

Why has Indira been nominated?

Child Rights Hero Nominee • Pages 68–85

Indira Ranamagar

Indira Ranamagar has been nominated for the 2014 World's Children's Prize for her 20-year struggle for prisoners' children in Nepal.

Indira grew up in extreme poverty and had to fight to be able to go to school. Even as a young girl she knew that she wanted to help other people who had hard lives.

Indira has built up an organisation called Prisoners Assistance Nepal (PA), which has rescued over a thousand children from cramped, dirty prisons. The children end up there because their parents have been sentenced to time in prison and nobody else is able to take care of them. When Indira rescues children, they are taken to one of PA's three children's homes. There they get an education and a safe childhood. They also learn agricultural skills and how to take care of animals. PA runs a children's home called Jankuri outside Kathmandu. Children from the surrounding villages are allowed to attend the school too.

Indira lobbies politicians and authorities to make prisons more humane. Many prisoners come from very poor families. Indira and PA teach them to read and write, so that they can manage better, and take better care of their children when they are released from prison.



Jungle girl's stubborn school struggle

Indira's feet slip in the mud on the narrow path between the rice fields. She is six years old. Naked and barefoot, she gathers firewood in a big basket on her back.

Two older girls walk towards Indira on the path. They are wearing blue school uniforms and their hair is in long, shiny plaits. When they get to Indira on the narrow path they push her and she falls over. The girls laugh loudly and walk on.

Indira gathers the firewood up again. She is in pain.

But it isn't the cuts on her feet that hurt – the ones she gets from walking barefoot on soil and stones. It's something else, something inside,

that is hurting her and making her cry.

All day, she has been running around the village as usual, helping everyone. Fetching water and wood. Taking cows and goats into

the jungle to graze. Searching for edible mushrooms and roots to take home. She even found two crabs in the river, and lit a fire and cooked them.

Indira knows it's important to work hard. Not to be lazy. She likes working and learning new things. People in the village rarely call her Indira. She has two other names instead. One is Kanchi, or little one, since she is the youngest child in the Magar family. The other name is Niguri, which is the name of a jungle fruit that is covered in curly hair. Indira has a shock of wild, wavy hair on her head. She's the only person in the village with



Hi mum!
Roshina visits her mum and little brother in prison. She lives at a children's home run by Indira and Prisoners Assistance.

wavy hair, so she is a bit different. Here, hair is meant to be straight and smooth and easy to tie back in shiny plaits. Indira doesn't like being called Niguri, but she tries not to let it get to her.

Sleeping with the cows

She doesn't see her mother and father during the day. They work for other people in the fields, to support the family. When they come home in the evening, they often find Indira among the cows, where she likes to sleep.

"Kanchi," sighs her mother, "now let's go home and wash off the cow poo again."

The family have a simple house on stilts. It only has walls on two sides, so it's wide

open straight through. The floor is covered with old rice sacks.

For dinner they eat rice. Almost always rice, but now and again Indira's mother brings a few soya beans from the field. She hides them in her clothes.

Indira's two older brothers go to school. She wants to go too. She wants to learn to read and write, and wear a lovely school uniform. At the moment all she wears is a tunic made from prickly sackcloth.

Indira nags and nags and prays to God. But there isn't enough money. And she is a girl. There's no point in paying for schooling for girls, since all they do is get married and look after children anyway.

Instead, Indira hangs over her brother's shoulder while he's doing his homework. And she begs and begs and begs. He gets annoyed, but she keeps asking. Finally, he gives in and starts to teach her letters and numbers.

Indira learns fast. She repeats everything, and writes letters in the sand. The brothers also teach some of the adults in the village at home, and Indira listens intently while chopping vegetables or cooking rice. He reads out stories of famous men and women in history, who have done good things for others. Indira absorbs everything, and forgets nothing. Now she knows that she wants to be a person who helps others.

By the time she is ten years old, Indira can read and write, and she knows that she can learn almost anything.

"Of course I can!"

Nobody can tell Indira that there are some things she just can't do because she's a girl. Like ploughing the fields, for example.

