

NEPAL- Janaki

Case study and activities



“I was so frustrated that I thought that my life was a waste...now I'm proud, I'm confident of myself and I'm sure I can expand my business to a new level.
– Janaki

Janaki is a young entrepreneur from Nepal who has turned her life around.

Growing up in a world of poverty and disadvantage, coupled with a forced marriage at an early age, she was in a very vulnerable position. She's now running her own successful sewing business while training others to do the same and has become an inspirational community leader.

A just future for Janaki has begun....

Janaki grew up in the Surkhet district of Mid-Western Nepal. Around one-quarter of Nepal's population lives below the poverty line – it's even higher in the Mid and Far Western regions, at around 45 percent.* Youth unemployment is also high, with low levels of education.

One of five children, living with her extended family, including her parents, uncle, aunt and grandparents, it was hard for Janaki to make ends meet. Belonging to a lower caste, her family often experienced discrimination.

Janaki's grandparents forced her into an early marriage at the age of twelve while her parents were in India seeking medical treatment for her brother. She went to live with her new husband and in-laws – until her husband died unexpectedly two years later.

The family's fragile financial status meant that they could not afford the proper treatment for Janaki's husband when he fell ill – and Janaki was unable to accompany him to a distant hospital

for treatment. She was trying to raise the money to go and see him when he died.

“I was so helpless and worried that I couldn't be with him in all those painful moments. I used to cry every day and night. If we were able to manage money for his treatment at the right time, he would have been alive now,” Janaki says.

Her husband's parents blamed Janaki for his death and she was thought to have brought ill fortune to his family.

She returned to live with her own family and in 2015 joined a youth club formed by Caritas Australia's partners, Caritas Nepal and the Ekata Foundation Surkhet, as part of the Children and Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP).

CYEP empowers over 14,000 children and young people annually. It increases the knowledge and leadership qualities of children and youth from disadvantaged families, through the formation of clubs, information centres, networks and libraries. It provides jobs skills and helps them to create income-generating projects.

Janaki took part in the training and was encouraged to follow her dream of having her own business. She took a loan from the youth club to purchase her first sewing machine.

“I was so frustrated that I thought that my life was a waste. Slowly I realised that I need to move on and have some skills. Everybody used to doubt about my skills. But I stand on my determination and stand firm to learn tailoring skills.”

Two years on, Janaki's life is a world away from her childhood days. She has 11 sewing machines and is running her own business, as well as teaching others. Now a youth club leader, Janaki is considered a role model in the community.

“Before, I was shy and was not able to speak confidently,” Janaki says. “My confidence level has raised and through the motivation and guidance from Caritas, we are doing several awareness programs on community cleanliness, child marriage and the importance of self-dependence.”

Janaki's mother, Khima, says her daughter's future prospects have been transformed.

“I am very much motivated by the work done by my daughter. She is providing us with all the basic needs like clothes, food, oil, and education for her brothers and sisters,” Khima says, “Due to her, we are able to live a happy life.”

Janaki's young trainees are also grateful. “Now we can earn our living by ourselves,” Kishimi says. “We also want to be like Janaki so that we could help all those women who are living a hard life and those who are much more vulnerable than us. She is our idol.”

Although Janaki is paying back her loan, her growing business means that she needs to hire more sewing machines, which often break down, need repairs and take away from her income.

“Through my heart I felt that I need to be the leader and serve the community. Now I'm proud, I'm confident of myself and I'm sure I can expand my business to a new level. I'm happy that I'm motivating and teaching other people as well.
– Janaki

“I appreciate all those respected peoples of Australia who are supporting this wise cause,” Janaki says.

“With your help, women who experience domestic violence and who are financially vulnerable are getting new hope in their life which I think is very generous and kind. I thank you from bottom of my heart.”

Janaki would like to encourage Caritas to continue the good work all over the world where there is a need – providing a just future for others like her.

Janaki was able to create her sewing business with the support of people like you.

Her just future has started with empowerment.

A just future starts with all of us.

Classroom Activities



FIND THE **STUDENT INTERACTIVE WORKBOOK** AT:
<https://www.thinglink.com/scene/1130003104528334849>
(Click 'Refresh' if the hot spot icons do not display correctly.)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Prayer

Loving God, we thank you that the Children's and Youth Empowerment Program in Nepal continues to support and empower young people to have a just future with choices and opportunities to live life to the full. Just like Janaki has become a role model in her community, we pray we too will use our talents to serve others and participate in our community. Amen

OR write your own prayer for Janaki.



Reflect:

"Cultivate with love the seeds of goodness, beauty and truth that God sows in every new generation."

—Pope Francis

How does this quote by Pope Francis relate to you and other young people such as Janaki?



Catholic Social Teaching Principles: Human Dignity-

We believe that every person is created in God's image and that all human life is sacred. We believe in the dignity of each person.

1. How are young people like Janaki treated with dignity at the Youth Club?
2. What do you think made the biggest impact on the sense of a person feeling like they are special or worthwhile?
3. How has learning to sew enhanced Janaki's quality of life?
4. What other principles of Catholic Social Teaching are evident in Janaki's story?
5. How does your support of Caritas Australia strengthen communities like Janaki's?

LEARNING TASKS

INQUIRY TOPIC: A JUST FUTURE STARTS WITH EMPOWERMENT



Story Study

Curriculum: English Y7- ACELY1723, Y8- ACELY1734, Y9- ACELY1744, Y10- ACELY1754.



Watch (or read) Janaki's story and discuss.

1. What challenges did Janaki face?
2. How did Janaki's life change for the better?
3. How did Caritas Australia contribute?
4. How did Caritas Australia's partners, Caritas Nepal and Ekata Foundation Surkhet, contribute?
5. What have been the flow on effects for Janaki's family and her community?
6. What are two facts you learnt about poverty and injustice from Janaki's story?



Human Wellbeing

Geography Y10- ACHGK081/ Religious Education

Investigate differences in human wellbeing between places.

- a. Examine the different concepts and measures of human wellbeing, and the causes of global differences in these measures between other countries featured in Caritas Australia case studies.
- b. Explore spatial differences in wellbeing within and between countries, and evaluate the differences from a variety of perspectives.
- c. Explore how Caritas Australia supported programs are designed to reduce the gap between differences in wellbeing.

Suggested websites:
<https://data.worldbank.org/>
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>
www.caritas.org.au



Civic Life

Civics and Citizenship Y9- ACHCK079/ Religious Education

Research the work of Caritas Australia. How does Caritas Australia contribute to the Australian community? **Explore** the concept of 'the common good'.

1. How is Janaki's story an example of how Caritas Australia, as the aid and development organisation of the Catholic Church in Australia, demonstrates inter faith understanding and social justice?
2. Why does Caritas Australia advocate for an end to poverty and inequality around the world?
3. How can you contribute to the work of Caritas Australia?



Why we work!

Economics and Business Y7-ACHEK020

Explain four or more benefits work has made to Janaki's life. (Tip: think beyond just economic benefits).



Making a Kurti/Kurta

Design and Technologies Y7-10



Watch the short film: Making a Kurti.

- Now it's your turn. Design a piece of clothing. Before you start, establish who the clothing is for and what criteria you will use to evaluate your design and product.
- **Draw** your design. Show different views. Remember to design your clothing to waste as little material as possible.
- Use newspaper like Janaki to make a pattern.
- Select your material and work out how much you will need.
- Use a sewing machine to make your item of clothing. Remember to waste as little material as possible.
- Evaluate your product against the criteria you set at the beginning.