

OUR SUCCESS STORIES

Part II



असल छिमेकी नेपाल
Asal Chhimekee Nepal

THE SOCIAL INITIATIVE OF POKHARA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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ON BEHALF OF ACN

Asal Chhimekee Nepal (ACN) is the social initiative of Pokhara Christian Community and has been serving marginalized, oppressed, and neglected people and communities since 2003. ACN is dedicated to improving the quality of life of these people. As we are celebrating 20 years of ACN service, we are happy to present some of the success stories of our beneficiaries. Stories of transformation from our beneficiaries, are also the stories of the organization itself, as the organization is involved in the process of facilitating transformation and making a difference in the lives of beneficiaries. We acknowledge all contributions from Government and Non-government sectors, supporting partners, Pokhara Christian Community who had this vision to serve people in need and formed ACN as their social initiative, our team, and our beneficiaries; we are thankful for you. On the occasion of the celebration of 20 years of service we are able to share these stories 'Our Stories – Part 2'. I believe that these stories give an insight into the impact ACN's work has had in the lives of various individuals and communities. This journey continues and we look forward to having continued cooperation and support from all in the future. Thank you.



Rajendra K. Adhikari (Raju)

Executive Director

Asal Chhimekee Nepal

NO HESITATION ANYMORE

Suk Maya Tamang, 44, lives in Hemja, Pokhara, Kaski. She lives with her husband and 4 children. She works as a daily wage laborer to support her family. While working in this way, she always used to have pain in her lower abdomen. She knew the sequence of her abdominal pain. Most of the time there was pain in her lower abdomen and foul-smelling, vaginal discharge and itchiness. But she was worried about who would solve this problem. She was ashamed to tell a friend, afraid of the hospital, and thinking about where to go and what to do. At that time, Asal Chhimekee Nepal organized a free health camp in her area. She was excited by this news. While waiting for that day, she was worried about whether she would get a male doctor, but she felt easy and safe to be treated by female doctors.



After getting proper consultation and medicine from the doctors, she says, "I had no knowledge about women's health like breasts and vagina even though they are part of my own body. I have also been ignoring my problem a lot. Thank you for bringing a free camp for people like us who can't easily open up about their problems! "

Currently, she is doing health check-ups from time to time and encouraging those who are facing the same problem as her. "The genitals are like any other organ and there is nothing to be ashamed of." –Sukmaya

COURAGE ENHANCED FROM ELECTRICIAN TRAINING

34 year old Bir Bahadur Gaha Magar had a hard life in a remote village on the hill called Hopsekot in Nawalparasi. He constantly struggled to look after his family of four through his agricultural work. Despite his hard work in agriculture, Bir was not able to provide enough to feed his family every month of the year, and sometimes he had to take a loan when any emergency or unexpected expenses occurred. He got tired of it. Hoping to earn better wages, he began working as a laborer in electrician work for other people. Since he only had very basic literacy, no skills or certification, he was not able to do better in his work and find a good job. He was experiencing growing frustration and was worrying how he would earn enough to help his family to be fed well and help his children to be educated.



In the meantime, he heard that Asal Chhimekee Nepal was conducting different trainings such as electrician, plumbing, mobile repairing of 390 hours with government level 1 certification for young people. He says, "I was excited to apply for the electrician training, I didn't want to miss this golden opportunity. But at the same time, I was very anxious whether I would be selected or not."

Bir Bahadur was selected for the training and successfully completed it. After the training, he says, "Initially, my main reason for participating in the training was only to acquire a certificate so that I could earn better. To my surprise, I not only obtained good skills and a certificate, but also received basic tools to begin my work with. I have commitment with these tools and with only a small additional investment, I can contact people and promote my work. "Bright Hopsekot" is a government programme in my village (electricity for all) and I can take benefit of this. I will now be able to meet the needs of my family and give a good education to my children."

