



Story from the Field

Tipping Point: Digging up the Roots of Child Marriage to Replant the Future

The Desire to Learn

Brindamati's Story



Brindamati and her mother are very happy to learn that Brindamati will be going to school again, Pursottampur

In most places in the Kapilvastu district, like in much of Nepal, men make the decisions in their household. For Brindamati Raidas, her household is no different. Her brother, Kailash makes all the decisions.

Kailash decided to discontinue Brindamati's education after the fifth grade because he did not see how furthering her education would help her in the future when she could be using that time learning how to be a good wife instead.

After being forced to drop out of school, Brindamati joined the Aba Mero Palo (Tipping Point) Project's adolescent girls group in Pursottampur. CARE Nepal has been partnering with the Dalit Social Development Center (DSDC) at Kapilvastu to launch this project to tackle and address the root causes of early marriage. The project has created an adolescent girl's group, adolescent boys group and a parent's group in eight Village Development Committees (VDCs) in the Kapilvastu district.

The Aba Mero Palo project has been working relentlessly to advocate for Brindamati's right to have access to her education. After numerous meetings with Kailash, Brindamati's parents, and the community, Kailash finally decided to re-enroll his sister in school this past month.

When asked what propelled him to re-enroll his sister, Kailash expresses, "I never had anybody explain the importance of education this way. Very often we think that the girl's roles are limited to

within the household, and we do not see much scope for them beyond that. However, when we realize the contributions a girl can make, and understand that marriage is not the only option for her in life, it becomes easy for us to support her on those dreams.”

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The project, with its focus on a social norms approach, believes that for the change to be sustainable a shift in the social norms for the better is required. When Brindamati hears that she will be starting school soon, she is ecstatic. “I have always wanted to continue my education,” Brindamati says. Brindamati expresses that coming to the group formed by the project helped her learn about the importance of education and peaked her interest in wanting an education beyond the fifth grade. She continues, “I like coming to the girls group that CARE and DSDC have set up. I not only learn here, but also get an opportunity to meet with friends. Very often, this is the only place I get to laugh and play.”

This story was first documented by Ayushma Basnyat, CARE Nepal.