



 **Good Neighbors**
International

Good Changes

2011 - 2015

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2011-2015

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Good Change for the World

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Foreword

Development is usually a slow process and demands involvement of a multitude of actors. It is equally challenging as excellent outcomes are expected with limited resources. Time length is also one of the critical factors in determining the success and sustainability of an intervention.

In its journey of fifteen years in Nepal, GNI reached out to the vulnerable children, their families and communities in remote hamlets of Humla District to the ex-bonded laborers settlements in Kailali; Magar villages in Myagdi District to peripheral areas in Kathmandu Valley through education, income generating activities, health services, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), advocacy, network building and disaster risk reduction programs and produced many tangible “good changes” in their lives.

This compilation consists of first-hand accounts of “successes” from 2011-2015 having a broad spectrum of human experience—struggles, fears, failures, successes, and hopes—of the people and communities that GNI Nepal works with. These change narratives present direct and economic changes that occurred as a result of GNI Nepal’s interventions as well as their indirect impacts.

GNI Nepal would like to take this opportunity to appreciate line ministries of Government of Nepal, Social Welfare Council, district level Government Offices for the support extended and thank Ashal Chhimeki Nepal, Sonaha Bikash Samaj, and Lele Samudayik Bikash Kendra for implementing our programs in the communities across Nepal from 2011-2015.



Daulatpur village which lies in the western part of Bardiya District is surrounded by three rivers, Gola, Karnali, and Manau in the east, west, and south respectively. Around eight thousand people call this village their home. Eighty percent of the population belongs to the indigenous Tharu tribe.

In 2010, GNI Nepal through its local implementing partner started implementation of income generation and promotion activities in the village which included the formation of income generation (IG) groups and providing with piglets, goats, vegetable seeds, and chicks to the local farmers.

Cooperative transforms lives of community members in Bardiya



To build a sustainable community, promote economic development, and rural livelihoods, the IG Groups were transformed into cooperatives with the participation of the local community. IG members, local partners, and government line agencies were strengthened through capacity development training programs.



The cooperative's working strategy is formulated by the annual general assembly (AGM) held every year. This year the AGM adopted "One Shareholder One Enterprise" strategy and planned to achieve it by the end of the year 2020. The cooperative forms sub-committee from among the share-members including the cooperative management team with the support from GNI Nepal funded agricultural technical staff. The technical

staff identify potential business opportunities. After identification of the potential enterprises; beneficiaries and targets are set.

Interested members are provided technical and vocational skills development trainings in the area of their choice. Potential entrepreneurs identified through the entrepreneur assessment survey participate in the training. They prepare a detailed business plan with the help of an agricultural technical staff and submit it to the cooperative along with an application requesting a loan. Loan sub-committee checks the viability of the business plan. Viable plans are forwarded to the management committee with a recommendation and it approves the loan.

Repayment process of the loan has also been made easier. Depending upon the nature of the enterprise, entrepreneurs can pay the loan only after generating income. However, the repayment schedule is prepared in such a way that timely collection of payment is ensured. Entrepreneurs' progress is monitored frequently by the management committee as well as the loan sub-committee. The agricultural technical staff counsels entrepreneurs from time-to-time



to adopt new and improved technologies.

Currently, the cooperative has 319 share members (about 97% are female member). The cooperative has generated a share capital of NRs. 740,000 and saving of NRs. 792,469. It has received NRs. 1,837,049 as revolving fund from GNI Nepal. Share members have been provided with business startup loans from the revolving fund. Till now 48 entrepreneurs have started micro-enterprises with the soft loans they obtained. 35 individuals have received a loan from the internal fund of the cooperative which has directly helped them to start their own enterprises.

The cooperative also provides support to the community members in hard times, such as, emergency needs, medical treatments, scholarship for poor students. Share members are cutting unnecessary expenses and the money so collected is saved regularly. As many share members have become successful entrepreneurs, their friends and neighbors are following suit. As a result, the number of enterprises such as pig and poultry farms has increased in the communities.



Udaya Lama, 23, is a resident of Ward No. 1, Tarkeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu District. He is a grade twelve student at Sangla Balkumari Higher Secondary School. His father abandoned him and his mother when he was a little child. Ever since his father left, Udaya and his mother have been living together with his aunt and her family. His aunt's family has been supporting them. Udaya's mother is a daily wage laborer.

As it happens with most of the poor families, his mother couldn't afford to send him to school. Luckily he was identified in 2002 and enrolled in a GNI Nepal supported 'hostel program'. Along with room and board, all required educational materials and uniforms were provided with. All school fees were also covered by the program. Additionally, he was offered motivation and counseling regularly.

In 2014, a GNI Nepal funded community development project supported him to take a six-month long computer hardware course. He showed a keen interest in learning and

Computer hardware course paves the path to success



consequently excelled at fixing broken computers. Even before completing the course, he was hired as a part-time instructor by the very institute he was training at.

Currently, he is earning a small income which is enough to continue his plus two studies and support his joint family. Beaming with confidence, he says, "Our family is on the path to self-reliance. I believe, with hard work and determination, I will make it to the top".

Puraina, Nauniya, and Nimuwabojhi communities in Kotatulsipur VDC had to rely on the arsenic contaminated water source for drinking water.

As a first step towards solving the problem, District WASH Coordination Committee (D-WASH-CC), and GNI Nepal including different stakeholders conducted a feasibility study. After analysing the situation, the team recommended installing deep tube-wells (more than 80 meters) for arsenic-free water. GNI Nepal also coordinated with the communities, VDCs and D-/V-WASH-CC to install deep tube-wells (100 meters). After the consultation meeting, VDC decided to provide a letter of recommendation to GNI Nepal to use the community land. GNI Nepal supported around NRs.900,000 to install three tube-wells; one each in Puraina, Nauniya, and Nimuwaboji. Communities provided in-kind support for tube-wells installation. Water from the tube-wells was tested at the government drinking water laboratory and the arsenic level was found to be less than ten parts per billion.



Arsenic-free water brings smiles to communities

Currently, more than 2000 people from 764 households are being directly benefited. The water is used for drinking, washing, bathing, irrigation, and farming. Even neighbouring communities frequently visit the tube-wells with gallons on motorbike to fetch drinking water. This project helped to minimize health hazards. The tubewells brought happiness to the poor communities and gave respite from arsenic contaminated water.





Children buck the trend

Almost all of the programs, be it at school or in the community, are planned and organized by grown-ups. An adult trainer/facilitator/teacher takes charge of planning and organizing programs for children and others. Children take part in the programs only as a passive audience.

If children are conducting a program, adult community members do not participate or take such a program seriously. Patriarchy, cultural traditions, and ageism are behind such a mindset. This mindset is deeply rooted, therefore not easy to do away with.

Like everywhere else in Nepal, it is rare to see children organizing or facilitating formal programs in Kailali District. To transform this scenario, a GNI Nepal supported local community development project (CDP) identified and selected a few children and started building their leadership capacity—to challenge the existing social-cultural traditions and prove that a child can be a trainer or facilitate formal events. First, the CDP gave an orientation to the selected child club committee

members. Teachers of the respective schools also pitched in to help conduct the orientation.

