STREET CHILD OF NEPAL

BREAKING THE BONDS

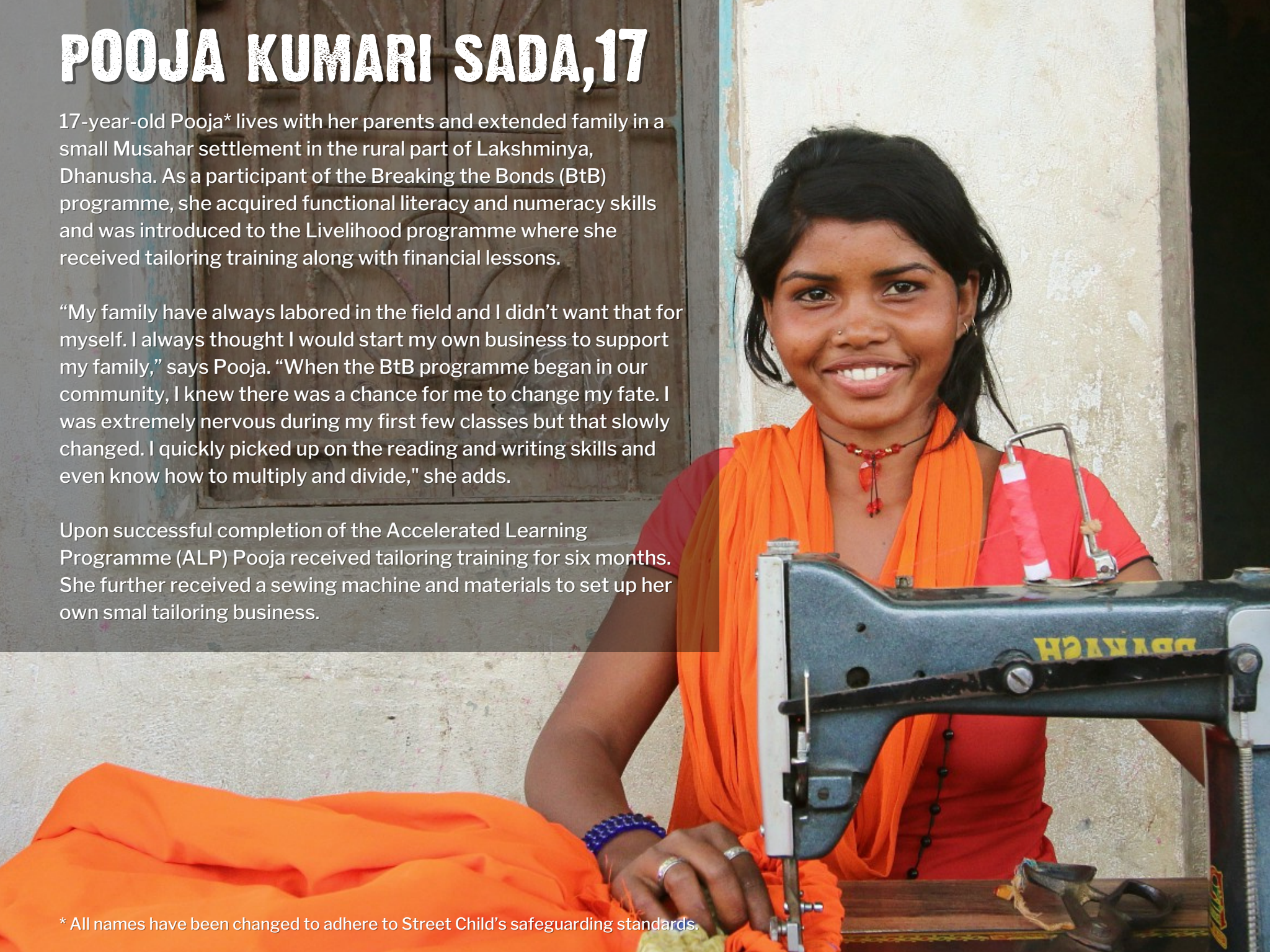
CASE STUDIES

POOJA KUMARI SADA,17

17-year-old Pooja* lives with her parents and extended family in a small Musahar settlement in the rural part of Lakshminya, Dhanusha. As a participant of the Breaking the Bonds (BtB) programme, she acquired functional literacy and numeracy skills and was introduced to the Livelihood programme where she received tailoring training along with financial lessons.

“My family have always labored in the field and I didn’t want that for myself. I always thought I would start my own business to support my family,” says Pooja. “When the BtB programme began in our community, I knew there was a chance for me to change my fate. I was extremely nervous during my first few classes but that slowly changed. I quickly picked up on the reading and writing skills and even know how to multiply and divide," she adds.

Upon successful completion of the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) Pooja received tailoring training for six months. She further received a sewing machine and materials to set up her own smal tailoring business.



