help his parents with household works, take care of livestock, and attend school. *"Sometimes I couldn't even go to school because of housework,"* he recalls. When World Vision International Nepal facilitated the formation of a child club under its child protection program, Abhinash and his friends joined the club. The child club provided him an opportunity to bring-out his hidden leadership capabilities. *"Earlier, I didn't even know what child rights meant,"* he says. *"But after attending training, I learned many things. Children also have the right to live, to develop, to play, to study, and to be safe from violence."* After joining the child club, he began discussing about child rights related issues with his friends. Now, when they hear about cases of child marriage, child labour, violence, or sexual abuse, they no longer remain silent.

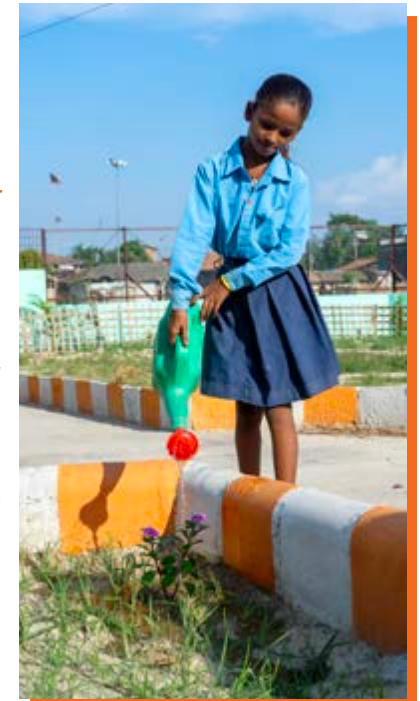
"We immediately inform the concerned authorities about such incidents. Whenever we find out that a child is not going to school, we inform the municipality and help to make an environment for that child to return back to school," Abhinash explains about his campaign. In the beginning, things were not easy. *"When we spoke up, people used to say, 'You are just small kids, don't talk about big matters.' But after knowing about our rights through the child club, we never stayed silent. Together with friends, we kept raising issues of child rights,"* he remembers. Over time, the community began to pay attention to their concerns. Today, children also take part in many social programs in the village. *"Before, our voices were ignored. But now, not only do they listen, they even ask for our suggestions,"* he says happily. World Vision International Nepal has also been organizing training programs for child development focusing on the issues such as internet literacy, public speaking, and story writing to conducting public events. Among these, Abhinash's favourite work is the training on event management. *"That gave me the confidence to speak,"* he says. *"Now I can talk freely about our rights."* He also found the internet awareness training very useful. *"Nowadays, many people get scammed online. The training taught us how to avoid such incidents,"* he shares. Abhinash is disciplined. His courage and clarity in speaking have made even the elders in the village interested in what he has to say. His active involvement has also encouraged his friends. *"Earlier, children were not allowed to speak in public matter. But now I can confidently tell everyone that we are also an important part of this society. Our voices must be heard; otherwise, we will make ourselves heard loudly,"* he says with confidence.

They have even submitted an appeal to the municipality to prepare programs ensuring child rights. Their ward is now preparing to be declared as child-friendly local governance. Abhinash believes this will help address many issues related to child rights. Abhinash's leadership has given a new direction to the trend of child participation in the village. The voice of a teenager has awakened the community. *"If I had not received the courage and opportunity given by World Vision International Nepal, I would probably still be limited with housework. But now, I have become the voice of my friends,"* Abhinash says with a smile.

GREEN SCHOOL: HAPPY STUDENTS

Nepal Rastriya Basic School in Mahottari district, is now vibrant and green. Trees and plants around the premises have enhanced the greenery, and a strong boundary keeps animals out. Students now enjoy a safe learning environment. But just a few years ago, the condition of the school was not so good. Although the school had buildings, the premises were barren. Recalling those days, Principal Rameshwor Mandal says, *"At that time, the school grounds were deserted. There was no compound bar. We did not have no enough desks and benches. The condition of sanitation was also very poor. It was difficult to ensure the regular attendance of children to."* With the launch of World Vision International Nepal's Green School Programme, the condition of school has completely changed. Now, classrooms are equipped with modern facilities such as smart digital boards, seating arrangements for younger children, book corners with additional reading materials, ceiling fans for the summer, and support for constructing new buildings. The principal says, *"Earlier, limited classrooms was a big challenge for us. But now, with new buildings and resources, teaching has become much easier."*

Teacher Rejina Khatun is also excited about the changes. She says, *"World Vision's support has made teaching, learning, and classroom activities much more convenient. Seeing students' study with joy gives us the real feeling of teaching in a good school."* As part of the greenery campaign, the school has planted trees and saplings in empty spaces. Principal Mandal adds, *"We have also started farming to grow vegetables for the day meal. This not only helps provide nutritious food but also gives students practical knowledge of agriculture."* To manage this effort, an Eco Club has been formed at the school. The club takes the lead in vegetable farming and greenery promotion. Teachers and students work together in the school garden which provides a practical knowledge to them. Along with vegetables, flowers and other plants have also been planted, making the school not just a place of education but also a destination to experience closeness with nature.



