

# FROM DENIAL TO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Journey to Citizenship  
Certificate and Birth  
Registration

*(Success Stories of 2023-2025)*



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# Isha and Her Mother's Journey to Citizenship Certificate

**ISHA** retains a faint memory of her father as someone who frequently engaged in arguments with her mother. On a freezing night, as usual, he got into a heated argument with her mother and eventually forced both Isha and her mother thrown out of the house. She remembers spending that chilly night under open sky with her mother. Subsequently, Isha's mother took her to her maternal home. A week later, upon returning, they were informed by their rented room owner that her father had vacated the room, taking all his belongings, and he never returned.

Isha was raised solely by her mother, and faced numerous challenges along the way. Isha nurtured a dream of pursuing education abroad to bring happiness to her mother's life. However, this aspiration was shattered when her hopes of obtaining citizenship denied by the concerned authority due to the absence of her father. With the legal assistance of FWLD, Isha filed a case in the High Court. On April 18, 2023, the High Court provided verdict in her favor. After successful litigation, she finally secured her citizenship certificate on August 14, 2023.



# FROM DENIAL TO RECOGNITION:

## *A Courageous Mother's Fight for Citizenship of Her Children*



**SIMRAN** and **SAJAN** were raised by their single mother, **BIMALA MANANDHAR**. Their father disappeared when Bimala was pregnant with Sajan, claiming he was going to work out of the town but never returned. Bimala faced numerous challenges in raising her children on her own. Unfortunately, when Simran and Sajan sought to obtain their citizenship certificates, they were denied by the Chief District Officer (CDO) of Kathmandu. The reason given was that there was no legal provision allowing a single mother to grant citizenship to her children in the absence of a father.

Determined to fight for citizenship of her children, Bimala sought assistance from the Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD). With our support, the siblings were able to register their births and filed a case at the Supreme Court. After enduring a lengthy struggle and legal battle, the Supreme Court issued an order on March 1, 2023, instructing the relevant authority to grant citizenship certificate to Simran and Sajan. However, the CDO office remained reluctant to comply, arguing that citizenship could not be granted without a specific law despite the court's decision. FWLD launched media campaign and other advocacies to shed light on the plight of Simran and Sajan. Their stories garnered significant attention in various media. Finally, after persistent efforts and advocacy, the CDO office relented and granted Simran and Sajan the citizenship certificates on 27 June, 2023.



## UNYIELDING SPIRIT:

### Sreeja Bajracharya's Decade-Long Battle for Nationality Justice

**SREEJA BAJRACHARYA**, raised solely by her mother **NANIHERA BAJRACHARYA**. Despite financial hardships, Nanihera ensured Sreeja's education, standing as her sole pillar of support. But when Sreeja sought her birth registration and later applied for citizenship, her father callously denied her the necessary documentation. Sreeja, in her relentless pursuit of justice, fought a grueling ten-year legal battle with the unwavering support of FWLD. Finally, on March 1, 2023, the Supreme Court ruled in her favor, granting her the long-awaited citizenship certificate under her mother's name. As a result of the Supreme Court's decision, Sreeja obtained her citizenship certificate on June 23, 2023, emerging victorious as a testament to her indomitable spirit and unwavering determination.



# A Mother's Struggle for Securing Citizenship Certificate

In 2017, **SARU** sought a recommendation for citizenship certificate to her 18-years-old son **SURAJ**. However, the ward office refused demanding physical presence of his father, who had abandoned them while Saru was three months pregnant with Suraj and never returned back. With the legal assistance from FWLD, Suraj was able to obtain birth registration certificate in 2019, but his application for citizenship certificate was still denied by the Kathmandu District Administration Office. With the support of FWLD, Suraj filed a writ in the Supreme Court, and on March 1, 2023, the Court issued a final verdict to grant citizenship certificate to Suraj. Despite the Court's decision, the CDO office resisted, and after persistent efforts, Saru managed to secure Suraj's citizenship certificate through her name on June 27, 2023.