Later on, CDP staff and the trainee child club members prepared a 'School Sanitation Campaign' plan. Tikapur CDP supported three committee members of Saraswati Child Club, Bangaun; Naya Bihani Child Club, Rajipur; and Srijanshil Child Club, Tikapur; for organizing a sanitation campaign.

These children demonstrated hand washing techniques and sensitized fellow students and the community members on proper sanitation practices. They conducted a 'sanitation program' at Karnali Secondary School, Tikapur and Mukta Kamaiya Primary School, Bijaynagar. There were about 500 participants including school teachers and community members.

After gaining practical experience, most of the child club members have become very active in terms of leadership and are campaigning against social evils/malpractices, and for positive social change. Some of the trainees have become very good trainers, facilitators, and emcees.

Amrita lives in Sanoshree VDC, Bardiya District with her family of five. Her parents are ex-bonded laborers. Amrita's father does odd jobs and supports the family. The government of Nepal provided her family with a 912 square feet plot for building a shelter and homesteading.

They constructed a hut out of bamboo, rafters, and straw.



'Gift money' triggers positive changes

During monsoon, rains submerged their home so the entire family had to take shelter at their neighbor's house. The family cultivated the remaining patch of land. Unsurprisingly, it did not support the family for even a few months.

As a sponsored child of GNI Nepal, she annually receives school uniform, shoes, bags, stationery and sanitation materials. She says, "One day, GNI Nepal staff told me that my sponsor had sent me gift money. It made us happy. We decided to utilize that money for our betterment. GNI Nepal staff helped us to purchase piglet and few dresses for me with that gift money."

The entire family put their heart into raising the piglet. The family fattened it to 170 kg and sold at around twenty-one thousand rupees. With this money, they gave their home a make-over—built a brick wall, kitchen, toilet and changed the roofing to corrugated zinc sheets—and bought two piglets. Her mother deposited the remaining money at Himpat Cooperative for Amrita's education.

Amrita says she is grateful to GNI Nepal for sponsoring her education and providing support to her family which has improved their living conditions.





Young children get a "Good Change"

Melina Rokaya, 4, lives with her parents in the remote village of Kanda in Bajura District. In 2015, at three years of age, her parents put her in the local early childhood development center (ECDC) called Shanti Bal Bikas Kendra, established in 2005 with material and labor contribution from the community.

In a dismal room, twenty-eight children including Melina had to sit on the cold wooden benches meant for big children from 10 am -1 pm every day. On top of it, the available furniture was inadequate.

Playthings and teaching-learning materials were not available at the ECDC and they had to borrow them from a secondary school close by. Belu Chandra Singh, the facilitator who is with the center since its establishment relates, "I had no child-friendly teaching techniques at my disposal. All I knew was lecturing, rote-memorization, and

a few local games. Day in and day out, I would make them chant English/Nepali alphabets and numbers. That was it."

The principal of the adjacent school remarked, "the children would not attend the ECDC regularly, which was obvious given its sorry state".

GNI Nepal through its implementing partner constructed a child-friendly ECDC building having one room each for play, lunch, and office along with clean drinking water facility and gender-sensitive toilets. Training to the early childhood development (ECD) facilitators and ECD kits were also provided. Now the facilitators teach the children based on the six-corner learning approach as specified in the ECD Curriculum, 2062.

About the changes that the support has brought, Belu Chandra says, "Compared to the past, children learn quickly. Thanks to the training we received, ECD kits and well-furnished playroom".

Now Melina and her friends happily spend their day playing games, singing songs, learning alphabets and numbers, and expressing themselves through creative arts. As a result of the improved status of the center, all eligible children regularly attend the center, quite contrary to the situation a year ago.

Speaking at a district level program, Manbir Khati, Resource Person, District Education Office Bajura appreciated the center saying, “out of the 223 ECD centers in Bajura, Shanti Bal Bikas Kendra can be ranked number one for the facilities and quality teaching available there”.



Elderly regains his eyesight



Buddhi Bahadur Pahari, 75, is a resident of Ward No.5 Badikhel, Lalitpur District. He suffered from cataract—an eye condition that leads to blurry and diminished vision—in his both eyes. Buddhi could not take his daily walks in the neighborhood nor engage in any kind of domestic work. Neither he sought help of anyone to get the disease treated nor he knew that it could be cured.

One day he heard that GNI Nepal offers treatment for such diseases to community members. With a huge hope, he visited GNI Nepal's implementing partner's office and communicated his condition to the staff. Sometime later, he was taken to Nepal Eye Hospital, Tripureswor and had both of his eyes operated on.

Buddhi was finally able to regain his vision. This not only helped an elderly to live an independent life. He says, “Now, I can see the world as I used to and can work and go anywhere without a problem. Many thanks for the help”.



Child gets rid of brain tumor

Nisha Bishwokarma, 7, a GNI Nepal sponsored child, is a resident of Myagdi District. She is studying in class three at Shree Ramche Primary School. She lives with her parents and siblings. Her elder sisters are married and elder brothers work in India as a manual laborer.

Nisha's father works the small plot of land which the family owns, and her mother takes care of the household. Their only domestic animals are a buffalo and a she-goat. The family doesn't have enough fertile land for producing food grains to sustain them for a year. Having two square meals a day is also difficult for them due to their poor economic condition.

One day she experienced headache and multiple seizures, so, her parents took her to the local health post. As the cause could not be determined there, she was referred to the district hospital in Beni, the district headquarter. The district hospital referred her to Manipal Hospital, Pokhara.

She was admitted to Manipal Hospital and stayed there for a few days. Based on the diagnosis, she was referred to BP Koirala Memorial Cancer Hospital, Bharatpur. Medical tests showed that she had developed a life-threatening brain tumor which was to be removed immediately.

The family requested GNI Nepal for help along with a written application. A project management committee (PMC) meeting was held for discussing her critical condition. GNI Nepal provided financial support to the family taking the severity of the illness and family's economic condition into consideration. GNI Nepal covered all of the medical expenses for removing the tumor. It was removed surgically and at present her condition is normal. Nowadays, she attends the school regularly and enthusiastically participates in all classroom activities.

Askiya Timalsina, 10, is a GNI Nepal sponsored child. She lives with her family in Sikharpa, Lele VDC, a remote area in the southern part of Lalitpur District. She is studying at a local public school in grade six. The family does not have cultivable land. Her father is the sole breadwinner in the family. He works as a seasonal daily wage laborer, earning about five thousand rupees monthly. Such a small income is barely sufficient for fulfilling their basic needs.

Everything was going on smoothly in Askiya's life and she was attending the school regularly and performing satisfactorily. One fateful day, she felt pain in her left knee. Gradually, it got swollen. Despite the pain and swelling, she did not reveal her condition to anyone. One of the mornings, her knee hurt so badly that she could not reach the school, no matter how much she tried.

A stitch in time saves life

She was admitted to a local hospital. All of the required medical tests were done but the disease could not be diagnosed. She was referred to Patan Hospital in Lagankhel, a national level hospital, but her family could not afford to take her there. Therefore, they informed GNI Nepal about her situation. She was provided with the needed financial support.