Student watering flower



Students watching cartoons at school

With the improved school environment, students' attraction to classes and attendance have increased. Kamani, a Grade 8 student, shares, *"Nowadays, I enjoy to coming to school. During free time, we get to watch cartoons and fun videos on the classroom television. Sometimes we go to the garden with teachers to plant or harvest vegetables, and at that time it feels like being with family."* Nepal Rastriya Basic School has become more than just a place for learning, it is now a model centre for education, cleanliness, greenery, and co-living. By turning a barren ground into a green space, creating joyful classrooms, and teaching life skills, this school's journey has become an inspiration for other schools in neighboring communities.

FROM MILK SELLER TO A LAND OWNER



Rekhadevi milking a buffalo

Rekhadevi's family from Mahottari district was in a very poor economic condition. They had no land of their own and no reliable source of income. Their family of six lived in a small hut built on someone else's land. The children did not attend school regularly, and the parents showed little concern for it. Their nutritional status was very poor. Rekhadevi's husband used to regularly travel to India for labour work. Their family life felt like a journey without direction. During a child growth monitoring programme run by World Vision International Nepal in the community, it was found that Rekhadevi's daughter was in poor health. Naturally, Rekhadevi was worried when she knew that her seven years old daughter Arushi was malnourished. Volunteers suggested to provide good food and appropriate care to improve the nutrition. Filled with hope, Rekhadevi joined a Positive Deviance Hearth Programme (PD Hearth) along with her daughter. There, she learned many things about nutrition. She says, *"I understood the importance of nutrition at that programme. I learned how to prepare nutritious food using grains, pulses, vegetables, and other items available at home. We were also taught feeding practices for children and hygiene."*

After participating in the 12-day PD Hearth programme, not only Rekhadevi, many other women in her community gained improvement in their awareness of health, hygiene, and nutrition. They began practicing the knowledge and skills at home, which has had a direct impact on their children's health. They also continue to visit health facilities from time to time to monitor their children's nutrition. With regular nutritious meals, the children are now healthier and stronger. World Vision International Nepal also registered her daughter in the child sponsorship programme, supporting her education and health. She was supported the essential education support such as notebooks, textbooks, a bag, and an umbrella which supported her in attending school regularly. Excitedly, seven years old Arushi says, *"I enjoy studying and playing with my friends at school. I want to become a teacher in future."*

Children's health had started improving, and nutrition became better, but the family's economic condition remained the same. To improve their livelihood, World Vision International Nepal supported Rekhadevi with buffalo rearing. The seed money provided to buy a buffalo, she started a dairy shop. She happily shares, *"Now I sell milk every day. By selling milk in the market, I am earning good profit. I am able to save up to 10,000 rupees per month. I deposit that money regularly in the bank. With those savings, I have even managed to buy a small piece of land in the village to build a house. My landless family has now become landowners."* She expressed her happiness. She adds, *"If I had not received support from World Vision International Nepal for buffalo rearing, I would still be forced to feed my family through daily labour. We would still be living in that small hut on someone else's land by the roadside."* Now, she dreams of making her dairy farming more systematic and commercial. She is also seeking further support from the local government and other agencies. Her determination shows that she may soon be recognized as a successful dairy farmer in her community.

A JOURNEY TO PROSPERITY THROUGH A GROCERY SHOP

Mehanaph's family lives in Mahottari district. With five children, there are nine members in her household. The responsibility of managing all the responsibilities of family is rested on her husband's shoulders. He lived in India, working as a tailor. The family had no land in the village. Sometimes, Mehanaph worked as a daily wage laborer, but most of time was leisure at home. Life was very difficult with the limited earning. Her nine-year-old son, Imawat, has a physical disability. Due to problems with his legs, he can't walk properly. He was not able to go to school and had not even got birth registration certificate.

Considering the family's vulnerable condition, World Vision International Nepal registered her child (RC) under the child protection program. Through this, the child was supported to go to school, obtain a birth certificate, and improve his nutrition. However, without improving the family's economic condition, sustainable changes in the children's condition were not possible.



Mehanaph selling goods in her grocery shop



Imawat going to school with his mother

Therefore, Mehanaph's family was identified as ultrapoor family and supported to start a grocery shop through the project. She gained training about the grocery shop management. This shop was the turning points of Mehanaph's life. She was started to gain good income and profit from the shop. Her routine has been changed. She says, *"Earlier, the whole day just passed by doing nothing, but now I have no free time from morning to evening. I go to the market for the shop, feed the children, maintain cleanliness, send them to school, open the shop, and run the business, my hands are never idle."* As income increased, she called her husband back from India. Together, they gradually invested more in the shop. Now their store has become larger, and business has expanded. In free time, her husband also run tailoring work at home.