Bir Bahadur has started a small electric shop and travels to neighbors near and far to install electricity. He has also installed a rice mill. He earns minimum Rs. 20,000 (above USD 150) per month. He is able to look after his family well and send his children to school. He concludes by saying, "Thanks to ACN who provided me with this opportunity for training, giving us business training, supporting with tools and start-up fund along with continued monitoring of my business. I have hope for the future to do even better. I am empowered and confident that I will do it. I will stay with my family and children. I don't want to go abroad, away from them. I am also happy to serve people in my community with my skills."

Youth focused vocational skill training and support for their career is one of the projects ACN is doing. ACN will continue with this as it is very much needed for young people like Bir Bahadur.

AMAZED BY THE NEW HOUSE !

72 year old Bhim Bahadur Gharti is the son of Zyama Ghartho and Dilmaya Gharti. Born in Makwanpur district, he currently lives in Bandipur Rural Municipality, ward number 3, along with one of his daughters and wife. He has 7 daughters and a son.

Unable to change their poor financial condition, he migrated with his family from Makwanpur in search of better opportunities. After some time, he decided to settle in Thadekhola, Bandipur Rural Municipality of Tanahaun district. However, the geographical condition was challenging, and few crops could be cultivated. Due to their large family size, it was even more difficult to provide food for everyone. Whatever they produced in the field only sustained them for half a year and they had to buy food from the nearby

market the rest of the time. He used the money he receives as a senior citizen from the government to provide food for his family. He had managed to build a small house with a tin roof awhile back but it was swept away by the landslide which occurred in the year 2078 (2021).

Due to heavy monsoon rainfall during Asoj 16, 2078 (June 2021), there was a huge landslide in the hill directly above their house. The debris from the landslide forcefully entered inside their house and destroyed it. They tried to run and his grandson got carried away by the debris while doing so. He tearfully remembers how they tried to rescue

his grandson by holding a torch in one hand and sweeping away the debris that had buried his grandson with the other hand.

Due to this, his family was forced to live in a temporary cottage shelter like before. Knowing the situation, Asal Chhimekee Nepal distributed CGI tin sheets which he used as a roof. However, still, the cottage was not good enough to live in. Later, the organization began a house reconstruction project in their village and Bhim Bahadur Gharti's family were among the beneficiaries. Along with the material cost and other costs that were invested by the organization, his son helped with the remaining work of reconstructing the house.

Finally, after a few months, the reconstruction was successful. There's a smile on his wrinkled face again and his happiness is evident through his face. He extends his gratefulness to Asal Chhimekee Nepal for their contribution.



HEALTH SERVICE AT OUR DOORSTEP

Fond of the lifestyle in the village, Lal Bahadur Gurung had several opportunities to become a soldier. He attended school up until grade 3, but his parents refused to let him join the army since he was their only son. "It has now been 65 years since I started farming and taking care of our domestic animals here in the villages," says Lal Bahadur Gurung. He lives in Siranchowk RM, ward number 1, Kerabari Bhirsingh with his 2 sons, 3 daughters, and his parents.

Bhirsingh is very far from the headquarters of Gorkha district. It is still very remote and hasn't been developed as much. Lal Bahadur told us, "We can hardly get any medicines for a simple headache or a fever. We have to walk more than an hour on foot to reach the nearest health post. Even though the roads are there, catching a bus is extremely rare." This makes it difficult for sick people and older citizens to utilize the existing healthcare facilities. One of Lal Bahadur's sons has a mental disability and he explains that this is due to the lack of basic health facilities and difficult financial condition. All the villagers were desperately wishing for a health facility to be present in their village.

Now a health post has been built in their village and they can get their health checked on time. They receive advice to visit the hospital if the issues are more serious and need immediate medical attention. Lal Bahadur hopes that no one will have to suffer from a lifelong chronic illness like his son due to lack of timely treatment. Finally, Lal Bahadur extends his gratitude towards Asal Chhimekee Nepal, Pokhara Christian Community, Siranchowk RM, and everyone who helped to provide the land to build the health post in their village.



