

## **Sangte: Breath of Life**

Take a deep breath...a long, deep breath. Imagine each molecule of air surging to your lungs and throughout your body –giving you life, and hope. Now imagine trying to take that breath...with an Asian elephant sitting on your chest! That's how it feels for me when my asthma is acting up...no matter how hard I try to breathe in... there just doesn't seem to be... enough air...leaving me gasping...for the next breath...that continues to leave me...struggling and clinging...to the little sustenance... I've managed to pull into my body.

I am Sangte. My husband, Lura, and I come from Mizoram in Northeast India. We made Pokhara, Nepal our home over 10 years ago, where we operate a childrens home for Tibetan children. My health seems insignificant when compared to the asthmatic condition most women in Nepal live with. The opportunities for them to be more than a desolate mother struggling to provide molecules of life for themselves and their children are almost non-existent. They are choking to death from extreme poverty, and lack of opportunities to learn new skills.

Nepal is a Hindu culture with teachings and practices that intensify the women's asthma. To be born a woman is the worst thing that could happen to you. You are lower than the snakes and the insects. If you are born a woman, it is because you were very bad in your previous life and you deserve to be mistreated and abused; it is your fault because you were so evil before. It is your karma.

Also, most girls stop attending school after grades 6 to 8. Most feel girls don't need school because they will only get married and serve their husbands. Many women have husbands who have gone to other places to find work with promises to send money back home, but most of it gets spent on alcohol before it reaches their families. One young woman who quit school after grade 6, got married, and had a baby, said to me: "We have no education so I can't do anything to provide some income. If I can learn to sew, then I can get a job in a shop!"

Suffocation...the need for air.  
Hope for new skills...breath of life.

There are hundreds of tailoring shops in Nepal because women have their traditional clothes made. So, God gave me an idea to begin a project called 777 Sewing School: 7 women, 7 machines, 7 months. In the beginning it was so difficult as we worried about the cost of machines, monthly rent and teacher's salary. But God showed His faithfulness through gifts from Global Women. More women have a skill now and are finding jobs. I'm excited about our plan to expand this program into other villages this year.

I do this ministry with women because I see how they are gasping for air –asthma of the soul, we might say! I want them to be able to breathe, and have a better life, and to know the God who is the true Breath of Life.

I feel so small and I know I can't do anything by myself, but it encourages me to have a partner like Global Women who shares the same heart and vision. This gives me great hope.

Please pray for my wisdom, creativity, good health and patience as I look for new ways to help the women in Nepal to breathe.