She says, *"Now, we earn more than 10,000 rupees a month. The family's basic needs are fulfilled."* They have also developed the habit of saving for the future. *"We understand that today's small savings will be the foundation for tomorrow,"* she says. They have opened a savings account in a nearby bank. Today, there has been a significant change in Mehanaph's family. All the children go to school. The family is able to provide them notebooks, textbooks, and nutritious food. Her son with a disability, Imawat, happily says, *"Now I go to school regularly. My parents have stitched good clothes for me. I have nice books, pens, and notebooks. I love studying and playing with my friends."* Thus, Mehanaph's family struggle and the small support to run a grocery shop have turned into a successful journey, now serving as a source of inspiration for other vulnerable families as well.

FROM MALNOURISHED TO WELL-NOURISHED



Asha Kumari's son takes part in growth monitoring programme

Asha Kumari's four-year-old child from Mahottari district was struggling with poor health. He often fell sick. The family's economic condition was also poor. And there was a limited awareness about health and nutrition. Asha was a daily wage labourer. The child used to spend the whole day playing in dust and dirt. Meanwhile, World Vision International Nepal had introduced a Growth Monitoring programme in her community. Asha attended the programme along with her child. It was found that her child's nutrition and physical growth was poor in growth monitoring.

"The health worker told me that my child was malnourished," Asha recalls. "Hearing that made me very sad. I had been taking care of him as much as I could, but I worried about how he could get better." A community volunteer suggested that she participate in the PD Hearth programme. So, she went there with her child. *"I used to think that if I could provide market-bought food to my child, he would be healthy. But I felt bad because I couldn't always buy it,"* she remembers. However, after taking part in the 12-day group cooking programme (PD Hearth), her thinking was changed. She clearly understood that nutritious meals could be prepared using locally available grains, pulses, green vegetables, fruits, fish, and meat. *"Nutrition is available right in our own homes,"* Asha shares with excitement. *"But earlier I didn't know this fact. Before, whatever we ate, we used to give the same to the child. Now I know that children need separate, balanced meals,"* she explains.

Within just 12 days, her child's health started improving. When volunteers measured his weight, it had increased by 200 grams. *"Hearing that my child's weight had increased by 200 grams made me happy,"* Asha says with a smile. From that day onwards, she started paying more attention to her child's nutrition. She continued the practices she learned from the PD Hearth programme at home as well. She made it her routine to feed the child on time, maintain hygiene, and follow proper handwashing habits. She also developed the habit of keeping herself, her child, and her house and yard clean. After realizing that the main source of nutritious food could be her own kitchen garden, Asha began to make her garden green. Through the programme, she also received improved seeds. She started vegetable farming. *"Now there is always some green vegetable growing in our garden. We don't need to buy vegetables and it helps to save some money, and the children get to eat fresh food."* Not only that, she also started fruit farming. She believes this will not only support her family's nutrition but also help with future livelihoods. After 28 days of starting the PD Hearth programme, again she took her child to growth monitoring and it showed her child's weight had again increased by 200 grams. Now her son is healthy and no longer falls sick as frequently as before. Asha has even enrolled him in a nearby school. *"Now my son is also growing up like other children; playing, learning, and studying. That makes me happy,"* Asha says.



Asha Kumari's son having food

WORLD VISION: A FRIEND IN CRISIS

The community of Radhadevi from Rautahat lies on the bank of Bagmati River. Every monsoon, floods bring constant suffering to this village. In July 2024, a massive flood entered to the village, displacing hundreds of families and destroying crops. Ward Chairperson Yogendra Mahato recalls, *"The entire village was flooded. For a week, it remained underwater. Those with concrete houses had to live on their rooftops, while many others had to leave the village. Around 500 households were swamped."*

Local resident Radhadevi also remembers that terrifying flood. She says, *"I was cooking when the flood suddenly covered our courtyard. It was around seven in evening. As the water rose, I grabbed the rice I was cooking and about five kilos of raw rice, and with my family, rushed to a neighbour's concrete house rooftop to save our lives. My house went under the water in front of my eyes. All our government documents, my children's schoolbooks, everything was swept away. Around 50 of us, mostly from small thatched houses like mine, were packed together on one roof. Our situation was miserable."*

Understanding the severity, World Vision International Nepal immediately conducted an