DON'T HAVE TO GO ABROAD TO JUST EARN MONEY



29 year old Durgesh Kewat lives in Palhinandan-3, Belaspur. He lives with his parents, wife and 3 children. His parents are involved in farming and his wife is involved in household work. His 3 children are small and go to the nearby school. He has the overall responsibility to fulfill all the expenses of his family members. For this, he runs a small snack shop in his pushcart. The income from his small business was not enough to meet the daily expenses of his family. He often wanted to go abroad to earn but he could not

go as his financial status was very critical. His family was going through very hard times. He was informed about the opportunity of 3 days business training to be provided by ACN from a nearby village in Bijaypur. During the training, he learned to cook more snacks like noodles and sweets. He went from one road to another road in his pushcart to various schools, markets, and public stations. Soon more customers were attracted to his shop especially the children and teenagers. Now he is very busy in his business. He supports his parents and wife in household work and farming in the morning and evening. And during the daytime, he is very busy selling his snacks. He has been able to earn Rs 1500 (USD11.50) on a daily basis. During festival times, he earns approximately Rs eight thousand rupees (USD61) in a single day selling his snacks. Now he, his parents, and wife are very happy with his work and income. He has realized that the training provided by ACN has helped him to work successfully in his local area, supported his family, and he does not have to think about going abroad anymore.

WATER-TAP TRANSFORMED COMMUNITY

The members of the mixed group living in Shankarpur, Palhinandan rural municipality ward no. 1 used to buy pure drinking water for their families due to the lack of clean drinking water. They tried hard to earn and save enough money to purchase drinking water from the market. But it was difficult for most families to spend money on this, so some used to drink tap water from nearby their homes. The tap water caused waterborne diseases like body itching, diarrhea, typhoid, and dehydration which was stressful for the community.



After the problems increased, when they were thinking about how to arrange clean water, 24 families of the group requested safe drinking water taps from Asal Chhimekee Nepal.

After constructing an arsenic-free drinking water stream in collaboration with a mixed group and Asal Chhimekee Nepal, all communities are now using arsenic-free drinking water from that stream.

Narvada Chaudhary says, "People who have money used to buy clean water from the market (Jar Water), but those who couldn't afford to buy clean water were forced to drink unclean water from the normal community tap. And they used to get sick because of the unclean water. But now, everyone has access to clean water and in the morning, all the people line up to fill the drinking water containers."

Chanda Choudhary says, "Though there is a problem with food and water, due to the poor financial situation at home, we could not build a water tank. When we agreed with Asal Chhimekee Nepal to build a water tank on the recommendation of the group, I was very happy at that time. By raising some money from Asal Chhimekee Nepal and all our communities, we built an arsenic-free drinking water pipe. It has been completed, and now we all use pure drinking water from that stream. Earlier people who could afford to, used to buy bottled water; now no-one has to buy water, and that saves our money. The money we have saved can now be used in other areas."

FREE FROM HUMILIATION

61 year old Aturan Darji lives with her husband and 2 children in Palhinandan 1, Chamkipur. She works in the field around her house and earns a living by farming.

Previously there were hardly any people in her community who had a toilet in their home. Slowly as time passed by, people in her community started realizing the need for a toilet and many toilets were built. Not having a toilet was starting to become difficult for her family. It wasn't easy for Atruran to build one as she was getting older in age and didn't have enough money to build a toilet. When there was no toilet in anybody's house, it wasn't much of a problem. But slowly as toilets were starting to be built, it was a matter of shame for them to defecate out in the open in nearby places, and so they used to rush to the rice fields or the riverside in case of an emergency. It was even

more of a struggle at nighttime as they risked getting bitten by snakes, deadly bugs, and mosquitoes when they went outside at night to go to the toilet. Monsoon rains caused more difficulties.

During this time, Aturan joined the "Swabalamban" self-help group formed by Asal Chhimekee Nepal. After coming to know that Asal Chhimekee Nepal was working for Community Empowerment, Livelihood, and Health Promotion in her community, she presented an application to build a toilet.