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# FROM LOSS TO BELONGING:

## Mamata's Journey to Citizenship and Acceptance

**MAMATA PARIYAR**, has never had the opportunity to see her father, and all she knows is that his name is Mathura Pariyar. Tragically, she lost her mother, Geeta Pariyar, at the tender age of four. Left with a void that only a parent's love can fill, Mamata found solace and care in the warm embrace of her aunt, who happened to be her mother's sister. As Mamata sought a citizenship certificate for a sense of belonging and identity, she faced rejection. The authorities refused her request, citing the fact that her father had passed away long ago without holding citizenship at the time of his death. Additionally, she had lost her mother. The authorities informed her that either a change in the law or a court decision were necessary prerequisites for her to be recognized as a citizen through her mother. Consequently, with the legal support provided by FWLD, she submitted a writ petition to the Supreme Court on September 6, 2021.

Finally, after 2 years of legal battle, the Supreme Court, on October 29, 2023, at last rendered a favorable decision in Mamata's favor, issuing the writ and thereby granting her a citizenship certificate through her mother's name.

It was a moment of profound significance, marking the culmination of a journey of Mamata that had started with loss and longing and ended with the warmth of acceptance and belonging.



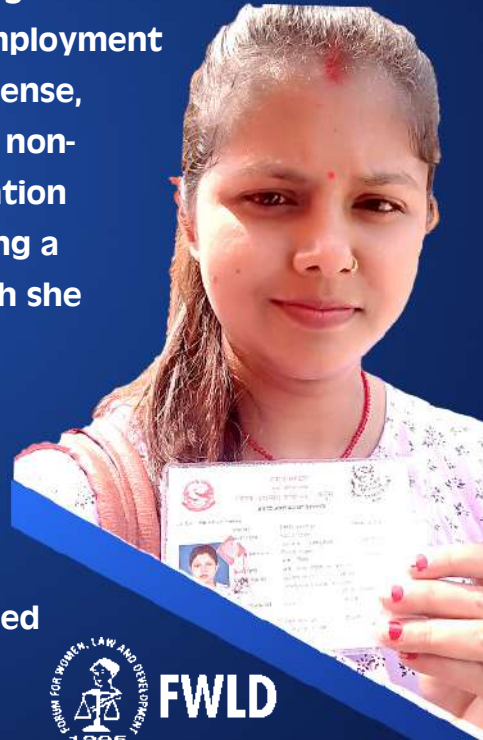
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# Enabling People without Citizenship Certificate to Exercise Economic and Social Rights

**NIKKI KUMARI JHA**, who was previously stateless, sought legal assistance from FWLD and filed a writ in the Supreme Court. During the initial hearing, the Court issued an interim order enabling Nikki to exercise various economic and social rights, such as enrolling in higher education, obtaining a SIM card, opening a bank account, applying for employment and competitive exams, acquiring a driving license, purchasing vehicles, filing cases, registering a non-governmental organization, obtaining a migration certificate, acquiring a PAN number, registering a business, and other similar rights, even though she did not possess a citizenship certificate. The Court also ordered that she should not be deprived of any of the mentioned rights while during her stateless period.

Ultimately, Nikki was granted citizenship on July 5, 2023, following a mandamus order issued by the Supreme Court.



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# Empowering Individuals Despite Being Stateless through Legal Intervention

**S. DUBE**, a talented wrestler at the national level, was chosen to represent Nepal in an international competition. However, her dreams were shattered when she was denied travel documents due to the unavailability of a citizenship certificate. The process of obtaining her citizenship certificate was stuck at the Ministry of Home Affairs, and she was informed that it would take a considerable amount of time. This meant that she was on the verge of losing the golden opportunity to represent her country on an international platform. FWLD provided legal support to her to file a writ petition to the Supreme Court demanding an interim order to grant travel documents. In response, the Court issued an interim order directing the relevant authorities to provide her a passport and travel permit, enabling her to travel overseas to participate in the international competition despite her stateless status.