Askiya was hospitalized for sixteen days. In accordance with the doctor's advice, she took a month-long bed rest. "If she had not been admitted to the hospital on time she could have developed bone marrow cancer", the doctor at Patan Hospital informed her parents pointing out the critical situation she was in.

After the treatment and bed rest, she recovered completely. Now, she attends the school regularly and takes part in extracurricular activities. In terms of academic performance, she is doing fine.





“After the completion of the project, all of us in our Bagar village including children and the cattle are hugely benefiting from the scheme”

Water woes, no more

Bagar village lies in Ward No. 9, Mudi VDC, Myagdi District and on the main trekking route to Dhaulagiri Base Camp—a tourist destination at distance of two-day walk from the district headquarter. Bagar is primarily a settlement of the Gurungs—an indigenous group largely found in the northern part of North-western Nepal.

This beautiful community has fifty-six households. Some of them run home-stay service for tourists. The village lacks a motorable road connection—the foremost precondition for economic development—with the district headquarter. The village can be reached on foot along a treacherous trail. There is one primary school and a cooperative which has been working for the Bagar Community as a multi-purpose organization i.e. income generation and social mobilization. There are no health facilities in the village.

Drinking water shortage was a perennial problem, the community and cattle suffered alike. The main water source is around 1.5 km below the settlement. Every household in Bagar

had to collectively spend two to four hours daily for fetching water. This ‘water responsibility’ was mostly on children and women. Some children would even skip school for collecting water. During summer, water became so scarce that cattle would scrape the muddy bed of water sources.

GNI Nepal in coordination with the District Water Supply and Sanitation Office (DWSSO) and under the overall management of a local cooperative, a new drinking water scheme was constructed, with seven taps servicing fifty-eight households. Each beneficiary household enthusiastically contributed twenty-five days’ worth of manual labor totaling 1372 days. The construction began in January 2015 and was completed by April 2015.

Min Kumari Gharti, chair of the parents group of the local primary school shared her happiness, “after the completion of the project, all of us in our Bagar Village including children and the cattle are hugely benefiting from the scheme. We are happy that the drudgery we had to face day in and day out is over now.”

Lele is a scenic VDC in Lalitpur District. It takes around 45 minutes from Lagankhel—one of the main city centers in the district—to reach there by a four-wheeler. It has been declared ‘Organic VDC’ as manure and natural pesticides only are used in agriculture. 1822 households of Newar, Pahari and Brahmin/Chettris communities inhabit the VDC. The total population is 8411.

Though it is a historically significant place—an important center during the Lichhavi Dynasty—currently, it is considered a backwater compared to other areas of Lalitpur District. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. This tourist destination is around 20 km away from Kathmandu, the national capital and largest urban center in Nepal. However, it feels as if Lele is a remote village in some rural district: poverty is rampant and traditions and superstitions play a big part in life and death.



Lele becomes a successful ODF VDC

Open defecation (OD) was the main health hazard in Lele. WASH related health problems were frequent. Community members were aware of this ‘uncivilized’ way of relieving oneself. They would feel inferior to the domestic and international tourists visiting their village and surrounding areas.

In 2011, the Government of Nepal made a commitment to declare Nepal, an open defecation free (ODF) country by 2017. Along that line, Lele VDC water, sanitation and hygiene coordination committee (V-WASH-CC) also made a commitment to declare Lele as open defecation free by July 2014. Due to a combination of multiple factors, it could not be materialized.

In close coordination with district water, sanitation and hygiene coordination committee (D-WASH-CC), V-WASH-CC again set out to make the VDC

ODF and invited all I/NGOs and community based organizations (CBO) working in the VDC to make it a success. In Lele VDC, there are only three I/NGOs and CBOs in operation.

The implementing partner of GNI Nepal, as a member of V-WASH-CC, took responsibility to declare Ward No. 4-8 of the VDC as ODF. A community-led total sanitation (CLTS) approach was adopted and finally on April 10, 2015, Lele was declared ODF VDC in the presence of Honorable Minister for Land Reform, Bal Bahadur Rana.

After Lele was declared ODF VDC, diseases having fecal origin are decreasing gradually. Sakuntala Tamang, a GNI Nepal supported WASH facilitator claimed, “Occurrence of diarrhea has decreased by around 60 percent and people have stopped defecating in the open”.



Migrant laborer finds sustainable self-employment

Bhim Bishwokarma, 32, lives in Meltoli village of Ladagada VDC, Doti District with his wife and three children (one son and two daughters). From the age of 16-32, he worked in India as a laborer, visiting his family once every two years. Meanwhile, he got married and had kids. His wife took care of the family while he was away.

Sixteen years of drudgery in a foreign land did not make his life any better. Somehow he managed to get by and send a small amount of money home every few months. For a daily wage earner like him saving money was impossible. To make things more difficult, there was no job security. He wouldn't have work every day nor had a consistent pay. He recalls, "Is my life going to be

like this forever, I wondered often. I got really anxious every now and then". Anxious he may get but there was no alternative to that life of blood and sweat.

Over the phone, his wife would share the family's condition back at home and her worries regarding the children's future, as the children had reached school age. One time, she emphatically informed him about GNI Nepal's livelihood support projects being implemented in their village. After this conversation with his wife, he saw income-generating opportunities in his village itself.

With a firm determination to do something on his own and in his own village, he returned home permanently in 2013 before the Dashain festival. At this point, his village had changed immensely.

Every household was involved in different income generating activities. He came to know about 'Srijansil Vegetable Farming Group' and shortly afterward joined it.

In October 2013, he started seasonal and off seasonal vegetable farming in one ropani of land. GNI Nepal provided him financial support for purchasing improved vegetable seeds, materials for building a poly-house with drip irrigation system and garden pipe. Technical support was also provided to him by the organization. Later on, he increased the land under cultivation to about 3.5 ropani.

He sells the vegetables at the local market and earns a good income. Almost four thousand rupees per month is mostly spent in buying

food, medicines, clothes, and on the children's education. Apart from the household expenses, he has been able to save forty thousand rupees in the village cooperative. He saves money on a monthly basis and borrows only if he needs.

"I am just one example among many in our VDC. About 40-45 farmers are engaged in vegetable farming in this VDC. Now, there are different groups in the VDC for vegetables, ginger & turmeric production", he says.

His message for everybody like him, "Involve yourself in some income generating activity in the motherland and live happily with your family. Do not go to foreign countries seeking employment".





Sitapur Village is a small settlement in Kailali District comprised of fifty households. It is just five kilometers away from the market center in Tikapur Municipality—the main urban center in the district. Though close to the main town in the district, it's poor and backward in terms of socio-economic development. A large majority of the families have small land holdings (3-8 kattha, which is less than an acre) which they cultivate for producing food for household consumption.

Most of the time, the women of Sitapur would be confined within the four walls of their homes. They would shy away if they had to deal with strangers or introduce themselves to outsiders, let alone speak in public. Occasionally they worked as daily laborers at the local market. They were engaged in traditional farming. They also produced a limited quantity of vegetables in their kitchen garden in a traditional way. The families would buy vegetables at the market if the production from their kitchen gardens was not sufficient.