With the organization's help, a toilet was

built for her family. She explains, "Now that we have a toilet nearby at our house, it has become convenient for us to defecate. It has saved us from the humiliation and the fear of defecating out in the open. It has helped us to be free from the worries of being bitten by snakes, deadly bugs, and mosquitoes in the dark. I want to thank Asal Chhimekee Nepal." Currently, everyone in Atruran's family uses the toilet which has helped the environment around her house to be cleaner and more hygienic. She has gained love and respect in the community. It helped her to regain her confidence.



REGAINED HAPPINESS



Nirjaya Shahi is 16 years old and lives with her parents and one brother in Pokhara-1, Shantitole. She studies in class 10. She is very active in extracurricular activities like singing and dancing in school and attends a child club in the community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she had to remain idle inside the house as there was a lockdown and all the schools remained closed. At first, she was happy to stay in the house playing all day and evening. But after a while, she felt lonely and bored. She started missing her friends from school, child clubs, and nearby friends.

During this time, ACN organized a virtual talent show for children under age 16 where all the children were able to participate and present their talent through an online platform. She was very happy to hear this when the information was shared in her child club. Through the support of her parents, Nirjaya was able to participate in the virtual talent show program and sent in her videos. She was able to achieve the top position among other competitors.

After the program, she shared that she was very glad to be a part of the program which helped her to grow and show her talent. She had remained sad and lonely for many weeks, but the program helped and encouraged her personally as well.

KISHORE IN LOCKDOWN

My name is Kishore Shrimal. I am 35 years old. I live in Gorkha district. Because of my disability, my family doesn't care much about me. That's why I live alone. I am earning my livelihood by doing what I can. But now, because of the lockdown due to Covid, I am having a lot of trouble getting food in the morning as I am not able to work daily.

I will never forget the help of Asal Chhimekee Nepal by giving me much-needed food items during such an emergency. I had not even heard the name of the organization before. But I found out. The food relief items I received today will last me at least 2 months. Again, after some time, the COVID lockdown will be over. Then I can earn enough to eat by myself.



COULD CONTINUE SCHOOL

Nine-year-old Anjali, the only daughter of her parents, is studying in Class 5 of Nepali Shri Krishna Secondary School. Anjali lives with her mother in a rented room in Pokhara. For the past 7 years, Anjali's father has been working in Qatar as a foreign migrant worker. From abroad, her father sends money he earns in Qatar to her mother in Nepal to cover their living costs and Anjali's

school expenses. Anjali's mother also earns some income for household expenses by washing dishes and clothes at the neighbor's house.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Anjali's mother could not go to work in other people's houses and had to stay at home for fear of infection. Anjali's father's work in Qatar also stopped. Because of this, Anjali's mother found it very difficult to manage the household expenses. They were living in a rented house and the rent started increasing. As Anjali's father was unable to work in Qatar but wanted to stay there, there was unrest in the family when he could not send any remittance money home.



After some time, the lockdown became normal. While Anjali's mother was struggling to manage the house rent and daily living, others were worried about how to get the necessary educational materials for her daughter to return to school.

Anjali received educational materials and school uniform from the organization called Asal Chhimekee Nepal. Like Anjali, many children and families were having a tough time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Asal Chhimekee Nepal came to villages with educational support to encourage community schools and needy children to join school as before.

Anjali's mother said, "I could not read and write, so I experienced many ups and downs. I can hardly even write my name. I get nervous if someone suddenly asks me to write my name. My only wish is that my daughter should study hard and not have to work in someone else's house like me in the future. Educating her and sending her to school is the most important thing for me. And I am trying my best to do so. But it's not that easy for me; there has been always a concern of how am I going to fulfill all the needs of my daughter so that she can pursue her future without worrying too much. In this situation I received a call from the school to receive the educational material for Anjali. I was relieved when my daughter got a uniform, socks, shoes, a bag, and pens so that she could return to school and resume her studies. Because right now, I can't buy all these materials immediately."