## Pari Tamang's success story to obtain citizenship certificate

Pari Tamang, daughter of Sita Tamang had spent couple of years navigating the complexities of not having legal identity. Despite being the daughter of Nepali mother, having birth registration, and recommendation from ward office, her application was rejected by District Administration Office, Nuwakot stating that there is no provision of getting citizenship certificate through the mother's name. Facing uncertainties, she came in contact with FWLD for legal assistance . A writ petition was filed demanding the issuance of citizenship certificate to Pari in the name of her mother. The High Court, Patan gave verdict in the favor of Pari, eventually she received the citizenship certificate on 23rd November, 2023.

This verdict brought a feel of joy, relief, and profound sense of belonging in Pari. The happiness of obtaining citizenship certificate was not just a legal formality but it was also a celebration of identity, acceptance and the culmination of a transformative journey. FWLD wishes for her bright future endeavor.







*Cristina Maharjan, her mother  
and FWLD's lawyers*

## Supreme Court Upholds GENDER EQUAL NATIONALITY RIGHT

Bindiya conceived **CRISTINA** from the relationship with her boyfriend before marriage but the relationship did not last long as that man tried to kill her by setting her on fire using kerosene when she was three months pregnant. Bindiya raised her single-handedly. When Cristina turned 18, she sought a citizenship certificate through her mother's name, only to be denied by the ward office. The denial was based on the absence of father. This denial infringed upon Cristina's right to citizenship under her mother's name and impeded Bindiya's ability to pass on citizenship to her child independently. To rectify this injustice, with the assistance of FWLD, she filed a case in Nepal's Supreme Court. On August 8, 2023, the Supreme Court issued a mandamus order compelling the relevant authorities to issue Cristina's citizenship certificate with her mother's name, thereby upholding equal nationality right.

# LEGAL VICTORY

## High Court orders Birth Registration and Citizenship in the name of Mother

**B. RAUNIYAR**, 27 years old, grew up in his maternal home. His mother has a citizenship by descent. She is a person with disability. Mr. B's mother was married to a worker in a factory who used to live in a rented room in Biratnagar. Her family married her to the worker without inquiring much about his background as he agreed to marry his mother despite her disability. Within a year of marriage, the man left the house without saying anything. Since then, he has been missing. He was born and then raised by his maternal relatives. When he went to inquire about the citizenship certificate, he was asked to apply for a birth registration certificate. Then, he went to the ward office where he was verbally denied birth registration because he was not able to present his father and his citizenship certificate as well as his parents' marriage certificate. Thus, with the support of FWLD, he filed a writ demanding order of mandamus and other necessary orders to be issued in a way that ensures all his rights.

Responding to the writ filed by Mr. Rauniyar, High Court Biratnagar on 2nd October 2023 issued order of mandamus in the name of his respective ward, instructing them to provide him with his birth registration certificate as well as recommendation for citizenship certificate.



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# Empowering Stateless Individual through Legal Intervention

