

WAWCAS Newsletter, December 2024



Dear Friends of WAWCAS

By Torben Bjerre-Madsen, Chairman WAWCAS International

Soon 2024 will come to an end and a new year will begin. As last year there are places in the world that have experienced a particularly difficult year – war, natural disasters, and human suffering. Let us hope this will improve in 2025.

In WAWCAS however we have had a very satisfactory year. As last year more than 900 new women have been enrolled in the 16 months Training Program and the LNGO Project in Lamjung is up and running and coming to new districts. The Child Groups are also showing very positive results, and a number of new initiatives have been taken. Among these an initiative to prevent child marriages.

Some of this have been covered in previous Newsletters and Nina and Sangeeta will give you more information in this Newsletter.

Also, from a financial point of view 2023/24 has been satisfactory as I will elaborate on below. All of this has only been possible due the strong support from our donors and a dedicated effort

from the WAWCAS Team in Nepal and Denmark. And not the least, the incredible effort from all the women in Nepal – Graduated or in Training, their children - and their relatives.

On behalf of the WAWCAS International Board I thank you all, for your valuable contributions and the interest you have shown in WAWCAS in 2024 and send you the best wishes for the New Year.

Annual Finance Reports

By Torben Bjerre-Madsen, Chairman WAWCAS International

At the recent Board meeting in November the financial figures for 2023/24 were approved and you can find them on the WAWCAS homepage.

When we look at the consolidated numbers for the whole WAWCAS Program the key messages are as follows.

The donations were the highest ever - DKK 3.318.375. An important reason for this is that one important donor decided to give a one-time donation to be spend over the years to come and not as earlier in tranches.

The Total Costs were DKK 1.994.667 and the Financial Items were positive with DKK 139.213. It is the LNGO Programs in Lamjung and Tanahun that explains the increased costs.

The Net Income for the year is 1.463.021 – the high number explained by the above-mentioned one-time donation.

This result combined with deposits in our bank accounts and important partnerships with foundations and companies, and private individuals that support us, make us confident that we can continue the positive development.

During the year DKK 1.260.000 was given as Seed Money to the more than 900 new women and 96,4% was repaid in due time. This means a default rate of 3,6% which is considered very satisfactory and in line with the years before.

On our homepage you can find more about the consolidated numbers in the “WAWCAS Program 2023/24 Report on Finance and Activities” and in the audited “WAWCAS International Annual Financial Report 2023/24” - the latter focusing on the activities in the Danish entity.

WAWCAS Highlights the Past Year

By Sangeeta Shrestha and Nina Schriver, Directors and founders of WAWCAS

As we reflect on the past year in WAWCAS, we are delighted to see the significant progress made in empowering women, uplifting children, and fostering sustainable communities for women and children across the districts where WAWCAS operates. Through collaboration and the unwavering commitment of all those involved, WAWCAS initiatives have made a measurable impact, driving progress toward a thriving, equitable society.

In WAWCAS, we believe that empowering women and strengthening communities are the cornerstones of sustainable development - also for the next generation. Our efforts focus on supporting the women to develop entrepreneurial, personal, and social skills needed to overcome challenges and break cycles of discrimination. By fostering collaboration with civil society and local authorities, we advocate for a rights-based, inclusive approach that fosters long-term resilience.



Children doing homework while their mother is working with her personal WAWCAS Diary reflecting on her achievements and challenges in the WAWCAS Program

In the past year over 900 new women have joined WAWCAS 16 Month Entrepreneurship Program, bringing the total number of women in the WAWCAS community to nearly 7,000. Additionally, 800 new children now have access to consistent, quality education thanks to their mothers' involvement in WAWCAS. Almost 400 of these children have also become members of WAWCAS Child Groups, which are very popular and all WAWCAS children between 8 and 14 years have wanted to participate.

WAWCAS LNGO The Lamjung LNGO has successfully reached 2,310 WAWCAS women members, with 1,900 of them actively participating in the General Assembly in October.

This year, the LNGO model was also introduced in Tanahun. We organized a Mega Event, which brought together 1100 women interested in forming the Tanahun LNGO and local authorities' representatives participated. The women agreed to move forward with establishing the LNGO.



Discussing about the new WAWCAS Tanahun LNGO

We were deeply encouraged by the following remarks,

We have heard about WAWCAS many times but never fully understood its impact until the Mega Event. This was our first time witnessing such a large gathering of women and hearing them discuss the formation of the LNGO. It was an experience we had never encountered before. The WAWCAS program has already had a profound impact on our community. Although the entrepreneurship training lasts for 16 months, its effects are long-lasting. The work WAWCAS is doing is something we should have been doing ourselves, and now we realize the importance of supporting it. We give our full support to this program and to the establishment of the LNGO. (Ishwor Bahadur Ghimir, Chairperson, Ward 8, Bhanu Municipality, Tanahun, & Min Bahadur Gurung, Chairperson, Ward 9, Bhanu Municipality, Tanahun)

This made us so happy to hear. It makes us trust that the women will be supported also when WAWCAS is not present anymore. And this is how the women are profoundly recognized and respected and can contribute to their own and other women's ongoing development.

We are very happy to experience the profound interest among the women to be a member of the LNGOs and involve in the development of their own WAWCAS LNGO. The LNGOs play a very important role in the journey towards sustainable women driven changes, encouraging women to critically assess community needs, advocate for change, and lead collective action. These LNGOs are owned and run by the women through elected boards of each Region and one Central Committee.

Husband representatives from all the new Women's Groups, as well as mothers-in-law representatives, have participated in two-day workshops on gender, equality, and human rights. Often, there is a lack of understanding regarding each other's needs and their culturally assigned roles within the family. These dynamics can contribute to challenges in building a strong family foundation.

Against Child Marriage In the Terai Region, child marriage remains a persistent issue. To address this, we developed a workshop titled *Against Child Marriage*, aimed not only at reducing this tradition among WAWCAS children but also at creating broader awareness in the Terai region.

Eleven local organizations took part, and 23 participant trainers will conduct the workshop they learned from WAWCAS with four groups of youngsters each. This approach was designed to ensure that knowledge spreads to more trainers and children than we could reach alone. In addition to the organizations, representatives from local authorities, the police, and the media also participated.

The media played a key role in highlighting the main issues discussed during the workshops. It was inspiring for WAWCAS to witness the strong interest and enthusiasm in working together on stopping child marriage.

For the first time, we conducted a WAWCAS Review Data process, involving 235 women who completed the program 5 and 10 years ago. The results were encouraging:

- 97% of WAWCAS children aged 6-18 are attending school.
- 32% of children aged 18-25 are enrolled in higher education.
- School attendance, including for university or higher education, is similar for both boys and girls.

And 96% of the women are still running their businesses after 10 years.

These findings clearly demonstrate the WAWCAS Program's strong and sustainable long-term impact, particularly its success in providing quality education to children from families facing poverty.



Looking Ahead to 2025 WAWCAS remains committed to empowering women, supporting children, and fostering vibrant communities across Nepal. With every milestone, we inch closer to our vision of a society free from discrimination and rich in opportunities.

Thank you so much to our donors, partners, and dedicated WAWCAS team in Nepal and in Denmark for making this journey possible. Together, we will continue transforming lives and building a brighter future for many more women, and their children and families.

Warm and thankful wishes to all

Sangeeta & Nina

More Stories from the WAWCAS Women and Their Children

Every month, three WAWCAS women add a new blog to their story on the WAWCAS website. And also, one of our many Child Groups upload a monthly story. You can get insight into the daily struggles and happy moments in the lives of these women and children by clicking the link below.

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