

WAWCAS Newsletter, February 2025

Introduction

In this Newsletter, Founder and Program Director Sangeeta Shrestha shares with us the stories of Bhawani Lama and Chini Maya. Both women and their families lived under ultra-poor conditions in Nepal for many years, but eventually the WAWCAS Program came to their neighborhood. Both Bhawani Lama and Chini Maya enrolled in the 16 Months Entrepreneurship Training Program. This decision changed their lives. And the lives of their families.

Read their stories below. These two women are wonderful examples of the life-changing improvements experienced by WAWCAS Women going through the Training Program. The resources embedded in these struggling women surface during the Program and for the first time in their life, they meet generous support from the woman next door. Her fellow WAWCAS Woman.

Now they can turn their back to the hardship. And break the cycle of poverty.

Enjoy your reading.

My Companion in Sorrow

By Sangeeta Shrestha, Founder and Program Director, WAWCAS Nepal.

Namaskar. I am Bhawani Lama, and I live in Lalitpur with my adored son. Life hasn't been easy for us. After my husband abandoned us, I had to take on the role of both mother and father. I worked tirelessly as a laborer to ensure my son received an education and that we survived each day.

One crucial day, I crossed paths with my dear friend Nir Maya, who spoke to me about the Slisha organization and its WAWCAS Program. Interested and hopeful, I decided to join. I learnt so much and after three months of learning I felt like a new Bhawani. I started a small vegetable business from a cart, finding joy and purpose in my work.



However, my dreams were shattered when the municipality suddenly imposed a ban on using carts. My business came to an abrupt halt, and once again, I faced the discouraging challenge of providing for my son and managing our daily needs.

Desperation led me to work in other people's homes. The work was exhausting and humiliating, and I often found myself on the brink of giving up. In my darkest hours, I reached out to Nir Maya, pouring out my heart and sharing my despair. She listened patiently, her eyes filled with empathy and understanding. With unwavering strength, she told me not to be disheartened. "Problems will always come," she said, "but running away only makes us weaker. Face them head-on and move forward which we learned during training.



Her words ignited a spark of hope within me. The very next day, Nir Maya visited me and suggested a new venture: running a snack shop. My heart ached with the desire to say YES, but I had no money for rent, utensils, or gas. Seeing my hesitation, she offered a lifeline. "You can use half of the space in my tailoring shop without paying rent," she said with a reassuring smile. She also encouraged me to take a loan from our group to cover the initial costs. Overwhelmed with gratitude and hope, I accepted her generous offer from the group and took a loan of 15,000 rupees.

With determination and the support of my friend, I started my snack shop. Day by day, I watched my business grow. Now, I earn around 1,600 - 2000 rupees daily from selling tea and snacks, and my monthly profit is about 20,000 rupees. The weight of financial stress has lifted, and I can provide for my son's education and our household expenses without fear.



Initially, Nir Maya gave me half of her shop space for free, but now I proudly pay rent, grateful for the solid foundation she helped me build. I will never forget her kindness and unwavering support. She has been my rock during the toughest times, and her encouragement and belief in me have brought me to where I am today. I owe all my success to Nir Maya, my true companion

in sorrow, all my group members, and last but not least, the WAWCAS trainers who have helped me get to where I am now. The most important part is that every day, I deliver lunch for the WAWCAS team at the office.

My Goats are My ATM Card

By Sangeeta Shrestha, Founder and Program Director, WAWCAS Nepal.

Namaskar. My name is Chini Maya Gharti, and I am residing in Bhanu Municipality, Pancham Nagar. Life hasn't been easy for me. I got married at a very young age and we have two children; one son and one daughter. We belong to the ultra-poor and my days were spent working on others' lands just to get food. Despite our persistent efforts, our struggle never improved our lives.

During this hardship a hope emerged when a private school opened in our area. I was desperately looking for any opportunity. I have applied for a cleaning job at the private school, and I got the job after numerous attempts. However, after five years, the school shuttered its doors, plunging me back into the same dire circumstances. The question of survival appeared larger than ever.

In this desperate situation, the WAWCAS Program entered my life, bringing with it a ray of hope. Joining the Program, I underwent transformative training sessions that empowered me with courage and motivation. Equipped with newfound skills, I started my business goat farming which soon became my lifeline, and my goats became my ATM card: whenever I need money I can sell my goats.



Previously I was rejected everywhere due to my poverty, but now I stand as a demonstration of resilience and determination. My goat farming business serves as my reliable source of income, granting me financial stability. Through my goat farming business, I have forged a path to financial stability, turning dreams once deemed impossible into tangible realities.

No longer overlooked, I now command trust and respect within my community, embodying the power of perseverance and the success of the human spirit. While sharing my story in the workshop, I feel so proud and happy.

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](#)