Project supported house



Rakesh Kumar doing homework

assessment. World Vision International Nepal provided essential materials such as tarpaulins, mosquito nets, blankets, solar lights, hygiene kits, and sanitary pads for women to 301 affected families. In addition, 750 families received food assistance. For families who had lost all their grain and clothing in the flood, this was a lifeline. To help children who had lost their study materials return to school, exercise books and stationery were distributed. Pregnant and lactating women were given nutritional supplies, and health camps were organized to minimize potential health risks. Many poor families who had lost their homes could not afford to rebuild. For them, World Vision International Nepal supported the construction of two-room houses with kitchen facilities, which provided enormous relief. Radhadevi says, *"If the organization had not helped us rebuild, we would probably still be living under tarpaulins. World Vision International Nepal became our biggest supporter in the emergency."*

When the flood destroyed water facilities, the community also faced drinking water shortages. The World Vision International Nepal helped restore water supply systems. Another challenge for the villagers was that their farmland was located across the river, making access difficult during monsoon. They had an old, unsafe boat, which was risky. To solve this, World Vision International Nepal provided a new boat. In this way; by ensuring food, shelter, clothing, water, and even access to farmland, the organization helped this community withstand disaster. Today, the locals describe World Vision International Nepal as their *"friend in times of crisis."*

FOUR LAKHS IN A YEAR THROUGH SCULPTURE ART

Anand works as a sculptor. He brings statues to life by carefully blending colours and painting them beautifully. His sculptures are attractive and appealing, but behind their beauty lies the severe reality of his struggles. It took him four days to paint a single statue, and he earned just 800 rupees for it. How could a family survive on 200 rupees a day? Anand's family has six members, including two children; 11 years old son Krish and 6 years old daughter Priyanka. Meeting their daily needs with such a small income was a huge challenge. Because of weak financial condition, his children's nutrition status was poor. Busy with work, Anand could not pay attention to whether his children were going to school or not.

In his community, World Vision International Nepal was implementing child development and livelihood improvement programmes for families in financial hardship. Through this programme, Anand was provided with a statue-painting machine. This reduced his workload significantly, as the machine could color many statues in a short time. Instead of spending four days on one statue, he could now finish painting up to 50 statues in a single day. As a result, his monthly income increased to over 40,000 rupees. From a family that once struggled to make even 30,000 rupees in a year, they began earning more than that in a month. Their poverty gradually faded away. He says, *"I never imagined I could earn this much from the same work. I have learned that if you continue with dedication, success ultimately comes."*

Now, Anand has opened a savings account at a microfinance and deposits regularly. His children attend school regularly; one is in Grade 5 and the other in Grade 4. With the increased income, they have also improved their kitchen and developed the habit of preparing and eating balanced meals. His wife has become a member of a savings for Nutrition Group (S4N). There, she makes weekly savings and participates in discussions on health, nutrition, child rights, and women's rights. This has helped raise awareness for both Anand and his wife. Although they had no farmland or other income sources, the family is now recognized in the village as entrepreneurs. They have also expanded their sculpture business, moving it from a corner of the village to the centre of the community. Anand still dreams bigger. He says, *"I wish I could develop this into a proper industry. If I succeed, I could provide an opportunity of jobs to other people and families struggling with poverty like mine, and also provide them the skills of self-entrepreneurship."*



Anand working in his workshop



Anand's son Krish reading book

ANUSKA'S STORY OF NUTRITION IMPROVEMENT



Anuska's mother preparing her for school

Mithiles, a mother from Rautahat district, lives with her family of seven including two daughters. Due to their miserable financial condition, even affording daily meals was difficult. Special food was prepared only during festivals. As a result, her children suffered from poor nutrition; especially her 48-month- daughter, Anuska, whose condition was fragile. When World Vision International Nepal carried out a "Growth Monitoring" programme in the community, Mithiles knew that her daughter was malnourished. She recalls, *"At first, I didn't even know why my daughter was weak. Later, through the programme, I realized that her nutrition status was not good."*

Seeking advice, she consulted with health workers and volunteers. They encouraged her to pay attention to diet and hygiene. Soon after, she was invited to participate in World Vision International Nepal's 12-day Positive Deviance Hearth (group cooking and feeding) programme. Mithiles attended the sessions regularly, where she learned important lessons about health, nutrition, and hygiene. She says, *"I used to think nutrition meant expensive food only rich people could afford. How could poor people like us manage that? But I realized that the real source of nutrition was right in our own kitchen gardens."*

Through the PD hearth sessions, she learned how to prepare nutritious meals, what foods to combine in the right proportions, and how to improve kitchen hygiene. The results appeared quickly. At first, weight of Anuska was only 9.5 KG. In just 12 days, she gained 300 grams. After completion the PD hearth session, Mithiles continued practicing what she had learned; keeping the kitchen clean, and including green vegetables, pulses, grains, and fruits from her garden in daily meals. This not only improved Anuska's health but also the overall family's diet.