Vegetable farming leads to empowerment



In 2012, an all-female group called Asal Aama Samuha was formed with the technical support from GNI Nepal. Currently, there are 23 members in the group. Training sessions on group mobilization, leadership development, women rights, and vegetable farming were given to the group members for enhancing their knowledge and skills. Initially, the group started collective vegetable farming in 1.5 kattha of land. They produced 2,700 kilograms of vegetables in the first year, and net profit was NRs. 57,000. They were encouraged by the achievement and added 2 katthas to the farm area. They also made a rule



which required every member to compulsorily save ten rupees per month.

Currently, the group cultivates vegetables in 5.5 kattha of land. The group's net annual profit is between NRs. 50,000-70,000. Besides the collective vegetable farming, the group members have also started producing vegetables in their own land. The group members are earning on average NRs. 20,000-150,000 annually from their individual farms.

Group farming practice has given confidence, practical ideas of selling/saving/financial mobilization and know-how of vegetable farming to the housewives of Sitapur VDC. Inspired by its success, another group has also been formed in the same community. Asal Aama Samuha has also established a cooperative named Sunaulo Bhabishya (Bright Future). The cooperative's share

membership stands at 107. The group is not only engaged in vegetable farming but conducting various activities/campaigns on sanitation, school enrollment and against open defecation, gender discrimination, and child marriage.





Support enhances teaching and learning environment

Sunadevi primary school is located in Deura, Ladagada VDC, Doti. For a primary school having five grades, there were only two rooms for conducting classes. The building of this dilapidated school was initiated by Uddyasingh Kunjeda, a local resident, and later his community also pitched in. The roof leaked during rainy season and it was a huge problem for conducting classes. It frequently hindered teaching and learning. With the onset of monsoon, the classrooms would fill-up with water. So, students avoided school.

Faced with such a situation, the local community started searching for helping hands, to renovate the building. They started communicating with different organizations, but they were unable to receive any kind of support.

The community came to know about GNI Nepal and the support it was providing to different activities in Ladagada VDC. They contacted GNI

Nepal staff member and shared their problem. GNI Nepal staff visited the area, held a meeting with the community, and assessed the situation. They decided to provide support, estimated the cost for renovation and prepared a design for other kind of supports.

Teachers and students including their parents are very happy as the school can house up to twelve grades and all 350 students can continue their study. The teaching-learning environment is more conducive at the school as there are enough classrooms.

The community is also making efforts to improve the quality of education at the school. Keshav Raj Pathak (former principal of the school) donated three ropanis of land to the school. The community is now enthusiastic about enhancing the quality of education and increasing local employment opportunities. Towards this end, the community has requested GNI Nepal for regular support.

Sanju, 17, lives in Ward No. 4, Jhor, Gairigaun, Kathmandu District with her parents and siblings (elder sister and younger brother). The family cultivates a small plot of land but the production from it is enough for three months only. Her father worked as a daily wage laborer, and most of his income was spent on alcohol. Therefore, the family wouldn't have enough food for their survival.

GNI Nepal staff member in 2011 identified and assessed Sanju's situation, and selected her for the sponsorship service program. Under the program, she received complete educational support and was able to continue her studies.

She worked hard and as a result, always stood first in her class. She also took part in extra-curricular activities and received many awards. Participation in extra-curricular activities enhanced her leadership skills. It helped build her



A deprived girl gets started on her nursing career

public speaking skills and now, she can speak in front of people without any hesitation. She took her School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exam in 2014 and scored distinction (80.25%).

She wanted to be a nurse, but her parents could not afford to pay the fees. So, Sanju was quite worried. Taking her SLC scores and poor economic condition into consideration, GNI Nepal supported her to enroll in the nursing entrance exam preparation course. She passed the entrance exam and got a full scholarship at a private nursing college.

"There is no end to suffering in a person's life", and she says she realized this old adage hard.

She was a scholarship student and all of her fees and other costs should have been waived by the college, but they asked her to deposit NRs. 10,000 as admission fee. It put her in a difficult situation as she had to manage other expenses such as clothing, stationery, and transportation by herself. Therefore, Sanju requested GNI Nepal once again to help her overcome this difficult situation.

Sanju expressed her gratitude and plans saying, "Without your support, I couldn't be where I am today. I promise GNI that one day, I will become a successful person and use my skills and knowledge to serve needy people".



Canal restoration improves food production

Ghodilas is a settlement in Ward No. 5, Pokhari VDC, Doti District. This community is endowed with a large area of fertile land but it does not yield a good harvest. Though the VDC is food insecure, it possesses high potential for cash crops and vegetable production. Lack of proper irrigation system caused serious water problem during the cultivation season. The distribution of water is always a source of dispute among the farmers. A major part of the existing earthen canal, not having proper retention structures, has a high seepage rate.

With the introduction of GNI Nepal's Saemual Zero Hunger Community Project, farmers have been highly benefited. The construction of the

lined canal in high seepage area has significantly reduced water seepage. The canal supplies water to 25 hectares of land. Construction of 3.169 km long drywall, and gabion structures have made the canal more stable, and it can withstand landslides during monsoon as well.

Similarly, the problems and costs associated with maintenance are reduced considerably. The total investment in the canal was NRs. 10,97,498. About the changes that this canal brought, Canal Construction Supervisor, Nar Bahadur Badaila says, "This project has helped a lot in increasing food production, reducing water distribution disputes and saving time/money that go into regular maintenance. Definitely, this has been a real boon to our community."



Schools merge for sustainability and better quality education

Owing to a strong demand from the Pahari Community, Good Neighbors Academy was established in 2003 in Badikhel VDC, Lalitpur District with the financial support of GNI Nepal. The Academy had the objective of providing quality education to poor children of endangered Pahari ethnic group. 269 children from play group to class eight studied at the school in 2013. After supporting this school for ten years, GNI Nepal initiated its merger with a community school for sustainability.

Patha Pradarshak Secondary School, established in 1963, is the only community school in the VDC. The school is nearby the Pahari settlements. The School got the approval from the government to run the lower secondary and secondary level classes in 2008 and 2011 respectively. This school catered to 159 children from play group to class ten in 2013.

As both schools served the Pahari children so GNI Nepal through its implementing partner initiated the merger of the schools. Patha Pradarshak

Secondary School was planned to be made a model school in Badikhel area by improving its learning outcome. A proposal was developed and thoroughly discussed a number of times with the school management committee (SMC).

An agreement was signed between the School and GNI Nepal in January 2012 for merging the schools and upgrading its infrastructure and enhancing the capacity of its teachers.

From 2013-2015 GNI Nepal supported NRs. 16,768,518 for constructing a building, playground, fence, water taps, toilet; old classrooms and building repairs and renovation; furniture, library and sports materials purchase, computer lab establishment, teachers' capacity development, and five teachers support for three years. The SMC oversaw the infrastructure construction, management and agreed to its upkeep. Badikhel VDC and District Education Office Lalitpur contributed NRs. 650,000 in total.

The schools were merged in January 2013. Around 500 children attend the new school.