SELF HELP GROUP TO LEADERSHIP

36 year old Maya Nepali has been living with her husband and 2 daughters in Pokhara-24, Kaskikot.

Despite being permanent residents of Kaskikot, they moved to Pokhara around 9 years ago due to lack of basic facilities like water, electricity, and good education. They stayed in a rented room and began increasing their education level after moving to Pokhara.

Maya was someone who always believed in standing up and speaking for oneself. She was a determined individual and convinced her husband to move back to their village in Kaskikot after completing their education.

After returning, her husband started working as a teacher and meanwhile she was thinking about what to do next. Asal Chhimekee Nepal initiated a self-help group called "Ekata Dalit Mahila Krishak". Through the self-help group, women were taught to be independent through various awareness programs, business training, personality and leadership training, and adult literacy program. They empowered women deemed to be of lower class by their society. "I am also one of them," says Maya.

Maya helped to develop the self-help group further by working as a facilitator and a secretary. She managed to bring basic utilities like water and electricity to her village through the help of the self-help group. Hence, after taking on different responsibilities at different points in her life, she was elected as people's representative and now serves as a ward member in her local government. "Previously through our self-help group, I used to raise voices and spread awareness on violence against women, child rights, caste discrimination, and now I get to do so at a local government level and that makes me immensely proud and happy!", exclaims Maya. She fondly remembers her previous role in the self-help group.

"I didn't join the local government as people's representative to earn money but to raise my voice in support of those who cannot do it on their own. I have been managing my household's expenses through the revolving fund of our self-help group formed by Asal Chhimekee Nepal. I took Rs 50,000 to buy 200 chickens and increased the number of chickens up to 500. I have been planting tomatoes in the tunnel and have also invested in pig farming. Asal Chhimekee has played a big role to bring me where I am today. They helped me to grow further, and like a lamp, added some oil in me so that I can shine brighter. I am forever indebted to the organization. I know that I have much more to go and achieve. Even though I am now in a position of power, I have been the victim of caste discrimination often. Despite this, I have been working hard to remove barriers such as these in the society." – Maya Nepali



KNOW HOW TO INCREASE THE PRODUCTION OF CROPS

31-year-old Najibun Nesha is a housewife living at Palhinandan 3, Vijayapur. She lives with her husband Kuddush Ansari, two sons, one daughter, and a mother-in-law. After finishing the housework, she farms her land. Because she adopted the old farming method, even though she had been farming for many years, it was only subsistence oriented.

Najibun is a member of a self-help group run by Asal Chhimekee Nepal. Under this group, a three-day training was conducted on vegetable farming. She participated in that training and through the training she got a chance to learn about soil and fertilizer management, selection of seeds according to climate, nursery construction, chemical and home remedies for plant diseases and their treatment, organic fertilizer production, and organic farming. Also, she learned about the benefits of vegetable farming and the attention that vegetable farmers should pay to it.

Before participating in the training, she did not know much about horticulture, so she was uncomfortable with cultivating vegetables. She was worried about problems such as fertilizer and nursery management, how to treat diseases, and how to grow plants. The vegetables she planted often would not grow; even if they did, they would not grow well, and the plants would die. Therefore, she was not sure that she could make an income by investing in horticulture. After participating in the training, she learned the things to pay attention to while doing horticultural work. After that, as learned in the training, she started using homemade methods such as leaf litter and cow dung, fertilizer and soil management, and seed production. When the plants got sick, she began using domestic methods such as black pepper, ash and chemical medicines as needed. While cultivating in this way, the plants did not get many diseases. Those that were diseased were treated on time, which minimized any damage.

As a result, her vegetable production started to increase. She was happy to see the unexpected growth which motivated her to continue. In November this year, she sold Rs 25,000 (USD190; €174) worth of coriander. Also, now she produces both seasonal and off-season vegetables such as coriander, garlic, onion, tomato, carrot, radish, cauliflower, cabbage, greens, etc.

