



ROLPA

Rolpa District is located in Nepal's Mid-Western Region. It is an underdeveloped area. Most of its approximately 220,000 people live in poverty with a low life expectancy of 52 years.

Rolpa can be a difficult place to live with rocky, unproductive land leading to insufficient food resources to last the year. With harsh terrain and little road access, getting additional food supplies from other areas is also difficult. This drives many people to seek work and income elsewhere, resulting in up to 11% of the district's population absent abroad at any one time.

With such an emphasis on mere survival, education becomes secondary for many families, evident by a 50% illiteracy rate amongst women.

INF started working in Rolpa in 2013 to try to address some of these issues. A Community Health and Development programme was set up in the district headquarter of Libang with the aim for social empowerment, economic growth and improvement of the general health of communities.

Already, 70 Self-Help Groups have been formed, 11 drinking water schemes provided and three health posts created. We continue to find ways to make a difference in the lives of the poor and marginalised in Rolpa District.

In Rolpa District:

- 52% of children under five have stunted growth
- more than 7000 people live with a disability
- only 0.41% of the district is agricultural land
- 84% of people still use firewood for cooking

Deva's story

Deva Kumari Thapa Magar of Rolpa was born with one of her legs shorter than the other. This not only caused difficulties in walking and day-to-day activities, but also led to discrimination in her own community.

As the eldest in a family of five, she was expected to help earn an income for the family. With their small plot of land, food could only be produced to support them for three months of the year. The rest of the time, they relied heavily on her elderly father who would go to work in India, leaving her to care for her elderly mother and siblings.

This difficult family situation led to Deva having to leave school early to find other ways to support her family.

Living with a disability, however, was not easy in her community. With the belief that she was not suitable for other work, she used to earn a small income crushing stones by hand.

In partnership with the Disabled Welfare Society of Rolpa, INF was able to offer people living with disability training in new skills to encourage and empower them.

Deva became an active member of this group and with some financial support from INF, was able to train in tailoring. She has now set up a tailoring business which enables her not only to care for her family but also to save some money. Her desire is to provide opportunities with her work for other people living with disabilities.

Deva's is an encouraging story. With a little help and with a lot of determination and drive, Deva has turned her life around.

"I would be in the same state crushing stones somewhere for pennies but now I am earning enough money – not only that, I have respect for myself."