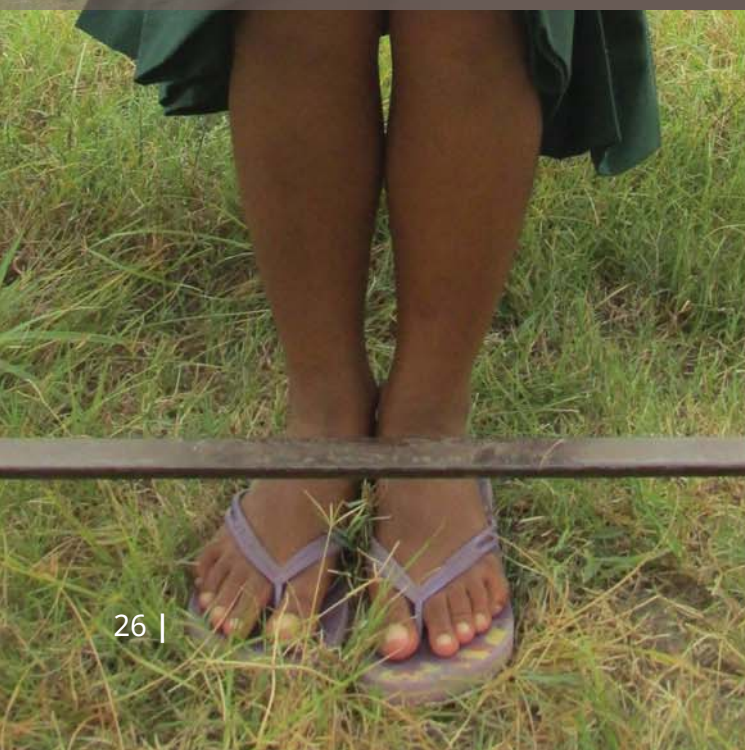
Sunima Chaudhary, 9, lives in Tikapur VDC, Kailali District and studies in the fifth grade. She was born and grew up in an ex-bonded laborer family. Her parents work as daily wage laborers and earn a small amount of money.

Sunima suffered from rheumatic fever. "There was no relief in my life because I was suffering from rheumatic fever. I could not pay total attention to my studies. Due to the pain in the joints (hands and legs), I couldn't perform my daily tasks like others", Sunima describes her situation.

Her poor parents did not have enough money for proper treatment of the disease. They were very much worried about her health and they had almost lost hope of treating her.

"As people say, God looks after everybody; we only need to wait. It turned out true when GNI Nepal provided support for the treatment. After the treatment, my health

A marginalized girl regains her health



condition improved significantly, and I was able to go to school like a normal student", Sunima recalls her condition before and after the support.

Now, she can easily continue her studies. Not only that, she can play games with her friends and participate in extracurricular activities. She hopes that she will become a successful person in the future. And, her dream is to serve poor people and make them happy. She had this to say to GNI Nepal, "I am very happy! Thank you for helping me! I will never forget you and your support. I really got a new life."



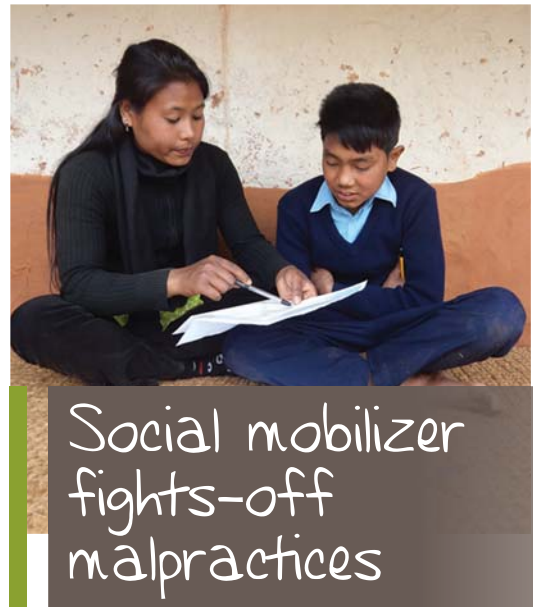
Goverdhan Bohora, 13, is a resident of Ward No. 9, Darma VDC, Humla District—one of the most remote districts of Nepal in the Far-western region—is geographically isolated, not connected to roads and lags behind in socio-economic development.

Goverdhan was born with a cleft lip and palate. Speaking, eating, and laughing: simple acts for his friends was a struggle for him.

Goverdhan's parents are subsistence farmers. Poverty forced them to forgo little Govardhan's surgery. Goverdhan could not be operated in the district. Travelling out of the district for his treatment, the family even could not imagine of. Govardhan pitied himself and suffered from inferiority complex.

GNI Nepal supported him to travel to Kathmandu and get rid of the cleft lip. He shared his happiness, "while flying to Kathmandu, I got really happy and excited as that I would not have to suffer anymore".

After the reconstructive surgery, he recuperated for another eleven days in the Korea-Nepal Friendship hospital—where he was operated at. He no more looks "different". He does not have to face ridicule anymore. Govardhan's days of pain are well past now.



Social mobilizer fights-off malpractices

Sita Nagarkoti, 22, lives in Ward No.3 Chhampi, Lalitpur District and is the eighth and the youngest child. She started working as a social mobilizer for a GNI Nepal supported project and later on took on the role of a teacher at Lele Community Development Project in November 2009. In her role as a teacher-cum-social mobilizer, she teaches school children and also regularly visits their families and communities.

In her visits, Sita witnessed malpractices such as gender discrimination, menstrual taboos & the negative impact it had on girls and women.

With a determination to change the mindset of the community members, she started writing a script for a street drama. She enlisted a few children as the actors, mentored them and staged the play at four neighborhoods in Badikhel Village. The play portrayed issues of women-folk. The drama was appreciated by the locals. Many housewives were moved to tears as the drama carried their very own problems.

Sita shared her experience, "Such awareness-raising plays can make the audience realize the ills in society and change their behavior. In fact, they can be one of the best means".



A sponsored boy finds success

Kamal, 22, lives with his family of six in Badikhel VDC, Lalitpur District. His parents are illiterate and earn a scanty livelihood by engaging in agriculture and bamboo craft.

At five years of age, he was admitted to grade one at Patha Pradarshak Lower Secondary School. As his parents are poor and could not afford a good education for him, GNI Nepal provided a scholarship to him. In 2003, he was put in a hostel and his hostel expenses were paid for and he continued his education.

Along with his studies, he always participated in various extra-curricular activities and received many awards. After completion of grade seven, he had to change his school and got enrolled in grade eight at Kitini Higher Secondary School. He continued studying hard and passed School

Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination with 61.75% in 2011.

After SLC, he enrolled in a hotel management course. Around the same time, he started his career in GNI Nepal supported Badikhel Community Development Project (CDP) as a volunteer. He learned writing annual child report, annual progress analysis of sponsored children, tuition center management, data collection, and compilation.

One day in January 2014, he came across a vacancy announcement for the post of assistant teacher cum social mobilizer (ATSM) at Badikhel CDP. He applied for that position and was selected."

"Around a month later, I started working there as a regular staff. My parents and siblings are very happy with my achievements ... and, now, I can support them in difficult situations", Kamal shared happily.