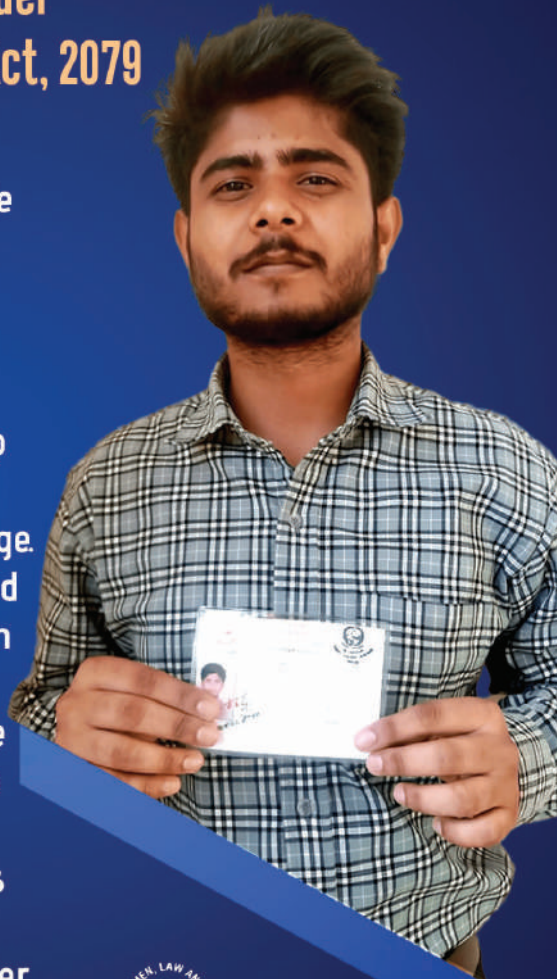


**N. RAI**, the daughter of an unmarried mother, faced a refusal from the authorities when she sought citizenship through her mother. She worked as a teacher in a boarding school near her rented residence. The school required her to provide a PAN number for taxation purposes and a bank account number for salary deposition. As she lacked a citizenship certificate, she faced the risk of losing her job since she couldn't fulfill these requirements. Seeking legal assistance from FWLD, she filed a writ petition to the Supreme Court, demanding an interim order that would enable her to open a bank account and obtain a PAN number. The court, disregarding her stateless status, granted the interim order, permitting her to open a bank account and obtain a PAN number.



# Securing Employment Rights via Interim Order and Acquiring Citizenship under Nepal's Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2079

**ABINASH SHAH SWARNAKAR**, a Bachelor's degree holder, faced obstacle applying for a vacancy at Nepal Bank Limited due to lack of a citizenship certificate. He was denied citizenship in the District Administration Office because his father obtained citizenship by birth and his mother gained naturalized citizenship through marriage. With the support of FWLD, Abinash filed a writ in the Supreme Court, seeking an interim order to allow him to fill out the form and participate as a candidate in competitive employment exams. The Supreme Court issued an order in his favor, enabling him to avail the benefits he sought. On June 29, 2023, he finally obtained his citizenship certificate under the Nepal Citizenship (First Amendment) Act, 2079.



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**BHARAT SINGH** and **CHETARA SINGH** are brothers. Despite both their mother and father being HIV positive, they got married. Bharat and Chetra were tested HIV negative. Their mother is still on medication, while the father passed away a few years ago in an accident. Based on their birth certificates, Bharat has completed his +2, while Chetara has completed his SEE.

To support their household financially, the brothers needed to obtain Permanent Account Numbers (PAN) and bank account, which required citizenship certificates. They initiated the citizenship process using mother's lineage citizenship and their father's death certificate, along with their educational certificates and ward recommendation, by filling out form of the Schedule 1. Regardless of this, the District Administration Office, Sunsari repeatedly turned them away, giving verbal response that they could not be granted citizenship without their father's citizenship certificate.

Faced with the necessity of legal procedures to obtain citizenship certificate, they contacted the Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD). As part of the legal process, a writ of mandamus was filed in the Supreme Court against the District Administration Office, Sunsari, et. al. On 19th June, 2024, the Supreme Court issued an interim order in favor of petitioners directing the Internal Revenue Office, Sunsari, to issue PAN, the Sanima Bank, Sunsari, to open bank accounts and District Administration Office, Sunsari to issue Citizenship Certificates by descent in the name of their mother. Subsequently, both brothers were provided with citizenship certificates on 3rd July, 2024 by District Administration office, Sunsari as per the decision of Supreme Court.

# A short and magical journey of triumph



# *A case study of state recognition success*

Pragan Murmu lost his mother a few years ago. His father was took care of him and his siblings when they were young. As he grew up he started the process to acquire citizenship certificate. Despite providing the necessary compilation of documents, including recommendation letter from Bhadrapur Nagarpalika ward no. 6, his mother's death certificate, his elder sister's citizenship, and other necessary documents, he got denied by the District Administrative Office, Jhapa to grant a citizenship certificate, citing that Mr. Pragan has not submitted his mother's (because she had not obtained citizenship) and father's original citizenship certificate.

