

WAWCAS Newsletter, August 2023



WAWCAS Women Group established the Margadarshan Cooperative in 2013

By Sangeeta Shrestha, Founder and Program Director WAWCAS

During our regular review of the performance of the WAWCAS Groups, we have a strong focus on aspects that can increase resilience and sustainability of the groups. I want to share with you the story of the Margadarshan Cooperative, which originally started as a WAWCAS Women's Group in the Lamjung District. During a recent field visit we met Mira Misha, the chairperson of the cooperative, giving us an opportunity to update this fantastic, inspirational story.

After exiting the WAWCAS Program this group (Lamjung 2, 2012) decided to start a cooperative. Mira Misha, the chairperson of the Women's Group, and her friends visited the women's development section in Beshisahar to get support for the cooperative registration. The women's development office provided training on how to establish cooperatives, and during the training they developed by-laws and managed to register as a cooperative. And

after registration, Slisha/WAWCAS provided comprehensive capacity building trainings in management, finance, coordination with line agencies etc.



Mira, who also became the chairperson of the Cooperative, motivated other WAWCAS group members to be members of the cooperative and now the cooperative has 235 members!

The journey was not easy and they faced many tough situations with the governmental process and the community as well. But they never gave up!

They have started lots of income generating trainings with support from Rainas Municipality: sewing training, vegetable farming training and many more. And also Panche Baja training! Panche Baja is Nepali for "5 instruments" and refers to the formation of a 5 instrument band. The instruments used in a panche baja band include the jhyali (cymbals), tyamko (small kettledrum) or dholak (drums), damaha (large kettledrum), narsiha (a long S-shaped trumpet), and shehnai (a wooden oboe).



They have mobilized 7 million rupees as a loan to the various members of the cooperative to expand their businesses. The repayment rate is excellent as always and therefore it is easier to get support from line agencies. They lease 18,000 square meters of land (35 ropani) where they are growing different seasonal vegetables. Every day 5 members from the cooperatives work for 2 hours with the vegetable farming. As the vegetable farm belongs to all 235 members, they share the working hours according to an agreed plan. The Municipality agreed to provide a vehicle for selling vegetables, and the women hope that through this farming they can earn more money.

Mira and her team know that they have to face challenges. But they are convinced that dealing with the challenges makes them much stronger.

End

Our journey from the WAWCAS Group to the Farmers School

By Aliza Magar, Senior Local Program Leader, and Sangeeta Shrestha, Founder and Program Director WAWCAS.

Our group was formed during the COVID-19 pandemic. We experienced many challenges and eventually we decided to register our WAWCAS Group as a Farmer's Group under the governmental agriculture section in Kirtipur, Kathmandu. With the assistance of Aliza (our WAWCAS trainer), we were able to successfully register our group and we received ample support from the agriculture section. Currently, we have saved 400,000 rupees in our WAWCAS Group and we are using these means to expand our businesses through loans to the women in the group. Our progress has been fantastic and we never thought we could have grown to this extent. We believe our successes are due to the excellent training we received and the unwavering support from our trainers.



After our registration, the group's chairperson encouraged us to seek support from various organizations. We wish to express gratitude to the assistance of the ward office and World

Vision for supporting and providing farmers class training to us in the beginning and now we are conducting our agriculture class. The agriculture classes are offered to those of us who run agriculture businesses. These classes, held for two hours every week, cover topics such as planting, growing, and harvesting. We have obtained an agricultural identity card, which permits us to sell our vegetables in specific locations. Additionally, we have a member who serves as our market representative. She stays informed about market rates and updates us regularly. This has been very helpful for us. We had the chance to participate in an Agriculture Fair (Mela).

We have all been given a water pump machine for our business by the Good Neighbors organization. Currently, we are in the process of submitting our plans to the agriculture office.

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Stories from the WAWCAS Women and Their Children

Every month new stories from the WAWCAS women and their children are added to our website. You can follow their daily struggles and happy moments by clicking the link below.

[Meet the Women and Their Children • Wawcas International](#)