



# An Interview with Sarah Gautam

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**Q: What is your greatest achievement over the past 12 months?**

A: There have been a number of women who have arrived at the safe haven with critical mental health challenges and suicidal thoughts. I have been so inspired by their determination to start a new life and my part in their recovery is my greatest achievement this year.

**Q: If you could say something to Australian supporters who have helped to enable your work, what would you say?**

A: Your efforts are making a meaningful difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals. I believe that together we can create a world where exploitation and slavery have no place. Let's continue to raise awareness, advocate for change, and provide aid to survivors, ensuring a safer and more just future for everyone.

Thank you for making a meaningful difference in the lives of the women and children in our community.

**Q: Describe some of the key challenges you have faced in the past 12 months?**

A: Our challenges over the past year can be grouped into three categories. Sadly the first relates to capacity, which tells us our services are still so desperately needed. We have had moments where we have more women referred to our care than we have space for, which leads to overcrowding. Coupled with this, the lack of medical trauma care has been another major challenge as we fight to get women the care they need.

Earlier in the year my husband and I faced a major security challenge as we received threats to our personal safety. Spending time away from home and in hiding was a big challenge, but I am happy to report this period has passed.

**Q: What are the most pressing issues related to human trafficking in Nepal at the moment and what is 3 Angels Nepal doing to address them?**

A: We have seen an increase in child marriage which is alarming. The practice was outlawed by the government

but it still happens and means girls are taken out of school and bound to the home.

Other issues we are facing relate to false marriage documentation, which makes it hard for our border patrol officers to spot women who are being trafficked. There is also an increased number of people migrating from villages into towns. Once there, they are very vulnerable to human trafficking. To address this we have built a stronger campaign through Hamro Abhiyan—our youth-led awareness campaign initiative.

**Q: What motivated you to start this journey and establish 3 Angels Nepal?**

A: From a young age I have always been passionate about child protection and women's rights, but being passionate was never enough in a society with limited education and family support. I was fortunate enough to receive higher education in Kathmandu, and here I was introduced to politics and saw this was the route to making a difference in the lives of the vulnerable women and children I had left in the village. It was here I also



started working with trafficked children, helping to rescue them from temples around the city.

My husband motivated me to use my skills and experience as a nurse to join the fight against human trafficking and every day I am making a little difference in the lives of those we are rescuing.

**Q: What gives you hope when you think about the future?**

A: When I watch a woman or child we have rescued smile, and see their eyes have hope rather than sorrow, I feel energised. It tells me they have a new future, a stronger future, a brighter future—this is the strongest motivation for me to keep moving forward in these challenging times.

