



Ten-year-old Kanchi lives with her grandmother high in the Himalayan mountains of Nepal. Until 4 years ago there was no school in her village.

Having grown up with no school, no books and no chance to learn, school was just a dream for Kanchi. Like the 258 million children missing out on school, she was trapped in a cycle of poverty (UNESCO, 2019).

1 in 6 children worldwide do not go to school. Girls from remote communities face multiple barriers to education.



Although her grandmother wanted Kanchi to attend school, the nearest school was more than an hours walk from home. Kanchi's grandmother thought the journey to school was dangerous. She also worried about schools being unsafe places for girls, large class sizes, and poor quality education.

Like 39 percent of girls living in rural Nepal, Kanchi stayed at home and helped her grandmother farm and cook.

Barriers to breakthroughs

When United World Schools (UWS) opened a school in a village close to where Kanchi lives, she was able to overcome barriers and attend school. Now Kanchi is in Class 5 of UWS Helabuwesi and her teacher says she's a model student. She's really good at Math and helps the other pupils.

"I used to dream of going to school and now I can! I learn a lot of new and interesting things every day. My favorite subject is Math and I feel great when I'm able to help my friends with their studies too. One day I'd like to become a teacher. I want to earn a good living and give my grandmother a comfortable life."

"When I don't go to school, I help my grandmother as much as I can. I like cutting grass to feed the cows and buffalo and I give them water too. At home, I cook curry and get firewood - I find it all hard to do on top of my studies, but there is no one else to help my grandmother."

Meet Kanchi's grandmother

"My name is Dhana Laxmi Rai. I'm 72-years-old. I don't know what to say, only I know that life has been very hard. I've had to use these 10 fingers to the fullest in order to live.

I never went to a school. Back in my times, there was no concept of school. It will be really nice if my granddaughter continues to go to school and becomes independent. I want her to focus more on studies than on her household work. I wish for her to become more educated and independent in life.



Kanchi's teacher

"My name is Surya Bahadur Thapa and I'm the Principal at UWS Helabuvesi."

"Kanchi is in Grade 5 and is one of the most brilliant students we have. Besides schoolwork, I know she has to help her grandmother with household chores. If she continues getting the support she needs, even though she is from a deprived family, I can see that she will earn a good name for herself and be a successful person in life."

Inclusive education is at the heart of this school. Even during the pandemic, UWS Helabuvesi continues to give lessons that:

- benefit all children – different genders, abilities, languages, ethnicities, beliefs
- view difference as a strength to be celebrated
- believe every child can learn.

This means girls like Kanchi are less at risk of dropping out of school, required to do child labor, and marry at an early age.

'The central message is simple: every student matters and matters equally'.

UNESCO, 2017

United World Schools is all about helping to make going to school a reality for thousands of children like Kanchi, who live in the most remote parts of the world. UWS aims to build, resource, and equip 70 new schools in Nepal and reach 10,000 more children in the coming years.