



Sarita and her parents

## a young girl in Nepal

Jeanette Happ, Interserve Partner in Kathmandu, tells the unfinished story of Sarita.

Sarita is nine years old and lives in a remote village two days' bus ride from Kathmandu. She is the youngest, and also the only girl, in a family of nine children. She was at the top of her class at the local government school. One day when climbing a tree she fell and broke her arm. There was no health clinic in the area to take her to, so a villager did what he thought best: he tied her arm tightly to a bamboo stick – so tightly that he cut off her blood circulation.

Her arm, naturally, got worse, so the next place they took her to was the witch doctor. The witch doctor would have gone into a trance, killed a chicken that the family had provided, and then rubbed the dead chicken on the affected arm. Ten days after simply breaking her arm, her family brought her into Patan Hospital for treatment. Her arm was so badly infected they had to amputate it at the elbow. What pointless pain and suffering she has been through.

### Making things better

After several weeks, Sarita was feeling quite at home in hospital, and was always there to greet me when I arrive on the ward. We wanted to sort out two things in particular for Sarita: a false arm and her education.

Sarita's parents are very poor and they will be unable to send her to school once she goes to secondary school. (Primary school is free at the government schools.) We talked to her father about the possibility of finding a children's home here in

Kathmandu so that she could continue her education. He was very happy, knowing that his bright daughter needs an education now more than ever. Sarita was delighted at the news and told her father, 'Go: I'm staying here and going to school.'

But plans changed. It was arranged for Sarita to go to a good Christian

### The Lord has done so much in Sarita's life

boarding school in Hetauda, which is on the Terai. From Hetauda, her home, also on the Terai, is perhaps four hours away, so her parents would be able to visit her regularly.

We tried to take Sarita to Hetauda, but we were unable to go because of the travel strikes.

In the meantime I went with Sarita to an orthopaedic clinic to see about having a false arm fitted for her. A real blessing is that her amputation was below her elbow, and there is just enough arm to fix a new forearm. The doctor examined and measured, and said she would have a new arm in ten days.

Sarita's father had been keen to return home, having been here in Kathmandu for over two months. He left Sarita with her uncle who lives here. I went with Sarita and her uncle back to the clinic to have a cast made. Her uncle was a very nice young man. When he was ten years old he fell and broke his arm very

badly. He almost had his arm amputated above the elbow, but they managed to save his arm, although it is badly deformed and he has no movement in the lower arm and hand.

We planned to take Sarita to Hetauda once her arm had been fitted.

### Changing plans

Plans changed again. Sarita is not at the Christian boarding school. The school director thought it would be best for her to live with her parents, and everyone was very happy with this arrangement. It was also agreed that it would be best for Sarita not to use an artificial arm at the moment: with the unhygienic conditions in her poor home village, the arm could cause more harm than good. Sarita's school fees are now being fully paid for her to go to a good school in her area.

The best plans aren't always the plans we think of first, nor even the plans which appear best to us. The Lord has done so much in Sarita's life, and we know that he has a wonderful plan for this bright young girl. What a blessing it is to be a part of Sarita's and other people's lives as we see God at work daily.

### Prayer pointer

- ♦ Praise God for the work and witness of Patan Hospital.
- ♦ Pray that God will continue to work in the lives of Sarita and her family.