In this way, she earns 500 to 2000 rupees (USD4-15; €3.50-14) daily. She says that it has helped her a lot to educate her children and meet her family's expenses. She is thankful to Asal Chhimekee Nepal for providing training in this way to instill hope in horticulture and help her to earn a living.



NEW LIFE BY NAWAJEEWAN

This is me, Renisha G.C (name changed), and this is a story of how I was a drug user since the age of 16. I live with my parents, and we are permanent residents of Myagdi district. When I was 6 years old, my parents moved to Pokhara. I started attending an English medium school in the city. I was studying in grade 3 and since my Nepali was extremely bad, I was shifted to a Nepali medium school. Since I couldn't read and write in Nepali, I failed and couldn't do well in my studies.

My father was addicted to alcohol and didn't care about us and our home. Due to this, my mother was the sole breadwinner of our family and earned a living by working as a daily wage laborer. Whatever she earned wasn't enough to sustain our needs. I quit school after I reached the age of 14. I wanted to help my mother financially, and so I started looking for work at my friend's restaurant. I learnt to smoke cigarettes, consumed various drugs from my friend. We were very close friends. One day she got married and I was left alone. I was very depressed and tried to consume more drugs. Soon I was trapped in the use of cigarettes, marijuana, and prostitution.

Time started passing by and I fell in love with a man who was also a former drug user. We jointly decided to quit doing drugs. I came to Nawajeewan Center and completed my 3 months treatment. I went back but on returning, seeing my friends using drugs magnified my urge to get back to it and this time I even started taking new kinds of drugs. I was under the influence of drugs and got in an accident when I was riding my scooter. My hands and leg got fractured. I also sustained head injuries. Even though the bones in my hands and legs were broken, I still injected drugs through my fingers. I couldn't continue working in the prostitution business due to my accident. Due to this I started feeling alone, helpless, and insecure. After spending all my money on drugs, I sold my mobile phone. Over time I started feeling guilty for using drugs. I met the staff of Nawajeewan coincidentally and I joined the treatment center for a second time.

This time though I stayed at the treatment center and took different types of training and continued my education by joining in grade 8. I went to school at the morning and helped in the treatment center during daytime. I had the opportunity to take several handicraft and leadership trainings. This helped to develop my capacity. I used the things I had learnt and my experience as a former drug user to encourage, raise awareness and inspire other female drug and alcohol users and even bring them to the treatment center.

In this way, I successfully completed my education and treatment. I also had the opportunity to learn various income-generating skills that enabled me to earn a living with dignity and improved my financial standards. I gained victory over addiction and now am self-reliant with the help of Nawajeewan. It brings me immense pride to say that I was able to complete my education and now work in Nawajeewan to improve the lives of other people who have gone through a similar experience like mine. Currently, I run my own business and have been living an addiction free life.



HARD WORK WON'T BE WASTED



Laxmi Chaudhary is a member of the Khadauna group in Sarawal-6, Rampur. Chicken farming is the main source of her earning. Although she has been involved in chicken farming for several years, she was not able to earn a good amount of money from this sector. Most of her chickens were very small and she was tired of feeding them. The cost of feeding her chickens was very high compared to the income she received after selling them. This made her very upset.

ACN organized a chicken farming training among the members of her group. She was very keen to learn from the training. During the training, she learned about the categories of chickens, types of diseases they are susceptible to, methods to take care of their health, importance of vaccination at various stages, as well as preparing local food from household wastages and resources. She was able to learn that local homemade food for the chickens plays a vital role in maintaining their good health and weight. Before the training, she used to buy chicken food at a high price from the market. She thought that such purchased foods were beneficial for them. But now after the training, she gathers all the required items available in her kitchen. The home prepared food has provided nutritious value to her chickens without any diseases. She used to provide food randomly without any knowledge but now she has learned the right proportion of food, vaccinations and taking care of them. Now her chickens are growing with good health and weight which has increased her source of income. She is very happy to learn good methods of chicken farming and improved from traditional ways.

