

# Nepal

## Case study

### Helping children affected by armed conflict in Nepal

When Dammar was in Grade 9, he was forced to join an armed rebel group in Nepal. His family could no longer afford his education, especially when his father drained the family's savings. The little money his mother made by selling cow's milk was not simply enough.

The Maoist group played on these issues and lured young people into their group with promises of a better life. With his family living on very little income and with no school to go to, Dammar could see no other choice. He joined the rebel group.

He started training in a remote area near the Nepal/India border, but soon received a call from his mother to come home. She promised Dammar she would somehow get enough money so he could continue his education. She convinced him to return home, which he did, and Dammar went back to school.

Suddenly, Dammar's life was turned upside-down when his mother passed away and, not long after, his father also died. Lost and alone, Dammar dropped out of school. He was also left to bring up his younger sister.

Working with a local partner, Save the Children's program in Nepal engaged Dammar in income-generating activities and helped him to develop his business skills. He setup a small shop near his home to earn income for him and his sister. When the shop was established, Dammar thought of other ways he could earn some money and approached Save the Children's partner to provide a small grant to start a poultry farm. The poultry farm has done so well that in the last six months he has earned 62000 rupees (\$720), which is enough to keep his sister in school and buy her a bicycle. Dammar himself has also been able to continue his education – he is now in Grade 10.

"If Save the Children and CWIN (Save the Children's local partner) had not provided me this support, I would not have been able to continue my education and my sister would also have been compelled to drop out. I am also able to have some savings. I am in this good situation because of Save the Children's support," said Dammar.

Save the Children is also running activities in the community to help them understand the situation of young people, like Dammar. These activities are helping to turnaround the negative perceptions in the community and helping them to accept these children and young people back into society.

Save the Children's 'Reintegration of Children/Youth formerly Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups and Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Nepal' program, supported by AusAID,



**Dammar feeds the chickens at his poultry farm**

*Photo: Save the Children*

works in three districts of the mid-western region of Nepal. These districts were the most affected by the decade-long civil war.

The rehabilitation and reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAG) is an integral component of stabilising Nepal and implementing the peace agreement. The process of reintegration presents opportunities for these children to attain normality in their lives, and establishes systems of protection and support. Without this they are at further risk of being re-victimised through re-recruitment into armed groups, trafficking, migration, social stigmatisation and gender based violence, amongst many other serious child protection concerns.

Save the Children has supported more than 25,500 children affected by armed conflict since 2006.