



Amir's Story

Meet 6-year-old Amir! Amir lives in the mountains of eastern Nepal. Have you heard of Nepal before? What do you already know about this country?

United World Schools helps make going to school a reality for thousands of children like Amir, who live in the most remote parts of the world.

"I live in a painted wooden house in Bhais Dhure with my mother, father, grandmother and small sister Puja. We have a small goat farm and also a black cardamon farm. When I'm not at school I help my parents with the farming."

The nearest school to Amir's home was a one-and-a-half hour walking journey through the woods. He did not feel safe on this journey and he did not like the school he was going to, but he went anyway.

Amir's journey to school

The long walk to school takes Amir and his friends through wooded mountains and streams. It can be tiring, and during storms and heavy rainfall, there is an increased risk of floods and landslides.

"Now, even if it is far away and tiring to walk there, I feel good going to school. Sometimes I walk with my friends Chandra and Nawraaj – we see many things on our journey and sometimes stop to drink from the water pipe".

One in 6 children worldwide do not have the chance to go to school. In the rural area of Sankhuwasabha where Amir lives, less than a third of children complete Elementary education.

In Nepal, there are 103,384 primary age children out of school. Half the population survive on less than \$1.25 a day. Nepal's literacy rate is among the lowest in the world, with many rural villages remaining unreached by government education.

Case Study - Amir's Story - US

New school

UWS is planning to open a new school in Amir's village. He will be able to play, learn and walk to school safely, and have more of a chance to choose what to do with his life.

As head teacher, Dhak Bahadur Poudel explains: "Before this UWS school was built, going to school had been quite difficult. There are rivers on two sides, and a high chance of floods and landslides at all times. It meant that younger children couldn't go to school at all.

At UWS Helabuwesi there are 94 students and from this year we will have classes running from nursery to grade 8. We study on wooden desks and usually there are eight to ten children in a class.

UWS schools support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 - Quality Education. This aims to make sure every child will have a good quality education by 2030.

Amir: "I like to play at school and learn. So, I try not to miss even a single day!"

When people like Amir are able to get quality education, they can break from the cycle of poverty. Education helps to reduce inequalities, empowers people to live healthy and sustainable lives, and contributes to more peaceful societies.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela

Headteacher Dhak Bahadur Poudel: "I feel happy to teach the children all day at school. It is so enjoyable to talk, play and teach the children that, sometimes, I do not even notice that the class is over. I feel like I've made a contribution to my community and I feel proud".

Pandemic

Even in a Covid world, UWS continues to reach 47,000 children like Amir in Nepal, Madagascar, Myanmar, and Cambodia.

UWS is determined to bring quality education to remote areas even though the United Nations estimates that 24 million children worldwide may never return to school after the pandemic, which will make worse the cycle of poverty (2020).

What can you learn from Amir about overcoming challenges in accessing education?