After 28 days, Anuska's weight increased to 10 KG. Three months later, she gained another 400 grams, and within a year her weight increased by 600 grams, reaching 11 KG. Mithiles was so happy with this progress of weight. She says, *"Seeing my daughter's increased weight made me truly happy. For me, it was a big victory,"* she said proudly. Meanwhile, World Vision International Nepal also supported her in improving her kitchen garden. She received training, farming tools, and quality seeds for seasonal vegetables and fruits. With this help, her backyard garden turned green. Excitedly, she says, *"Earlier my garden was barren, but now every season, we grow some vegetables. It not only provides us nutrition but also saves money, as we don't need to buy everything from the market."*

Today, Anuska has started going to school and is doing well in her studies. Mithiles shares her experience with neighbours, encouraging them as well. She says, *"Just like me, others should also know that nutrition is not only about money. The solution can be found in our own homes and gardens."* Through her struggle and learning, Mithiles transformed her once weak and malnourished daughter into a healthy child. Today, she stands as a source of inspiration not only for her family but also for the entire community.

FROM ONE HUNDRED TO FIVE THOUSAND IN A DAY



Ramshrestha selling goods

Ramshrestha from Rautahat, has faced a life full of struggle. His two daughters Archana and Raju are physically disable. Archana is 12 and Raju is eight years old. His hardship was increased when both of his daughters were born with physical disabilities. As the sole breadwinner of a family of six, the responsibility of supporting the household rested entirely on his shoulders. He earned only 100 rupees in a day as a carpenter, *"I worked tirelessly, sweating all day,"* he recalls, *"but at the end of the day, I often had nothing in hand to feed my family. Surviving was a daily struggle."*

One day, Ramshrestha got in an accident and fractured his leg. This left the family even more vulnerable. The primary source of income was suddenly gone, and with both daughters unable to attend school due to their disabilities, the family's situation became critical. During this challenging time, World Vision International Nepal stepped in to support his family's livelihood. The project assisted Ramshrestha in starting a grocery shop, provided business development training, and supplied the necessary materials for the grocery shop. Gradually, his life began to change. The man who once sold his labour for meager wages to survive was now the owner of his own shop. He says, *"I realized that I could earn by staying in one place running a shop. That realization alone changed my life."*

Today, his shop generates a daily turnover of around 5,000 rupees. World Vision International Nepal also enrolled his two daughters in its programme, supporting their nutrition and education. The project also provided support in the form of school materials such as pen, copy and books. His daughters Archana and Raju now attend school regularly. *"They are very interested to study,"* he says, *"but never had the opportunity. Now, their dreams are slowly coming true."* Ramshrestha's aspirations are even bigger now. He plans to expand the shop, add new products, and make it a sustainable source of livelihood. However, his weakened leg still causes discomfort when transporting goods for shop. *"If someone could help with an electric bicycle, it would be a huge relief for me,"* he shares. Despite this, he currently saves 250 rupees daily. Even without external support, he plans to use these savings to buy a bicycle, manage expenses for his daughters' treatment, and expand the shop.

Ramshrestha's journey is an inspiring story of transformation. It proves how a vulnerable family can rise economically and socially. Moreover, it shows that self-employment not only brings financial independence but also restores dignity. His entrepreneurial journey has become a topic of discussion in the community and hope for others still struggling with poverty.



Raju and Archana doing homework

A STORY OF SEWING ENTREPRENEUR PRIYANKA

Priyanka belongs to a joint family of ten members along with six years old daughter Rinki. Her father-in-law, was only one bread winner of her family, who earned 250 rupees a day through daily wage labour. In her community, the belief prevailed that daughters-in-law should not work outside the home. As a result, Priyanka was not allowed to engage in outside work. Faced with both financial hardship and restrictions on working outside, Priyanka usually experienced mental stress. Family disputes were common, and the health, nutrition, and education of the children were neglected. They do not know about the provision of allowances provision of local government for the children's nutrition.

Through World Vision International Nepal's Child Growth Monitoring programme, Priyanka came to know that her child was malnourished. Subsequently, Priyanka's family was included in the programme as extremely vulnerable family. Participation in the programme opened new opportunities for Priyanka. For a woman who had never left home independently, attending meetings and discussions was itself a major achievement. During these sessions, she learned the importance of skill development and was enrolled in a three-day sewing training programme. Along with learning sewing, she gained knowledge about women's rights, social security services from local authorities, and child rights. She recalls, *"I realized that women can also earn for a livelihood in the community, just like men."*

Before the training, Priyanka did not have essential legal documents such as citizenship, marriage registration, or birth certificate of her child. She did not know the importance of these documents. She says, *"I didn't even know I needed these documents. After participating the training, I immediately started the process of obtaining them."* After completing the training, Priyanka started sewing work at home. Gradually, her sewing centre gained recognition throughout the village. She became busy, her days were no longer idle, and her confidence grew as she earned independently. She says, *"Now I don't have to depend on my father-in-law or husband for small amounts of money."* Now, she earns more than 10,000 rupees per month. Not only does she cover household expenses, but she has also started saving by opening a bank account nearby. Her life has become more secure and independent.

