

## Economic Empowerment through Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of Women Entrepreneur from Katari, Udayapur



Ms. Parbati Shrestha at her shop

### The Situation:

Nepal has made great strides towards gender equality in recent years however it still lacks the opportunities for economic empowerment of women. As Nepal remains a patriarchal society, women's accesses to economic resources are severely limited. Most of women are involved in unpaid unproductive family labor force. Women in Nepal are responsible for cooking, fetching fuel and water for household purposes. Further, continued dependence on traditional biomass has adverse effects on women's health. 63% populations lives in rural areas (CBS2011) and are dependent on kerosene and bio-fuel. The economic empowerment of women is a vital element of strong economic growth in any country given the fact that they constitute 50 percent of the economically potential population. Involvement of women in entrepreneurial activities would ensure effective utilization of labor, generation of income, leading to improvement in quality of life and economy of the country. Women empowerment through entrepreneurship is a must for a modern developed economy.

“Energy: Empowering Women, Uplifting Lives” or “Advocacy” project is supporting and advocating women entrepreneurs of WEE Nepal project (Promoting Women-led Enterprises for Energy Access and Local Production). Both projects are being implemented in Nepal under the leadership of Centre for Rural Technology, Nepal (CRT/N) in partnership with NEFEJ and NACEUN. The project is supported financially by ENERGIA/HIVOS with Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) providing policy support.

## Ms Parwati Shrestha, ICS Entrepreneur expands her Enterprise:

### Background Detail of Entrepreneur:

Ms Parwati Shrestha, resident of Katari, Udayapur District in Province 1 is a successful female entrepreneur. She commenced her journey with the ICS business. A year later she included a retail shop, in a rented house. Her shop is located within the inter-district bus station, an appropriate market area for her business. Realising that the area has good business opportunity for an eatery she supplemented her already operating business with an eatery. At present she is furnishing the shop together with different appliances to enable quick cliental service. She has a monthly earning of Rs 30,000- Rs 40,000. The business has increased her income but also built her confidence in overcoming the risks.

**"Women can be independent, they can earn money but they need to believe in their abilities, and utilize their strength, skill and time for the what they want to do"- Ms. Parwati Shrestha**

Ms Parwati Shrestha is 34 years old, she is married and has a little daughter. She herself did not go school in her childhood but aspires to send her daughter to have good schooling. As her husband is employed abroad, she is managing the tasks on her own. Her friends and family help her out when necessary at the shop.



About four years back she participated in the training on entrepreneurship building organized by WEE Nepal. According to her, the training helped to develop concept about business, At the time of training, her daughter was only two years old, so she was on dilemma whether to take part in training or not. Her mother motivated her to take part and start business. According to Ms. Parwati, her mother is the guiding factor for her to establishment of business.

She started her business of ICS in partnership with Ms. Mina Koirala. They had an investment of Rs 1,20,000 but partnership dissolved due to personal reason. They advertised and created demand of ICS in the programmes of municipality. She had also recruited three agents for the marketing of ICS. Now she is more engaged in the shop and the eatery. She is earning well from the shop and hotel. She said that she is equally happy with the business of ICS, shop and hotel.

She initiated her business with a loan from Chimeki Bikas Bank for purchasing a refrigerator and racks for the shop. She is fully confident of timely payment of the loan. In the process of expanding her business, she is also negotiating with Udayasri Finance for the loan of amount Rs 1,00,000. With this fund at hand she intends to put up ICS stoves on display on a rack within the little shop.

In average she has a daily saving of Rs 400 after deducting for rent, daughter's school and other household expenses.

Ms Parwati Shrestha would like to advice other women that they should not depend on their husband but be financially independent. According to her most women in the community stay at home, wasting their valuable time, enjoying the husband's income and believes that husbands income is sufficient for them. She states that today women are no more less than men. They have all the rights and necessary support, hence it's the time to do things differently - utilize available time effectively, engage in productive activities.

**"Present women have rights and supports, hence it's the time to do the things own selves. We have to utilize the time and should involve ourselves in productive activities" - Ms Parwati Shrestha**