M EANINGFUL LEARNING

Sarawal Village 6 Khadouna, located in the Terai region of central Nepal, is a very hazardous area. During annual monsoon rainfall, if the water of the river flowing near the village is not drained, it enters the houses in the village and washes away rags, clothes, and food.

Lakshmi Kant Chaudhary is a farmer living in that area. He lives with his wife Pintu Kumari Chaudhary and his son. A farmer and businessman by profession, he has a generous nature to help those in trouble.

Due to flood-affected areas and excessive water, Asal Chhimekee Nepal conducted intensive training among social workers, teachers, intellectuals, group facilitators, and working committees in that area. Lakshmi Kant participated in the training, and he learned about the structure of nature, its parts, its importance and events, the importance of community and its parts. Always taking a step forward to help those in difficult situations, Lakshmi Kant tried to solve the calamities and catastrophes in the village in traditional ways. It was customary to give old clothes and food in the name of helping the flood victims. If he did not follow the safety rules, he would sometimes have problems with himself.

By participating in the training, he learned that disaster is not a result of someone's will or bad work, but a problem caused by nature due to various reasons, so the support given to those affected by the disaster should be selfless, based on humanity, and quality materials should be given. After learning that, community members are actively participating in rescue and relief distribution during floods and other disasters in their communities, helping to prevent the disaster from increasing, and taking initiatives to provide quality relief to the real victims. In this way, by participating in the SPHERE Standard training, Lakshmi Kant learned that quality materials should be given to those affected by the disaster with respect, and he is taking the initiative to implement what he has learnt.



WHEN COOKING GAS RAN OUT

This is 35 year old Santa Bahadur Pariyar with his wife and two children. He has a visual impairment disability since his birth. His wife also has low vision. He lives in Pokhara-15 in a rented house with his family and works as a street seller (door to door seller). He sells items such as incense, camphor, pens, and pencils. It has been more than a month of COVID-19 second wave and lockdown that restricted him from selling things on the street. He lost his means of livelihood. He has already finished the little



savings he had saved before the lockdown. The second wave lockdown is extending with continued rise of infection rate.

During the pandemic, in his kitchen, his cooking gas finished. He had food materials, but without cooking gas to cook with, his wife was unable to cook food for the family. Then he requested his neighbors for help and his neighbor provided some firewood. The little firewood he had was enough for a few days only. So, he was worried about how to cook. ACN came to know his situation from the local FM station and came to his doorstep with a filled cooking gas cylinder. "One filled cooking gas cylinder will be enough for three months," says a grateful Santa Bahadur.

Santa Bahadur's story represents the current situation of many poor families and people living with disabilities in Nepal!

YET TO LEARN MORE



Amrendra Kumar Mandal who is originally from Saptari in the Terai region of Nepal, works as a teacher at Janakalyan Basic School at Shreenathkot, Gorkha. He has a Master's degree (M.Ed) in English language. He teaches English at the Janakalyan Basic School. He says, "Even though it has been 3-4 years since I completed my Masters in English and I have been working as a teacher since then, there have been times where I couldn't pronounce some English words while teaching in the classroom. I felt really bad that even though I had studied the language and now had

taken up a role to teach it, I wasn't confident enough. I had been trying to improve my English writing and speaking skills and right around that time, I heard the news that Asal Chhimekee Nepal were interviewing teachers to train basic level teachers in English language online. I was excited for this opportunity and I applied for it. I was elated when I found out that I had been selected for the training. After taking 40 days online training, I experienced major improvements in my English writing and speaking skills. This has helped me immensely to teach my students effectively. I really enjoy teaching now that I can correctly pronounce difficult words easily. I am extremely grateful towards Asal Chhimekee Nepal for organizing capacity enhancing trainings such as this for teachers in rural areas."