"Of course I can!" says Indira, and pulls the plough just as well as the strong boys. She draws strength from her pure stubbornness and often turns out to be even stronger than the older boys. She beats them at football.

A teacher has heard about Indira, and persuades her parents to allow her to start school. Her brother saves up for her school fees by selling bananas. The teacher thinks she should start in Year 4. Indira doesn't agree. Year 5 suits her much better, so it is decided. But there is no money for a school uniform or school-bag. Indira just wears her tunic.

That remains her school uniform throughout her years at school. They can't even afford pens or crayons. She has to strain to remember everything that the teacher shows them on the chalkboard, and as soon as they get a break she sits down on the ground and writes everything in the sand from memory. That's why she never has time to play with the other children. At lunchtime she has to run home and move the animals to a different pasture. She has to do that every morning, lunchtime, and evening.

Indira gets on well at school. She is particularly gifted at maths. Within a year, Indira is the best in the class and she gets a scholarship. And she has much higher grades than those two girls who pushed her over. She forgave them a long time ago. But she will never excuse injustice. ☹

The first photographs of Indira





Indira wasn't allowed in the kitchen

Indira didn't have many friends at school. She was poorer than most, and belonged to a lower caste than the other children. The caste system was banned in Nepal a long time ago, but it still exists nonetheless. People are divided into different groups, called castes. People who belong to the lowest castes are often treated badly.

"One time I went to a girl's house," says Indira. "Then her mother came and told me I must not go into the kitchen. Since I belonged to a lower caste she thought I was 'unclean', dirty, and I wasn't to touch anything to do with food or the kitchen. It felt so horribly unjust. It made me both sad and angry."

In a caste system, there are loads of rules that affect people's lives. What jobs they are allowed to do, for example, or who they can marry. As soon as you are born you belong to a caste, a group, which has either high or low value. If you are born into a low caste, you belong to it for your whole life, and you can never move to a 'better' caste.

There are people who are born with no caste at all. According to the old way of thinking, casteless people are worthless. They are extremely poor and have jobs like emptying toilets, or sorting waste. They often have to beg to survive, and are also called 'the untouchables' because they are seen as unclean. They are not allowed to drink from the same wells as others, or eat at the same tables.



When Indira comes to prison with the children to visit, the mums have made food for the children and they eat together.

Indira wants to help

Wherever Indira Ranamagar goes, people recognise her.

"*Namaste Aama,*" they say, which means 'good day, mother'. Street children, politicians, and rich businessmen. They know that she rescues poor children from prisons.

When she approaches in her shining white sari, it's hard to believe that Indira once ran around naked in the jungle. That she once couldn't read or write. But Indira herself will never forget the poverty of her childhood. That's what drives her to help others.

When Indira was seventeen, she left her village to continue her education in the capital city, Kathmandu. She worked hard doing other people's cleaning and laundry, so that she could afford to go to school. She also worked as a

teacher. At one school, Indira met Parijat, a well-known author who wrote a lot about human rights. Parijat thought it was wrong that people were put in prison for protesting against the injustices in society. She also wrote about how bad the conditions were for prisoners, and visited prisons to give out food and clothing.

Then Parijat asked Indira to start working with her.

"I was scared the first time I went into a prison," says Indira. "I thought the prisoners were dangerous, but I realised that they were people, just like the rest of us. Most of them were extremely poor and couldn't read or write."

Indira began visiting prisons every weekend when she didn't have school. She ran courses to teach people to read and write, and she donated clothes and food. She was shocked that so many children had to live with their parents in the dirty, cramped prisons.

Wants to help others

One day, Parijat asked Indira what she wanted to do with her life.

"I want to help others," replied Indira. "Especially those who are as poor as I once was."





Dad's cell.

Waiting for dad.

Bye dad!

Here he is!

Indira has come along with two brothers so they can visit their dad in prison.



the poor

“It’s a terrible environment for children,” says Indira.

She tried to find places for the children at various children’s homes, but it was hard. The children’s homes were also overcrowded with poor children.

The first child

Indira is twenty years old, and on the way to visit a prison as usual. At the prison gate she stops dead. There is a

child lying there, sleeping. It’s a little girl who is going to change Indira’s life.