Hira Devi Nepali, 14, lives in Ward No. 4, Ruga, Mugu. She studies in class seven at Shree Masta Lower Secondary School, Tharpa. Her family is poor and resembles daily wage earner families in other parts of Nepal. Although they have a small plot of land, the produce cannot fill their bellies a year round. To supplement the family income, they always had to be resourceful. Therefore, she would go to the mountains to collect Yarchagumbha, a type of expensive Himalayan herb.

She relates a terrible accident that she met with while her group was on their way to collect Yarcha, "I slipped on the snow and my right leg got injured badly. It took us three days to reach the nearest hospital." Unfortunately, the resident doctor could not treat her injuries and referred her to Nepalgunj Zonal Hospital." Due to unavailability



A Dalit girl gets a new lease on life

of fast means of transportation, Hira was carried on a stretcher all the way to Nepalgunj and it took the group almost a week to reach there.

GNI Nepal paid for all of the expenses of her treatment including her family's transportation. As she couldn't get medical care on time, she lost her right leg.

"It was very difficult walking with the support of others. I felt disabled and in need", Sanju recalls the days right after her leg was amputated.

GNI Nepal again supported her to travel to Kathmandu for further treatment. She was given a prosthetic leg. She is happy now as she can do her work without anybody's help.

Confidence echoes in her words, "Though I am disabled physically but not mentally, and I am in good health. After the treatment, I got a new lease on life".





Sima, 13, studies in grade seven at Kalika Lower Secondary School in Tikapur VDC, Kailai District. She belongs to a family of ex-bonded laborers belonging to the Tharu Community. Her father works at a brick factory and mother takes care of the household.

When Sima was in class two, she was enrolled in GNI Nepal's Sponsorship Service Program—her parents were overjoyed. Sima got the support she direly needed. In her own words, “Up to now, all my educational expenses have been borne by GNI Nepal. I pay complete attention in the class and study hard because I want to be a successful person in the future.” The fruits of her hard work, she comes first in the board examinations.

Not only she is a good student but a promising athlete as well.

She always takes part in running competitions. She has bagged a number of prizes. Two times

A Tharu girl's rise to sprinting prominence



she was awarded best player and best girl athlete award in the Tikapur Resource Centre level athletics competition and Tikapur Municipality level athletic competition and also secured third position in the far western region athletic competition.

GNI Nepal has been providing her with sports uniform, shoes, and nutritious diet regularly. She sprints daily and hopes to win the sprinting category in Far-western region wide athletics competition. If she wins this competition, she will qualify for the national level competition. Sima dreams of representing Nepal in international competitions and judging by her growth over the years, is not far-fetched.



A hamlet overcomes water scarcity

In 2014, GNI Nepal started a community development project (CDP) in Kaski District. The Project is striving to improve the quality of life of marginalized and disadvantaged people by providing supports in education, health, income generation, water and sanitation, community partnership, network building and advocacy.

In the hamlet of Dharapani, Lumle VDC, there were nearly twenty-two households and most of them were GNI Nepal supported families. The piping was swept away by a landslide triggering so the people were unable to get sufficient water for the household. Parents including their children had to spend two hours just for collecting a bucket of water. A significant amount of their waking time was spent in fetching water. By reason of that, sometimes children were unable to attend school. Unfortunately, they had to manage every essential household chores with that limited water.

Dharapani Drinking Water Consumer Committee was looking for a funder since they had no money

to solve it. They requested GNI Nepal to provide financial assistance to buy the polythene pipe.

A field visit was carried out by GNI Nepal staff and its implementing partner to assess the damage to the piping. Two hundred meters of polythene pipe was provided to the drinking water user committee. Piping from the water collection-tank to the tap-stands in the community was replaced.

Now, each household has potable water just a few meters away. The amount of time spent for carrying water has been reduced to 1/15 of the time required previously. Kitchen gardens neglected due to lack of water are being cultivated again. These gardens produce seasonal and off-season vegetables which the households sell in the local market and earn a good amount of money. These incomes go towards their children's education and paying household expenses. More importantly, children are going to school regularly and progress in education is clearly visible.



Women fight menstrual taboos and unhygienic practices in Kailali

Menstrual hygiene is a major concern in Nepal. Many communities still consider menstruation ritually “impure”. In rural and remote areas, pubescent girls are rarely taught about menstrual cycle and its hygienic management in their entirety. Girls and women also hesitate to talk about these matters openly. Mainly in Nepal, a menstruating woman is not allowed to enter her house, touch food-grains, milk as well as male members of the family. Girls and women in periods are expected to stay in cramped, dark cabin called *chhaupadi*.

Not only in remote areas, women and girls are unaware of the use of sanitary pads and cannot afford to buy them but in relatively developed

areas in Kailali District as well. A significant portion of the population in the district are originally from the hill districts in the region where *chhaupadi* is still prevalent. Therefore, Kailali Mom Center initiated a menstrual hygiene awareness-raising program among girls and women of Kailali.

The Center provided menstrual hygiene training to 150 girls of Tikapur Area and 250 women of reproductive age from Patharaiya VDC. The training covered physical changes and menstruation, physiology of menstruation, female reproductive system, fertilization process, problems during menstruation, menstrual hygiene management, unhealthy practices and their effects, hygiene, nutrition and pain

management and government policy related to the eradication of *chhaupadi*.

The Center provided orientation on menstrual hygiene management to students of seven schools in Patharaiya VDC and is also distributing sanitary pads at 15 schools of Tikapur Area. This support has contributed to reduce absence of girls at school; and women are advocating about menstrual hygiene and practicing regular household chores without facing discriminatory behaviors. As an effect of regular awareness-raising programs, levels of menstrual hygiene management is increasing and taboos at home are also gradually getting lax.

GNI Nepal supported 10 local female cooperative

members of Ward No.8 of Patharaiya VDC and they were provided six-month tailoring training and an additional two-week training for making sanitary pads. At a cost of NRs. 48,000, they made 600 pads and distributed among the girls. The demand for these pads is increasing and the trainee entrepreneurs are planning to establish an enterprise.

GNI Nepal will support to conduct a sanitary pad making training and conduct monthly menstrual hygiene education for women and girls at the mom center, put up samples of sanitary pads in the local exhibitions and support the women's cooperative to open an outlet and sell sanitary pads at an affordable cost.





Cooperative empowers locals in rural areas of Doti

Saemual Zero Hunger Community Project (SZHCP) was started in Ladagada VDC, Doti in 2011. The project planned to establish a cooperative which would be led by women group of Ladagada. Discussion with the community members revealed that a Laxmi Women Multipurpose Cooperative had already been formed in 2008. However, it was not properly operating and the loans had not been refunded. Initially, there were 250 members. Hence, the project initiated to reactivate it and build coordination with Division Cooperative

Office, Doti in 2013. SZHCP provided business plan preparation, leadership, saving credit mobilization, and book-keeping training to the cooperative members. As a result, the situation of the cooperative improved gradually.

Nowadays, Laxmi cooperative is earning NRs. 50,000 per month and the loan is being effectively mobilized. Around 82% of the members have taken out loans and invested in productive works such as vegetable, ginger, turmeric production; and, livestock (cows and goat) rearing and agriculture.

As this cooperative is getting older, it is growing bigger—by building trust in the community, sharing wider responsibility, transferring ownership, improving governance and gaining social recognition. For creating a better management process, SZHCP has been regularly providing supports such as personnel, assets, and capacity development.