Amrendra has continued teaching at the school with newfound hope and enthusiasm. He desires to be a part of such trainings in the future and is excitedly looking forward to that.

PLENTY OF VEGETABLES AND CROPS

Arshila Rai; 70 years old is a single led woman. She lives with her granddaughter in Julefi tole, Koshi. She is unable to go outside and work to earn the household expenses. She owns a little land and does farming for living. But after the Koshi flood, her land was destroyed fully.

She says, "There were no any place I can go to find help as all my neighbor's land and houses were also affected by the flood. We have been struggling hard to live our life mostly after the flood. Meanwhile, ACN supported us with warm clothes and food package. The support was very helpful to me at the time of festivals. The food was sufficient for us for nearly 3 months. I was very happy to receive the support when I was in immediate need. ACN supported with seed and fertilizer package as livelihood recovery support in second time. I also received the seed and fertilizer package and able to plant them in my small land. But the seeds were not doing well as they were supposed to be. All my nearby families' seed and vegetables were growing wel. This upset me even more". She says, "If I had not received the seed and fertilizer package, then I would not have been able to buy at my own cost. So I wanted to grow the provided vegetables, crops and do well. But when the things did not turned out as I wished, I was very worried. Knowing all these situations and my age, one of my neighbor showed some care towards me. He helped in irrigation to my crops and vegetables. After getting some water and rain, my vegetables and crops grew more and very well. Now I have been consuming the fresh vegetables and crops. I am very happy now. The seed provided by your organization was very good but I was not able to grow but now I am doing well. Thank you very much for your team who reached to us at time in expensive vehicle".



Anita Nepali; 22 years lives in Khalbemasina-14, Pokhara with her family. There are 6 members in her family. She had an opportunity to participate in different beauty contest during her school time. As time went, she wanted to explore more in the sector of beauty and makeup. She also worked in different beauty parlors near to her home. She completed her high school education along with the skills of makeup. At such, she came to know about the skilled trainings provided for youth by ACN through social media.



She applied for the training and was able to be selected as a suitable candidate. She dedicated herself fully and completed the 3 months basic beautician training. But after her training completion, there was a lockdown imposed due to COVID-19. She had to remain idle at home. She continued self-practice at home of her learned skills from the training. During the period, she was offered with an internship from the training institute. She continued the work for 9 months. She had an opportunity to develop her skills and realized to explore more. Through social media, she applied for job in one of the renowned beauty salon. She was able to get the job as she was well qualified with professional experiences. She was able to earn good salary. She says, "Now I have made many networks and clients through my services and this makes me proud of myself. She understands that there is no need to go abroad for job if we have some skills with us. I can earn and live independently. This training has helped to polish my hidden work even more skillfully. I have much more to do and I have a wish to establish my own beauty salon here".

INCOMPLETE HEALTHPOST HAS BEEN COMPLETED NOW!

My name is Amar Gurung and I live in Gandaki Rural Municipality (RM) 8, Gorkha district with six members of my family. My main occupation is agriculture. I have been involved in social work in my community since I was 27 years of age and now I am 55 years old. I am also a chairman of the recently built Benigaun Community Health Unit building construction management committee. Villagers had to walk 3 to 4 hours to reach the nearest health post just for very basic health facilities. To solve this problem, Benigaun Community Health



Unit was proposed in 2017, but there was no building for the community health centre. Villagers started to construct a building, but due to insufficient funds construction work was stopped after laying the foundation of the building. So, the community health unit operated from a rented house carrying out daily health services, but daily health services were badly affected because of the shortage of space and facilities. In partnership with ACN and the Gandaki RM, the incomplete construction work of the community health unit was completed recently. With the newly constructed purpose-built building, the service of Benigaun Community Health Unit has become effective. Now villagers do not need to walk several hours for small basic health facilities. I am expecting that our community's health and sanitation problems will also be reduced. I would like to express gratitude on behalf of the entire village for ACN's support in the improvement of the Benigaun Community Health Unit service by the construction of the building and providing essential materials.