He then approached the legal team of the Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) and with the advice and help to citizenship certificate acquisition process he filed a writ petition at the High Court, Biratnagar, Ilam Bench on 18th February, 2024, claiming that the CDO's decision was invalid through an order of certiorari and requesting an order command note, which included mandamus if necessary on behalf of the opponents.

Following extensive legal proceedings, the court finally gave decision on 30th April, 2024, directing District Administrative Office, Jhapa to grant him with citizenship certificate.



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# Success Story on Removing the Tag of Statelessness

Asok Kumar Sahani, a boy struggled to get citizenship despite of submitting required compilation of documents like his father's citizenship (as per naturalization), his mother's death certificate as his mother had not obtained citizenship, his siblings citizenships by descent and relationship certificate with his parents. District Administrative Office denied to give citizenship certificate even after submitting the recommendation letter from Bhadrapur nagarpalika ward no. 5 along with supporting documents, quoting that Mr. Sahani had failed to Submit both Father's and Mother's citizenship.

Then he approached Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD)'s legal team seeking guidance and assistance in navigating the citizenship acquisition process and by then he submitted a writ petition at High Court, Biratnagar on 18th February, 2024 to issue order command note including mandamus, whichever is needed on the name of opponents.

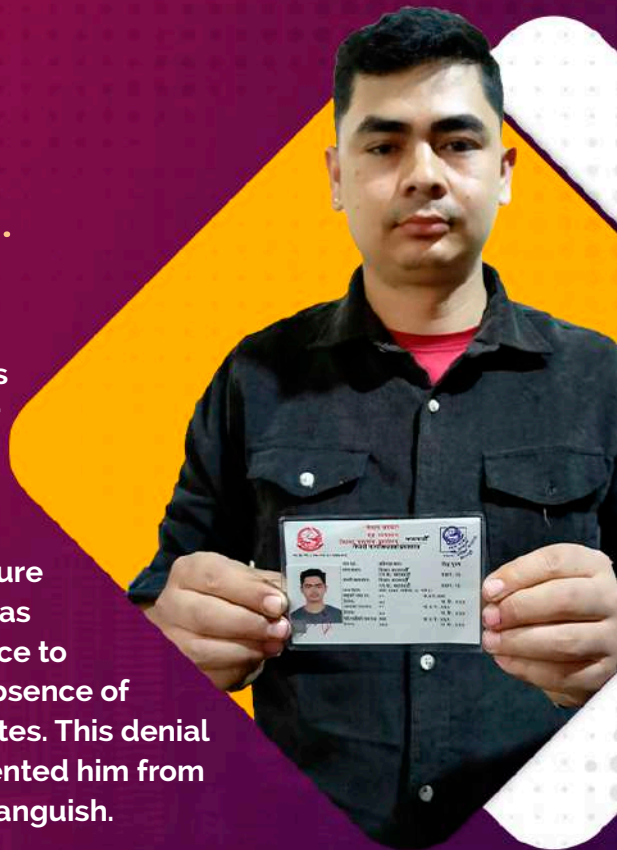
After thorough proceedings of Court, the court ordered to grant him citizenship on 30th April, 2024 allowing him to enjoy all the rights and privileges of Nepali citizenship.



# Avinash's Quest for Identity

**AVINASH THAPA**, aged 32, raised by his maternal grandparents in Kathmandu, faced a challenging journey to secure his identity and rights. Orphaned at a tender age, his father vanished before he was born, and his mother disappeared when he was merely three months old. Despite his plight, Avinash sought to secure official recognition of his existence. He was denied by the District Administration Office to grant citizenship certificate due to the absence of his parents and their citizenship certificates. This denial not only left him stateless but also prevented him from registering his own child, deepening his anguish.