With increased income, her children now receive nutritious food. Priyanka ensures balanced use of vegetables, greens, and fruits grown at home, and supplements their diet with fish, meat, eggs, milk, and fruits purchased from the market. Her children attend school regularly, and she provides all necessary educational materials, including books, notebooks, and pens. World Vision International's programme has transformed Priyanka's life from one confined within household walls to one of independence and opportunity. Now she manages her time for family care and her sewing work, with plans to expand the sewing centre, provide employment to others, and make this enterprise a sustainable livelihood.



Priyanka sews at her tailoring shop

HAMAR BAJIKA IN HARIPURWA: BRINGING MOTHER-TONGUE EDUCATION TO LIFE

Nepal's Constitution 2072 guarantees every child the fundamental right to receive education in their mother tongue. Despite legal provisions and curriculum requirements mandating at least one subject to be taught in the mother tongue, many schools across the country have struggled to implement this due to lack of resources, materials, and trained personnel. Haripurwa Municipality in Sarlahi has emerged as a positive example in this regard. With the support of World Vision International Nepal's SIKAI Project, schools in the area have developed mother-tongue curricula and textbooks. Workshops and repeated interactions among stakeholders including teachers, principals, students, and local representatives facilitated the curriculum development process, from drafting to publication and implementation.

Janak Kafle, Education Officer of Haripurwa Municipality, states, *"With the support of World Vision International Nepal, we gathered teachers, principals, students, and local representatives together in a single workshop to discuss curriculum development. This collaborative approach made it easier to prepare a curriculum that incorporates everyone's perspectives. The resulting curriculum has significantly strengthened children's learning process."* The workshops included participation from the Curriculum Development Centre's director, local school teachers, students, and parents. As a result, a 100-mark mother-tongue curriculum titled *"Hamar Bajika"* was developed. A similar participatory approach was used to prepare the accompanying textbooks, ensuring the materials aligned with the curriculum.

The principal from Ramjanaki Basic School, expresses joy at being able to teach a mother-tongue textbook for the first time. Not only teachers but also students are excited. *"Children feel proud learning about their culture, religion, and traditions through the textbook. They now turn the pages with interest rather than obligation,"* he says. Students also appreciate the textbook. Mamta, a student, shares, *"I enjoy reading 'Hamar Bajika.' Reading in our own language gives a sense of belonging. Earlier, when we only studied other cultures, our own sometimes felt neglected. Now, we can learn about our culture as well."*

The textbook incorporates local stories, customs, and illustrations, making learning more relatable and engaging. It encourages children to take pride in their identity. This initiative not only improves learning outcomes but also plays a crucial role in preserving local culture and language. *"Reading in their mother tongue allows children to learn faster, enjoy the process, and connect personally with the content, effectively translating constitutional rights into practice,"* said local resident Ramprasad Kushwaha. Other schools in Haripurwa have also started teaching *"Hamar Bajika"* this year. Teachers report increased student engagement and enthusiasm in the classroom. Education Officer Kafle adds, *"This initiative has strengthened both mother-tongue preservation and children's learning outcomes. We plan to continue and expand this work."* The efforts in Haripurwa send a clear message: with resources, willpower, and local participation, mother-tongue education can be effectively implemented. Teaching in the mother tongue is not only a matter of children's rights but also a strong pathway to safeguarding local culture.



A teacher teaches Hamar Bajika in school

A CHILD LEADER'S VOICE: KUNTI'S STORY

Until a few years ago, Kunti from Sarlahi district had little knowledge about child rights. Her father passed away when she was young, and she was raised by her mother. In her community, girls faced numerous social restrictions. They were discouraged from going outside the home, speaking in front of strangers, or attending public gatherings. Deep-rooted traditions and social norms limited girls' freedoms, and early marriage was common due to superstitions or economic hardships. However, few understood that child marriage is illegal and a violation of children's rights. Kunti herself was at risk of facing these restrictions.

Around this time, World Vision International Nepal started community programmes that gave Kunti and her friends a chance to form a child club. Kunti was chosen as the president. Together, the children learned how to manage the club and began raising awareness about social issues and harmful practices in their community. One day, they discovered that two child marriages were about to happen. Knowing it was against the law, they quickly informed the police, and both weddings were stopped. At first, the families were angry. Some even threatened Kunti's mother, telling her to keep her daughter at home. But Kunti, encouraged by her knowledge, explained to her mother about child rights, parental responsibilities, and the legal provision. Trusting her daughter, her mother supported her and allowed to continue her work.

