

# JOURNEY WITH JUMLA

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

ISSUE 02 2019

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**Journey with Jumla connects Australians with communities in Jumla, Nepal, as they work with INF towards 'life in all its fullness'.**

**By supporting the people of Kanakasundari in prayer and finance [\$25 per month], you will also take your own learning journey, joining us for an inside view of community development.**



Through Self-Help Groups women grow in confidence and skill. For many it is the first time their voices have been heard in the community.

Nobody is better placed to tackle local problems than local people. All the outside experts in the world can't help if local people aren't involved or if unsuitable solutions are imposed from outside.

Locals know the daily and seasonal pressures experienced by families in their neighbourhood. They know the hard work needed to put food on the table, keep families healthy, and support kids in school. They have a deep understanding of the ways local culture, politics, economy and geography affect people's lives.

That's why INF project Team Leaders all live in the communities where they work, and the Community Mobilisers who facilitate and provide training and support for community Self-Help Groups [SHGs] are all local people.

When INF began recruiting these Community Mobilisers for our new Women's Empowerment and Livelihoods [WEAL] program in Jumla, we faced two problems.

The first was the very welcome problem of how to select the best candidates. There was so much interest from people wanting to serve their community that INF received over one hundred applications for just twelve positions.

A second, related problem was how to ensure that the candidates who were eventually selected would have a high level of legitimacy in the community and that the process would be free from bias or political influence.

INF put the candidates through not one, but two exams to test their skills and insights. The shortlisted candidates were interviewed by a panel which included members of INF's Jumla team and also representatives from local government, ensuring that they started with widespread support from different parts of the community. [contd on p3]

# KANAKASUNDARI RURAL MUNICIPALITY



## ABOUT KANAKASUNDARI RURAL MUNICIPALITY

**Population:** 13,200 [2011 Census]    **Religions:** Hinduism, Buddhism & Christianity    **Elevation:** 2400-3000m

# WORKING TOGETHER

Self-Help Groups [SHGs] are the backbone of INF's work among poor communities. Drawing on local knowledge and resources, they are at the heart of our Community-Led Integrated Development Approach.

After deciding which communities to work in, INF conducts surveys and analysis to determine community issues and need. After this, INF holds community meetings so that people know about our work and have the opportunity to form SHGs.

Community Mobilisers, drawn from the communities, facilitate and support these groups. For many members, particularly women and girls, this might be their first experience of speaking up about issues that affect them and have their voices heard.

Over time, group members develop new skills in planning, public speaking, group discussion, problem analysis, and more. People involved in this process regularly tell us that their membership in groups changes their lives. At a personal level, poor and vulnerable people, particularly women, develop new confidence and sense of purpose. At a community level, people experience new-found unity, willingness and power to tackle issues of poverty and injustice.

By pooling savings – to which INF provides seed funding – group members are able to purchase goats, chickens, seeds or other resources to increase family income, meet costs of education or respond to health emergencies.

Not only that, but with technical support and training, these groups identify problems their communities face, and work together to develop and implement plans to tackle them – improving health, hygiene, disaster resilience and education outcomes in the community and raising their voice to local authorities for better services and support.

## PROJECT PROGRESS [JUL 2018-JAN 2019]-THE JUMLA WEAL PROJECT HAS:

- placed 4 Team Leaders [2 female and 2 male] to live and work in the community
- recruited and trained 12 Community Mobilisers [5 female and 7 male] from the community to facilitate SHGs
- formed 111 SHGs– with 2,573 members [98% women and girls], reaching every household in Kanakasundari Rural Municipality
- conducted public meetings, radio broadcasts and training with political leaders, community members and school students on:



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT**



**CLIMATE  
CHANGE**



**CHILD  
MARRIAGE**



**HEALTH &  
HYGIENE**



**DISASTER  
PREPAREDNESS**



**THE RIGHTS OF  
WOMEN & GIRLS**

# AN EVER PRESENT HELP

As the INF team were preparing to work in new communities across Jumla, they drew encouragement from the words of Psalm 46:1–3:

**God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear,  
though the earth give way and  
the mountains fall into the  
heart of the sea...**

**Psalm 46:1–3**

How do these words make you feel?

Have you experienced God as an ever-present help in trouble? In what ways?

Take time to pray for INF's team in Jumla. Ask God to strengthen them in His service and to protect and prosper their work among poor and disadvantaged communities.

The difficulties and sometimes dangers of travelling the remote roads of Kanakasundari, the hard and patient work of empowering poor communities, the pain of confronting difficult issues of poverty, neglect and injustice can sometimes seem overwhelming. But the INF team know that with God's help, they need not fear.



Team Leader, Jol Bahadur Budha, and Community Mobiliser, Sangita Sanjal, [both standing] observe a community meeting



Sangita

## Local Knowledge [contd...]

The twelve community mobilisers in Kanakasundari Rural Municipality come from a range of backgrounds, are different ages, and have different skills and experiences. One thing they all share, though, is energy and enthusiasm for the task of helping improve the communities they are from.

**Sangita Sanjal**, who also recently completed training as an auxiliary nurse-midwife, said that she had wanted to become a community mobiliser because *“I want to use my skills to help women in the community. I am very committed to that and it will be a great experience for me.”* After receiving training in group facilitation skills, and with ongoing support and training from INF's experienced team leaders and technical advisors, Sangita and her eleven peers have already begun the work of community transformation.

You can watch video interviews and see photos and videos of these amazing Jumla locals at [www.inf.org/journey-with-jumla](http://www.inf.org/journey-with-jumla).

# FAMILIES IN JUMLA

## reflections and resources for families & children

Village homes in Jumla are very different to most houses in Australia. They are designed to keep families warm in very cold conditions and to make space for people to live and work on really steep, sloping land. They are built using the know-how and hard work of local people, with locally available materials, like wood, stone, mud and straw.

Look at the photos of houses and fields here – and watch the “Inside a Jumla Home” video at [www.inf.org/families-in-jumla](http://www.inf.org/families-in-jumla) – and imagine stepping inside a family home in Jumla.

### ACTIVITY 1 - SPACE

- Make a list of the rooms in your own house and what each one is used for.
- Which is your favourite room? Why?
- Which do you think is the most important room? Why?
- Make a list of the rooms you see [or hear described in the video] in the home in Jumla and what each one is used for.
- What are the biggest differences between your home and the Jumla house?

### ACTIVITY 2 - WATER

- Count the number of taps in and around your house where you can get safe drinking water in your house. Don't forget rooms like bathrooms, laundry and even toilets. [*Hint*: there's at least one tap in every house which provides drinking quality water that we use for another purpose].
- How many taps do you see in the home in Jumla? From the photos, can you see where most families in Jumla get their drinking water from?



**Will you join us to Journey with Jumla over the next three years, in prayer and finance [**\$25 per month**]?**

**In addition to this newsletter, all Journey with Jumla supporters will receive regular online updates, as well as interactive and other experiential events, bringing you the inside story of community development work.**

**Become a monthly supporter, or share this resource with a friend.**

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A Christian mission serving the physical and spiritual needs of Nepali people

#### INF AUSTRALIA

PO Box 5400  
West Chatswood  
NSW 1515  
T +[02] 9411 1195  
E [ausoffice@au.inf.org](mailto:ausoffice@au.inf.org)  
ABN 75 090 528 500

**[WWW.INF.ORG.AU](http://WWW.INF.ORG.AU)**  
**[WWW.INF.ORG/FACEBOOK](http://WWW.INF.ORG/FACEBOOK)**  
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