* All names have been changed to adhere to Street Child’s safeguarding standards.

SABITA SAH, COMMUNITY EDUCATOR

As a Community Educator, I feel it is my responsibility to help the Musahar girls within our project when they share their problems with me. Belonging to one of the most socially disadvantaged and marginalised groups in Nepal, these girls face a lot of challenges when it comes to their rights and choices.

Recently, a project participant was being disowned by her family due to the rumors of an affair. It is often forbidden for a Musahar girl to have an affair before marriage. In most cases the girls are immediately married off and this has been an issue for many young girls in the community where I work. 18-year-old Sanjila Kumari Sada* a project participant was being forced to marry against her will because of a rumour about her having an affair had spread in the community. Her parents were furious and wanted her married off at the earliest.

Despite Sanjila's plea to not marry, her parents were adamant and thought it was best for her to get married than bring shame upon their family. They confined her to her room and did not allow her to step out of the house. I stepped in to meet her parents and have them change their minds. Her parents were reluctant to listen and believed the society would look down on them if their daughter did not marry.

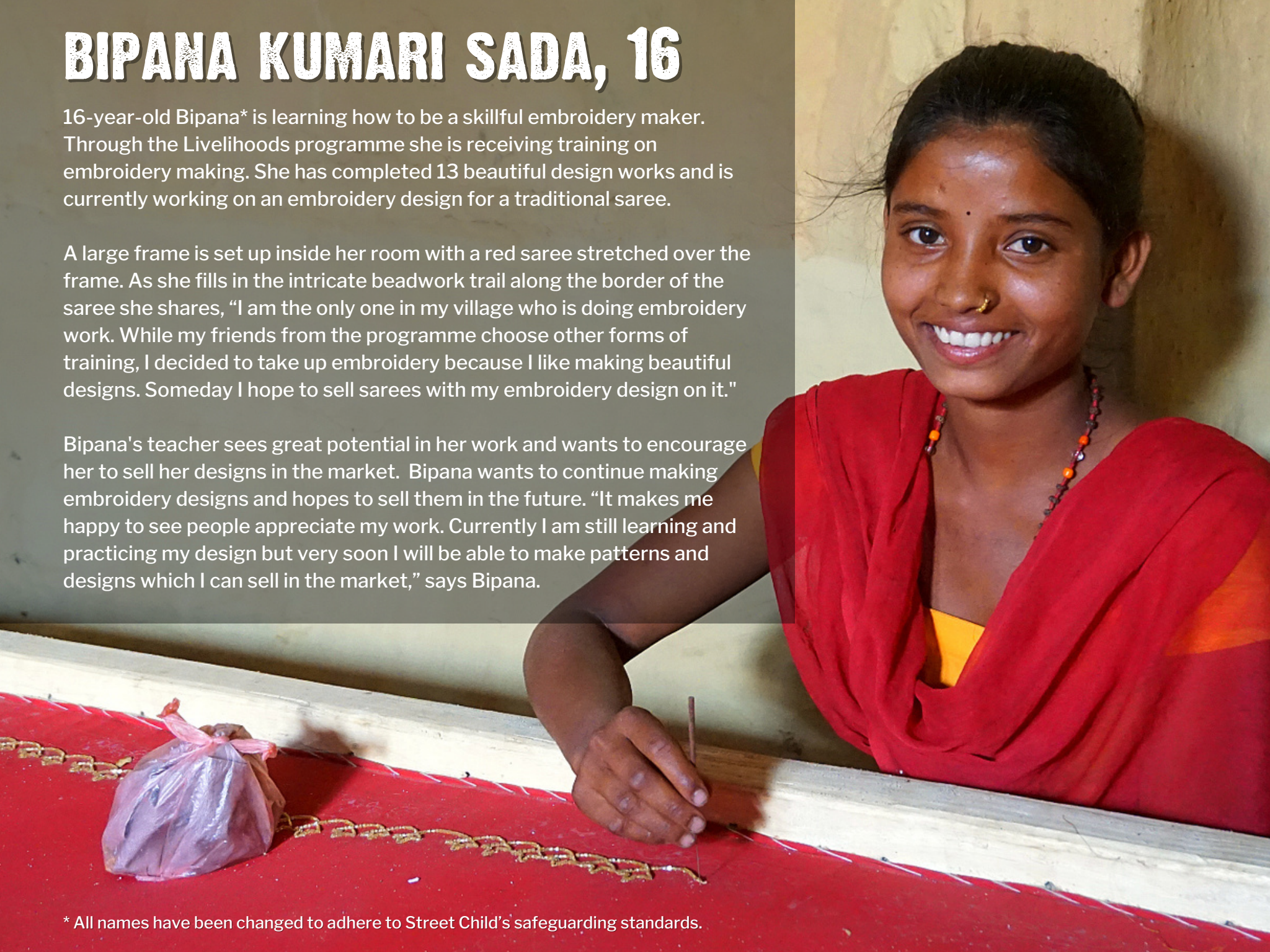
Eventually, after a long talk with the parents, I convinced them to give Sanjila a chance. They finally understood that marrying Sanjila was not the solution. The marriage was called off which was big relief to us all. I made sure Sanjila was provided counseling to help her cope with the recent happenings. Sanjila is thankful that I came to see meet her parents and gave her the support she needed.