Kunti also joined World Vision International's Transformation Facilitator Training and later led 26 transformation classes. In these sessions, she raised awareness among other children about child marriage and its effects, child rights, gender equality, and social discrimination. The classes helped many children understand their rights more clearly. Although her family was facing financial struggles, Kunti received a small remuneration as a volunteer facilitator, which she used to continue her own studies.



Child leader Kunti



Kunti interacting with child club members

She is now studying in Grade 12. Reflecting on her journey, she says, *"Those who are afraid to speak in a group will never speak. Those who walk will stumble. Every failure is the beginning of success."* Today, Kunti and her friends actively work with the local ward office, advocating for child-focused programmes and budgets. Their efforts have led to positive responses from local representatives. The ward office has even set up a dedicated room with computers, books, and newspapers to support children's learning. Municipal member Mantoriya says, *"Children like Kunti have made our whole municipality more aware of child rights. We have responded to their requests, not just with budgets and programmes but also by involving them in decision-making. This has helped us create a child-friendly environment."* Because of leaders like Kunti, harmful practices are being changed, child-friendly programmes are expanding, and young leaders are driving real change. Her story is a powerful example of how empowered children can make their communities better.

CITIZEN VOICE AND ACTION: TRANSFORMING LOCAL HEALTH SERVICES

The health post in Haripurwa, Sarlahi, now provides quality services, ensuring timely and convenient access for patients. However, a few years ago, the situation was very different. Poor management and irregular staffing had decreased community trust in the health post. The health post often reminded closed during working hours, health workers were absent, and medicines were unavailable. Shivani, a local service user, recalls, *"Earlier, even basic facilities like toilets and drinking water were lacking. There was no proper space for patients, and hygiene was also poor."* When World Vision International Nepal formed the Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) group under its project, the condition of the health post improved greatly. CVA brings together community stakeholders to form a committee. This committee not only helps to improve health services but also monitors them to ensure quick and effective delivery.

In Haripurwa, the CVA group was formed with the participation of teachers, civil society representatives, female health volunteers, teenagers, and farmers. The group's chairperson, Dinesh, says, *"In the past, when we raised such issues individually at the local government, no one listened. But now, we raise the issues collectively, the response is immediate and effective."* He explained the importance of the CVA.

The CVA committee has established 11 key indicators to monitor health service quality which includes:

- | | | |
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| 1. Effective outreach services | 2. Availability of safe drinking water | 3. Functional toilets with water supply |
| 4. Regular immunization services | 5. Growth monitoring of children | 6. Availability of iron supplements for pregnant women |
| 7. At least eight antenatal check-ups | | 8. Distribution of maternal safety allowances |
| 9. 24-hour delivery services | 10. Accessible family planning services | 11. Availability of essential medicines |

The committee evaluates these indicators monthly, keeping detailed records and alerting relevant authorities if corrective action is needed.

After these efforts, the health post is now consistently open. Health workers are available throughout office hours. Emergency services are accessible at all times, and filtered drinking water is provided for health post visitors. Facilities include disability-friendly toilets and comfortable waiting areas for patients. Dinesh emphasizes, *"Whenever an issue arises, we immediately reach to the health post staff, municipality health coordinator, ward chairperson, and hospital management to make them accountable."* Now, the health-post is functioning with full accountability, creating a bridge between citizens and health services. Through CVA, community voices and complaints are effectively communicated to relevant authorities. World Vision International Nepal also supports the health post with essential materials, ensuring that the local community can access quality health services close to home.



CVA (Citizen Voice and Action) meeting

AJAY'S JOURNEY FROM HEARING IMPAIRMENT TO CLASSROOM CONFIDENCE

Fourteen years old Ajay from Sarlahi is studying in grade 6. It was not easy to start school for him. Most of the children were going school at the age of 5, Ajay stayed at home because of his hearing impairment. *"Since Ajay couldn't hear, we thought it wasn't necessary to enroll him in school,"* his mother recalls. His hearing impairment affected not only his ability to speak but also his social development too. He struggled to understand his friends, and listening to lessons in school was a major challenge. When World Vision International Nepal initiated the *"Strengthening Inclusive Education in Nepal (SIKAI) Project"* in his community, transformative journey of Ajay was begun. The project provided him a hearing aid. Once the device was fitted, Ajay's world has been changed. *"Now I can understand my friends, interact with them, and even debate in class,"* he proudly shares.

Teachers also observed a significant change in him, *"Earlier, there was a belief that children with disabilities could not learn. But now, both parents and teachers have changed their perspective"* said a teacher from a local school. Along with Ajay, the project has supported many needy children in village for their transformation. Activities such as inclusive education training, disability-related law awareness, and regular monitoring of disability-friendly school facilities are among the projects' priorities. Through mobile teacher monitoring, the project ensures schools maintain child-friendly and disability-friendly classrooms, proper hygiene, and a supportive learning environment. Ajay was also assisted in obtaining a disability identification card, which enabled him to receive scholarships from the municipality. This support eased the family's financial burden and motivated Ajay to attend school regularly. *"Earlier, friends used to tease me for my disability, but now they come to pick up me for school,"* he says happily.

