

A Community Rising from Darkness – Through the WAWCAS Program: The Tin Pipale Story

By Sangeeta Shrestha, Program Director, WAWCAS Nepal.

In Rainas Municipality, in a small place called Tin Pipale, a silent crisis had been tearing families apart from within. About one and a half years ago, during a meeting with the Mayor to discuss support for the WAWCAS Lamjung LNGO, he shared both encouragement and concern. Tin Pipale was facing a deep-rooted problem: widespread alcohol abuse and gambling. Homes that should have been places of safety had become spaces of fear.

Despite the distance from our field office in Bhotedar, we felt a strong responsibility to act. Hence, we immediately acted. In early 2025, we initiated the WAWCAS program in Tin Pipale. Alongside entrepreneurship and empowerment training for newly formed women's groups, we began to work closely with local authorities to address deeper social issues.

When our team, led by Pabitra, entered the community and conducted the Information Sharing Meeting (ISM) process, a painful reality emerged. Children were living in constant fear - afraid to speak, afraid to move freely, and even afraid of their own fathers. Many had stopped attending school. Their childhood, meant to be a time of joy and learning was slowly being taken away.

Our data revealed a harsh truth: a significant percentage of women were experiencing domestic violence - economic, mental, and physical. The intensity of suffering within households was alarmingly high.

We knew this situation could not continue.



We brought together key stakeholders - ward representatives, police, teachers - and facilitated a joint discussion. But we also knew that real change required listening, especially to those at the center of the problem.

In the next gathering, 150 - 200 community members came together. This time, we invited the men who were struggling with alcohol to speak first.

What emerged was not resistance - but vulnerability.

They spoke openly about unemployment, frustration, and a sense of helplessness. Alcohol, for many, had become an escape - a habit that slowly took control of their lives. Many admitted they had never fully realized how deeply their actions were harming their children and families.

That moment became a turning point.

From this honest dialogue, a powerful community-led movement was born:

“Bikrity Bismagti Nunikaran Abhiyan 2082”
(Campaign for the Elimination of Social Evils and Distortions 2082)

This was not just a campaign - it was a collective commitment to transform their community.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor stood firmly with the people and introduced strict measures:

- NPR 1,000 penalty for making alcohol
- NPR 3,000 penalty for selling alcohol
- NPR 2,000 penalty for drinking alcohol
- NPR 4,000 penalty for drinking after 8 PM (for both seller and drinker)

But rules alone do not change a society - people do.

In the beginning, there was resistance. Some men warned, "From now on, you will not receive anything from us."

But instead of fear, this sparked something powerful among the women - courage.

Women stood up.

They made a commitment, not only to their families but to themselves, that they would no longer accept a life of fear, silence, and suffering.

And slowly, changes began.

Earlier, when men returned from abroad, drinking would resume almost immediately.

Now, that pattern is breaking.

Children are beginning to feel safe again.

Homes are becoming calmer.

Once silent voices are now being heard.

The police and local authorities had long sought to address this issue, but real transformation began only when the community itself took ownership, with the WAWCAS team providing the ignition.

This story is not just about reducing alcohol consumption.

It is about restoring dignity.

It is about rebuilding families.

It is about giving children back their right to a safe, joyful, and hopeful life.

Tin Pipale is no longer just a place known for its struggles.

It is becoming a symbol of what is possible when a community chooses courage over fear—and change over silence.

Residential Workshop 2026: A Journey of Reflection, Connection, and Transformation

By *Sangeeta Shrestha, Program Director, WAWCAS Nepal.*

As part of our ongoing commitment to empower women through the WAWCAS program, we successfully conducted two impactful residential workshops in early 2026.

The first workshop took place in Dhulikhel from 30 March to 1 April 2026, bringing together 43 WAWCAS participants from Lalitpur, Kathmandu, and Rautahat districts. The second workshop was held from 3–5 April 2026 for 47 participants from Tanahun and Lamjung districts.

These workshops were not just events - they were deeply transformative experiences where women connected, reflected, and rediscovered their strength.

A Joyful Beginning: Breaking Barriers Through Connection

We began in a unique and lively way. Participants were given just five minutes to remember as many names as possible. The challenge? Not only to recall the names but also to identify each person correctly.

The room soon filled with laughter as women struggled to match names with faces - even those they had just met. This simple yet powerful activity broke the ice, dissolved hesitation, and opened the space for meaningful engagement.

The reflection that followed helped participants realize the importance of attention, connection, and truly seeing one another.

Life Journey: Stories Painted from the Heart

One of the most emotional and powerful sessions was the *Life Journey* exercise. Each woman expressed her life story through drawings—using symbols like mountains, rivers, trees, and paths to represent her struggles, successes, and turning points.



As women presented their creations, the room transformed into a living exhibition of courage and vulnerability.

There were tears. There was laughter. There was silence filled with understanding.

Women shared stories of hardship, resilience, and transformation—and most importantly, how the WAWCAS program had impacted their journeys. This session became a safe space for healing, reflection, and mutual respect.



Sunrise Reflection: Beginning Each Day with Purpose

The second day began with a peaceful and grounding practice—*Sunrise Reflection*. After a short meditation, participants reflected on key questions:

- How do I want to start my day?
- What should I focus on today?
- What should I avoid?
- What unfinished work needs attention?
- What must I be most careful about today?

This simple yet profound exercise deeply resonated with the participants. Many expressed their commitment to making it a daily habit, recognizing its power to bring clarity, discipline, and inner peace.

From Challenges to Solutions: Strength in Collective Wisdom

In a powerful group exercise, participants identified real challenges they face in their personal lives, businesses, and communities. These were written on cards and categorized into themes such as family, business, competition, and social barriers.

What followed was a remarkable shift - from problem-sharing to solution-building.

Women moved between discussion tables, taking on dual roles as both challenge holders and solution providers. Each table became a space of collaboration, empathy, and practical problem-solving.

A powerful realization emerged:

One woman's struggle could be solved by another woman's experience.

By the end of the session, every participant had identified at least one solution to her challenge. Many also shared how they contributed solutions to others—creating a strong sense of collective empowerment.

Visioning the Future: A Commitment to Growth

In the final session, each woman reflected on her life five years from now - imagining her growth in business, family, and her children's future.

They shared their visions with clarity and hope, demonstrating confidence in their ability to shape their own futures.

The workshop concluded with heartfelt commitments from all participants:

- To practice daily Sunrise Reflection
- To remain positive and focused
- To strengthen their businesses
- To dedicate quality time to their children

A Space That Transformed Lives

These workshops were more than just training sessions—they were spaces of transformation. Women not only learned new tools but also rediscovered their inner strength, built deeper connections, and found solutions within their own community.

As we closed the workshops, there was a shared sense of gratitude, hope, and renewed energy.

Together, these women are not only transforming their own lives—but also becoming agents of change in their families and communities.



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