BIPANA KUMARI SADA, 16

16-year-old Bipana* is learning how to be a skillful embroidery maker. Through the Livelihoods programme she is receiving training on embroidery making. She has completed 13 beautiful design works and is currently working on an embroidery design for a traditional saree.

A large frame is set up inside her room with a red saree stretched over the frame. As she fills in the intricate beadwork trail along the border of the saree she shares, “I am the only one in my village who is doing embroidery work. While my friends from the programme choose other forms of training, I decided to take up embroidery because I like making beautiful designs. Someday I hope to sell sarees with my embroidery design on it."

Bipana's teacher sees great potential in her work and wants to encourage her to sell her designs in the market. Bipana wants to continue making embroidery designs and hopes to sell them in the future. “It makes me happy to see people appreciate my work. Currently I am still learning and practicing my design but very soon I will be able to make patterns and designs which I can sell in the market,” says Bipana.



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ARATI DEVI SADA, 21

Arati Devi Sada* is a participant of the Breaking the Bonds programme who received our support to set up her own small egg-selling business. She lives with her husband and his family on the outskirts of a tiny village in Siraha. Arati has no formal education, for the first time she learnt how to read and write through the Accelerated Learning programme (ALP) a learning component of the BtB programme. After attaining literacy and numeracy skills, she transitioned into the livelihood programme where she received vocational skills training along with life skills lessons.

Through the Livelihood programme, she was trained on duck rearing and egg production and further received 14 ducks to help her establish her business. Today, she sells 6-9 eggs a day for Rp 25 each and makes a monthly income of Rs 3,000-5,000. She also saves Rs 500-600 every fortnight which she deposits at a local cooperative. “With the profit I make from selling eggs, I buy groceries for my family. Now if someone is sick at home, I have the money to buy medicines. It makes me proud that I can support my family financially and that I don’t have to borrow money from anyone,” shares Arati. She even bought five chickens with the profit she made. She plans to rear more ducks and increase the production of eggs. Arati along with other participants receive counseling and guidance from the facilitators before choosing their desired enterprise. Now Arati feels happy to have chosen this business because not only is she making an income and supporting her family she also has time to care for her infant.

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Seema Devi Sada, 40

As a member of the Committee Member Community (CMC), 40-year-old Seema Devi Sada* shares her experience as a community member and a parent within the Breaking the Bonds (BtB) programme in Gyan Jyoti Training Center, Mahottari.

I believe my role as a CMC member is to encourage girls to become educated. I visit the center everyday to make sure everyone is participating in the programme regularly. If any participant is missing their class I follow up with them and their parents. I help parents understand the importance of their children's education and why it is necessary for them to support their growth. I also share great relationship with the teachers of the programme, I give them daily updates on the wellbeing of the girls and suggest any requests from the community.

Once I became a member of the Committee, I feel it is my responsibility to see that the girls from my community are benefitting through the programme.

I have two daughters who are also participants of the BtB programme. I see many positive changes in them. After joining the programme they now know how to read and write. I have made a promise to myself to enroll them into schools after they complete the programme.

KABITA KUMARI SADA, 15

15-year-old Kabita Kumari Sada* belongs to a Musahar community in Balkawa, Siraha. The majority of Musahars reside in small settlements across government lands as they are predominantly landless and are employed through bonded labour. Street Child supports many adolescent girls like Kabita to attain basic education and provide them sustainable livelihood opportunities. Prior to joining the programme, Kabita found reading and writing challenging however through the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) both skills have significantly improved. After completing the programme, she received a tailoring course and simultaneously engaged in financial literacy.

Upon completion of the vocational skills training for tailoring and sewing, Kabita was provided a sewing machine to start her own tailoring business. Initially she began sewing clothes for free to gain the customer's trust. Gradually, many people in her village started to approach her because of her work. The orders began increasing and she started making a stable income by tailoring. Her father who is very supportive of her wants her tailoring business to expand shares, “My daughter knows how to make dresses, but I want her to learn how to make men’s suit."

Kabita is saving up money to take further trainings and wants to learn how to make men’s suit as well. Her father adds, “I am very grateful for the opportunities my daughter has received through this programme, the whole community is very proud of my daughters accomplishment today.”

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