Social enterprise generates employment and income

Shankar Budha is the chairperson of Haatemalo Community Development, Agriculture & Herbs Cooperative, in Ward No.7 Rowa, Mugu District. The implementing partner of GNI Nepal facilitated to set-up this cooperative. At the time of its formation, there were 50 share-members only.

“It was very much challenging for us to convince the people to join the cooperative. We conducted a number of community meetings to share the benefits it would bring in their lives, but they would not listen to us. However, we continued our activities. Through our cooperative, we started herb collection as well. The herbs were sold at a good price. As a result, we were able to save some amount for our cooperative as well.”, Shanker recalls the struggle in the early days and subsequent success.

The implementing partner of GNI Nepal also

supported the cooperative to start a retail-shop. It purchases hosiery from the community and sells them. The demand of hosiery is increasing day by day. The benefit of becoming a member was clearly visible to all in the community. As a result, now, the cooperative has 95 shareholders and NRs. 774,700 in savings— and it is increasing every day. Nine locals work full-time and more than 200 community members collect herbs part-time for the cooperative. Shanker is happy that the cooperative is providing economic support to the people and has brought positive changes in his and fellow community members' livelihoods.





Youths start their own enterprise

Shanti (32), Mohan Singh (35), Pushpa (33), and Bishna (23) are residents of Shankarpur VDC, Darchula District. All their fellow community members including them were involved in traditional agriculture. They did not have the know-how to increase the agricultural production even though the land is fertile. Thus, the produce was not sufficient and it led to constant food scarcity.

The growing size of their families and their needs and demands were a big challenge to all four of them. They did manual works for feeding their families. They shared they had almost forgotten that their lives could be better. With such a low

level of income and agricultural production, they were even unable to fulfill their very basic needs.

Luckily, they got the opportunity to meet GNI Nepal staff and came to know that GNI Nepal was planning to provide 'sewing and cutting' training to a few youths. Only four of them from their VDC were motivated enough to take the training.

GNI Nepal organized a three-month tailoring training. Food and accommodation expenses and training fee of all the trainees was covered by GNI Nepal. 15 youths from five projects VDCs of Darchula District took the training.

The training provided them theoretical as well as practical knowledge in tailoring. They became

“we are very much satisfied with our work and optimistic that this business and agriculture will improve our lives. We also believe that our children would be able to further their studies without any obstacle.”

skilled in designing and stitching ladies suit, gents shirt and pant, blouse, school uniform, etc. GNI Nepal provided materials and equipment required for establishing a ‘tailoring center’. Under the GNI Nepal livelihood program provision, all four of them took a loan amounting to 40% of the total start-up cost. Remaining 60% they invested themselves. As the group had everything they needed, they established ‘Gauri Aama Tailoring Center’ in their VDC.

They are happy that their services cover the whole of Shankapur VDC including Ward No. 2 of Malikarjun VDC and their incomes are also far better now. They provided a three-month training to four locals with a nominal fee of NRs. 3,000 (per person).

The group wants to turn their tailoring center into a training institute and help others by sharing the knowledge and skills that they have acquired. They are determined to keep on working to expand their business. We heartily thank GNI Nepal for motivating and providing such a wonderful opportunity to us. Finally, we would like to request GNI Nepal to provide us new opportunities to enhance our capacity.

They say, “we are very much satisfied with our work and optimistic that this business and agriculture will improve our lives. We also believe that our children would be able to further their studies without any obstacle.”





Daily wage laborer becomes an entrepreneur

Man Bahadur Khati, 45, lives in Ward No. 1, Muna VDC, Myagdi District. There are six members in his family; four children, his wife and himself. His eldest child, Manish Khati is one of the sponsored children of GNI Nepal. He worked as a daily wage laborer in his village. Even though

he worked very hard, he earned a small wage. Sometimes, he had to work during bad weather just to earn 150 rupees. With such a meager earning, they could not make ends meet. The family farmed a small plot of land in a traditional manner. Obviously, the yield was poor. Even if he wanted to switch to modern farming methods, he did not have the training.

Fortunately, GNI Nepal started income generation (IG) activities in his VDC and formed a parents group (PG) to implement them. He was selected as a member of that group. In one of the PG meetings, he was recommended to participate in the 'farming training' and he did so.

In that training, he says, "I learned a variety of ideas and techniques about growing different types of vegetables in greenhouse. I also learned about how to use improved seeds, insecticides, pesticides, and modern tools. Shortly after the training, I leased a plot of land at NRs. 10,000 per annum. I made greenhouses and plastic tunnels and used improved seeds. Meanwhile, I also learned skills to make farming more systematic. However, I did not have enough money to expand my farm. Hence, GNI Nepal provided all of the required money."

Three months later, he started a small tea shop. Her wife looks after the teashop and he works the land. The couple is earning a good amount of money.

"We are able to manage household expenditure, look after our family and send children to school with clean uniforms, textbooks, and stationery.", happily shared Man Bahadur. He is confident that he can enlarge his business and live a good life.



Local club builds a covered-hall for the community

Bir Bahadur lives in Kotatulsipur, Kailali. He loves to serve needy people and is involved in a number of local groups. He took an initiative for the formation of Daff Youth Club in Nimuwabojhi, Kotatulsipur in 2013, and with the support of a few community members, he accomplished it. The main objective of this club is to raise awareness of harmful socio-cultural practices and community development. The Club collects NRs. 151 every month from each member and put it into community development activities. Currently, he is the chairperson of this club.

The Club was planning to expand the range of their activities and looking for help. They knew that GNI Nepal was working in Kotatulsipur for improving the quality life of the local people. They shared

their main problem—lack of a covered space for organizing community activities—and its possible solution—a community hall. Later on, they submitted a concept note to GNI Nepal through its local implementing partner for funding. GNI Nepal conducted a needs assessment and decided to fund it. The community hall construction was completed successfully.

Later on, the Club raised money locally for furnishing the hall. In addition to this, they formed a committee for its management and maintenance.

Now, the people have a place where they can organize different activities any time of the year.



Tailoring training helps a woman to overcome poverty

Pawan Shahi, 35, lives in Katakse, Ward No. 8, Patharaiya VDC, Kailali with her husband and son, Suresh. Ten years ago, Pawan's husband went to India in search of work, started to work there as a laborer, sometime later married another woman and never returned. Pawan was left alone to fend for herself. She knew the ordeal had befallen her. Burying the pain deep inside her heart, she started her struggle to earn bread for herself and her son.

Fortunately, not long after Pawan was abandoned by her husband, she approached GNI Nepal seeking help. Suresh got enrolled in GNI Nepal's sponsorship service program and received educational support. Pawan continued to work hard as a day-laborer and eke out a living.

In 2013, Pawan was provided an opportunity to be part of a six-month-long tailoring training organized by GNI Nepal. On completion of the training, each trainee was provided with a sewing machine, scissors, and measuring tape. This support encouraged Pawan to establish a tailoring shop. Her enterprise turned out a success. She started earning as much as NRS. 12,000 every month.

Pawan now knows the "tricks of the trade" and wants to open a tailoring center in Katakse, a nearby township. Her only desire is to earn sufficiently to provide her son clean and hygienic food, adequate clothing and a good education.