With unwavering determination, Avinash, supported by FWLD, filed a writ petition at the Supreme Court on September 2, 2021. After a long legal battle, and continued assistance and facilitation from FWLD even after the Court's decision in Avinash's favor, he finally received his citizenship certificate on April 3, 2024, which not only validated his identity but also paved the way for him to formally register his child, bringing profound relief and joy to his life.



# Landmark Achievement on Citizenship Rights of a Nepali Women married to a Foreign

Sukumaya Lama was denied the right to citizenship despite her Nepalese parents because she is a woman and was married to a foreign citizen. She was trafficked at the early age of 12 years old to India to work in a circus where she got married to an Indian Citizen, also working in the same circus. They gave birth to 2 daughters.

While working in a circus, her husband died, and she had to return to Nepal. After about 3 years of returning to Nepal, she reached out to the concerned authorities to initiate the application for obtaining citizenship, but she was denied. This denial rested on the proviso of Section 8 (1) (a) of the Nepal Citizenship Act, 2063, which had restricted Nepali women, married to a foreign citizen from even applying for citizenship. To ensure her citizenship rights, Sukumaya Lama in support of Forum for Women, Law, and Development filed a writ application to the Supreme Court of Nepal to have the discriminatory provisions declared void and order of mandamus to provide her citizenship.

On 28th May 2025, the Constitutional bench issued a writ order declaring the proviso of Section 8 (1) (a) of the Nepal Citizenship Act, 2063 void for being a discriminatory provision and issued a mandamus to provide her citizenship.

Following the implementation of this order, on 22nd August 2025, Sukumaya Lama was provided citizenship certificate by District Administration Office, Makwanpur.



# Sushmita's Legal Battle for Citizenship

**Sushmita Bishwokarma (Pahari)**, whose father abandoned her family when she was 13, was raised by her mother who worked as a domestic worker in Kathmandu. She was repeatedly denied citizenship due to the absence of her father's citizenship records. After her marriage she tried multiple times to secure citizenship but though the Ward Office initially gave a recommendation, the District Administration Office denied processing it, citing her father's unverified identity and later informed her that the validity of the previous recommendation had expired and asked her to bring a new one. But when she approached the ward office again for a fresh recommendation, the ward office also refused to provide it. With the unwavering legal support of the Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD), Sushmita filed a case on May 4, 2025. Finally, on June 30, 2025, the court directed authorities to grant Sushmita citizenship through her mother, and she successfully obtained her Nepali citizenship and secured her and her family's fundamental rights.



नेपाल सरकार  
गृह मन्त्रालय  
कञ्चनपुर  
जिल्ला प्रमैपाली नामास्किताको प्रसाप्रापत्र

ना. प्र. नं. : ७५-०१-८२-०३५१४

नाम धर: ललिता चुनारो लुहार  
जन्म स्थान: जिल्ला: कञ्चनपुर  
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बाबुको नाम धर: जितु बहादुर चुनारो ना. प्र. नं.: १५८३००७७  
देगना: भीमदत्त न.पा.-११, कञ्चनपुर ना. कि.: वंशज  
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विद्व: महिला  
वडा नं.: ११  
वडा नं.: ११

प्रशासकीय अधिकारी

## JUSTICE AFTER 12 YEARS: Lalita's Road to Legal Recognition

Twelve years ago, Lalita Luhar's life took a devastating turn when her husband went missing while traveling to India for work. Left alone, she struggled to raise her children, Mahesh and Manisha Luhar. Without her husband, she could not obtain citizenship and her children remained without birth registration, trapped in a cycle of legal invisibility.

In search of justice, Lalita approached to Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) and with the support, an application was prepared confirming her husband had been missing since January 24, 2013. On May 6, 2025, the ward office issued a local verification report with a recommendation. FWLD then facilitated filing the case in Kanchanpur District Court, and on May 27, 2025, the court officially declared her husband deceased and issued a declaration letter. With this legal recognition, Lalita successfully approached to the ward office and District Administration Office, and finally got her citizenship.




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