He has a dream to be a good teacher. He said, *"I want to study hard and become a teacher. I will build a good house in our village. My success will inspire other children with disabilities in my community."* Academically, Ajay is excellent. Teachers note that after receiving the hearing aid, his learning capacity improved significantly, allowing him to compete alongside his friends. Currently, five students with disabilities study in his school. Some students already pursuing higher education.

Ajay's mother reflects, *"I once thought my son would never go to school or learn. Seeing him carry his school bag and go to school with friends fills me with immense joy."* Ajay's story is not just about one child; it is a proof to the power of child rights, inclusive education, and societal change. His journey highlights how children with disabilities can learn, grow, and thrive when given the right support and opportunities.



Ajay with his mother

CHILD LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY MONITORING



Chandrika and her friend conducting child monitoring

Until a few years ago in a Municipality of Sarlahi, children's voices were neglected in the community. They spent their free time playing or helping their parents with household work. Their concerns and opinions were rarely taken seriously. But today, that scenario is changing. Chandrika, who is studying in grade 10, has emerged as a young leader in her community. Along with her friends, she established a child club and she became president. The child protection programme of World Vision International Nepal provided Chandrika and her friends the opportunity to join the club, helping them to develop their skills and confidence.

Chandrika says, *"Joining the child club has made me more socially aware. Now we understand the problems and struggle in our community."* Instead of spending all their time on games or fun, the club members take part in monitoring community activities and development projects. They look at whether schools, health services, and infrastructure meet people's needs, whether things are done transparent way,

and whether projects finish on time. If they see any problems or unfair practices, they report them to the concern bodies. Previously, children's voices were ignored because of their young age. However, through Chandrika's leadership and determined efforts with her club, local representatives have begun to listen to children. *"We are members of this community too, and our voices matter,"* Chandrika emphasizes.

This active engagement has increased children's self-confidence and enhanced their social awareness. Club members not only identify problems but also observe good practices within the community. Through training provided by World Vision International Nepal, they have learned how children can take on a guardianship role in society. In the past, they did not see the need to care about others' lives or ask questions about local projects. Now, they understand that as social beings, it is their responsibility to care about the happiness and suffering of others.

Under Chandrika's leadership, the child club has ensured child participation in local development processes. They monitor development projects within the municipality, promote social awareness, and consistently raise their voices on issues of child rights. This has inspired other children in the community to follow it. The leadership skills demonstrated by children in Sarlahi prove that active participation by children not only contributes to their personal development but also brings positive change to the entire community.



Chandrika and her friends interacting with a local representative

LIGHT OF NUTRITION FROM PD HEARTH

Sangita, from Sarlahi is a mother of two daughters. She gave a new birth to her second daughter when her first child Akriti reached 36 months. This time her pregnancy and delivery went well, but her first experience with her elder daughter, Akriti, had been very difficult. Sangita's family was poor and survived mainly on daily wage labour. She remembers, *"We didn't have enough food at home. Nutritious meals were only a dream for us."* During her first pregnancy, she often ate nothing more than biscuits with water, thinking it was enough for her health. She also did not know about the importance of regular health check-ups or safe delivery at a health facility. So, Akriti was born at home. Without proper postnatal care, Sangita struggled to produce enough breast milk, and her baby became malnourished.

At that time, World Vision International Nepal started the Child Growth Monitoring Programme in her village. When Sangita took her 18 month old Akriti for a nutrition check-up, she found out that her daughter was malnourished. This was a turning point of her life. Sangita realized how neglecting nutrition and health care during pregnancy had affected her child. Then she joined the PD Hearth Programme with enthusiasm to learn more. The programme changed everything. Sangita learned that nutritious food was already available in her home such as rice, wheat, and vegetables. She attended daily sessions, practiced cooking balanced meals, and changed how she fed her daughter. Slowly, Akriti gained weight and her health improved.

This experience made Sangita more aware. During her second pregnancy, she took special care of her diet and health. She went for at least eight antenatal check-ups, took iron supplements regularly, and followed a nutrition plan. This time, she chose to give birth at a health facility and followed the advice to exclusively breastfeed her baby for six months. Proudly, she says, *"With my second baby, there were no problems with breastfeeding. She*

is completely healthy." Now, Sangita shares what she has learned with other mothers in her community. She believes, *"Because of the PD Hearth Programme by World Vision International Nepal, no child in our village will suffer from malnutrition again."*



Lalita conducting growth monitoring for Aakriti



Aakriti's mother, Sangita



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