Enrolment Campaign brings children to school

GNI Nepal started to work in Myagdi District in 2013 with the objective of addressing pressing needs of children and communities. Child-centered education is one of the major interventions and under it, quality education is provided to all school-age children. Gurja VDC is one of the remotest VDCs of Myagdi District. Many school-age children in this VDC were out of school due to poverty and their parents' lack of knowledge about the importance of education. Therefore, the GNI Nepal conducted an assessment in the VDC to identify the exact number of school-age children not attending school, and 18 out of 296 school-age children were found not enrolled in the school.

GNI Nepal organized door-to-door school enrolment campaign in close coordination with the District Education Office, District

Development Committee, VDC and public schools of the community and shared the importance of education with parents and community members. After organizing campaigns, all of the out-of-school children were enrolled in the school. Gurja VDC was declared "No school-age children remaining out of school" in May 2014. Altogether, 238 representatives and parents from District Education Office, VDC, DDC, public schools, local level political leaders, and communities participated in the program. Parents made a commitment to send their children to school regularly. During the declaration program, community members shared that they understood the importance of education and will encourage neighboring communities to send their school-age children to school regularly.



Shy young woman leads the fight against chhaupadi

Puja Thapa, 27, lives in Ward No. 4, Patharaiya VDC, Kailali District. She has four members in her family. She work as a housemaid and her husband works in India.

She is a member of Kailali Mom Center, Good Mothers Group. Every month, she and her fellow memebers receive different types of capacity building training programs and orientations at the center. Before, becoming a member of this group, she was scared of speaking in public. But, Mom Center motivated her to get rid of her 'stage fright'.

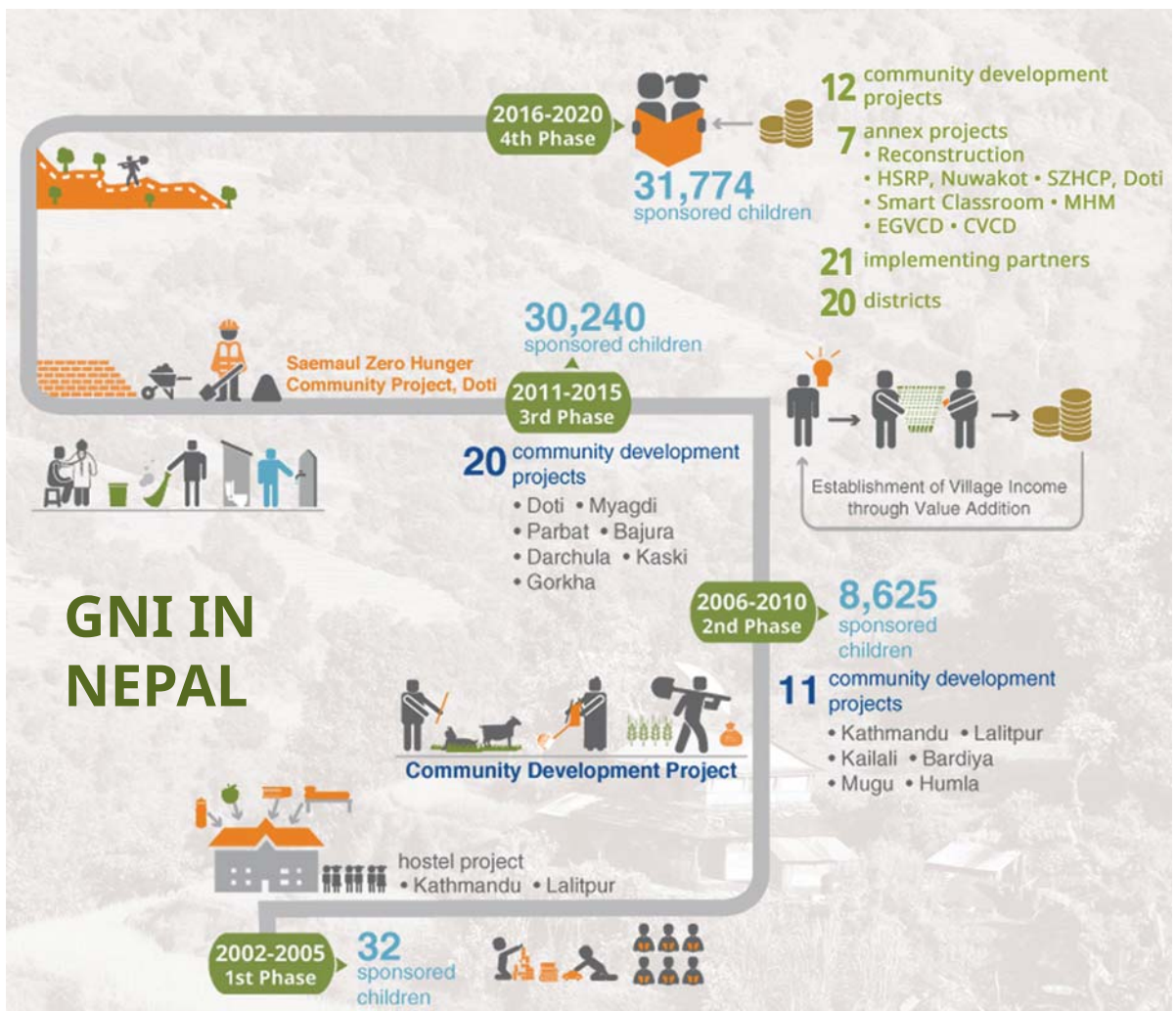
Now, she feels good about herself, since she can easily convince and motivate community members to change their behavior. She remember staying in the shed called *chhaupadi* (women are forced to stay in a dark isolated shed) during her periods. Women in these parts during their periods are not allowed to enter the house, perform regular household chores and come in contact with foodstuff/grains, household altar as well as male members of the family.

She got an opportunity to participate in the safe menstruation and *chhaupadi* elimination training organized by GNI Nepal. This training taught her about menstrual cycle and hygiene, and negative aspects of *chhaupadi*. She says, "Finally, I understood that menstruation is a natural and biological process. It does not make us 'impure'. After participating in this training, I made a commitment to change myself and my community."

Immediately, after the training, she started speaking against *chhaupadi* among her family members and gradually in the community and as a result her family and community members let menstruating girls and women stay in the house, take care of their health, and disseminate message against Chaupadi in neighboring communities as well. Puja was successful in changing her family and community's outdated mindset and is a happy and confident women because she is a change-maker.

Good Neighbors International (GNI) is an international, non-governmental, and humanitarian organization established in 1991. The organization is working in 39 countries around the world through 211 community development projects (CDP) and benefiting approximately 16.8 million people, including 9.6 million children. GNI is headquartered in Seoul, South Korea and has fund-raising offices in the USA, Korea, and Japan. GNI also has an International Cooperation Office in Geneva, Switzerland.

GNI has been working in Nepal since 2002 with the objective of improving lives of poor people, especially children through education, income generating activities, health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, child protection, disaster risk reduction, advocacy and network building. Currently, GNI Nepal is implementing its activities in 20 districts.



GNI Nepal Working Districts



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