The girl is three years old and her name is Anjali. Her father has just been put in prison and her mother is dead. Anjali curled up and went to sleep outside the prison to be as close to her father as possible. She doesn’t have anyone else.

Indira, who has already helped so many children to move from prison to different

children’s homes, tries to find a place for Anjali. But nobody has space for the girl.

Indira decides to take care of Anjali herself. She is also disappointed with the children’s homes. They rarely give the children the love and care they need. Indira has realised that the prison children need even more love and security, since they have often been through bad experiences. If they have been in prison for a

long time, it also delays their development. Indira studies at secondary school, and Anjali comes with her to her lessons.

Anjali makes Indira work in a different way. Instead of rescuing children from prisons and taking them to children’s homes, she starts to take care of more and more children herself. Eventually, she has so many children that she has to start her own children’s home. Later, she

Indira with her daughter Subani, and Anjali, the first girl she took care of.



“Choose me or the children”

When Indira had three children from prisons that she took care of herself, she met a man and they fell in love. They got together, and they had a daughter called Subani. Indira continued her work at the prisons, and sometimes Subani came with her.

Her husband thought she spent too much time on the prison children. And that there were too many children in the house.

“You have to choose now,” he said. “It’s me or the children.”

“It wasn’t a difficult decision,” says Indira. “He had no respect for my work. So I realised that he didn’t really love me. I chose the children, of course.”



→ starts schools and farms all over Nepal. Today, it is 22 years since Indira found that little girl sleeping outside the prison gates. Anjali is an adult now, with a family of her own. Indira has managed to save over a thousand children from prisons, giving them a safe childhood and an education. 🌍



At Indira's children's home, the children are encouraged to get plenty of exercise.



Many people in Nepal used to think that girls shouldn't cycle. Indira ignored that.



Girls shouldn't cycle? Forget it!

Indira is not only known for rescuing children from prisons, but also as the first woman to compete in mountain bike championships in Nepal. When she started cycling, lots of people thought girls shouldn't cycle at all. But Indira ignored that. She

thought it was fun. And good exercise. She has won lots of competitions and inspired other girls to start competing. Now it's much more common to see girls on bikes in Nepal. Several of Indira's children's homes have mountain biking courses for the

children. Indira believes it's important for children to use their bodies and get exercise – cycling, running, and swimming. "When your physical fitness improves, your confidence grows with it."



Indira and Subani.

Subani's hundreds of little brothers

Subani, 17, is Indira's biological daughter. She has grown up with several hundred younger brothers and sisters.

"I've never felt jealous of the other children," she says. "They feel like my real siblings. Of course I sometimes wish I had more time with my mother, but I understand her work and I am so very proud of her. Wherever we go, people praise her."



Indira's daughter Subani loves playing for the children in the children's home.



All the children come running down from the children's home to meet Indira, who gives them all a hug.

All children have light inside them

"I called the children's home outside Kathmandu Junkiri, which means firefly," explains Indira.

"When I was a child, I always followed them. I felt that every being, every person, every creature that is alive has light inside it. We have to find that light in every child! That's what we do here. That's why we called it Junkiri."



The children at the children's home and school wash their own clothes.



Grow your own with pride

There are animals and vegetable patches at all of Indira's children's homes.

"Animals and nature are good for you," says Indira. "When the children get to tend animals, they grow as people and learn to take responsibility. And to grow crops is to grasp the meaning of life. It instills respect for nature. The children discover that they can sow a tiny seed and make it grow, and then their vegetables will be enjoyed by everyone. 'I grew this!' It's a great feeling."



The worst ones walk free

The people who are actually in prison are not the worst offenders," says Indira. "Most of them are poor people who have perhaps stolen food to survive. They might also have been talked into committing a crime for someone else, in return for money.

Poverty is the real villain. The other criminals, the ones that earn money from dodgy deals and take advantage of people, they always walk free.

"I am so incredibly angry that this happens in my country! Nepal has so many resources, and wonderful people. We could become a fantastic country if we all played our part."

Indira and Prisoners Assistance

- Run three children's homes, two schools, and youth programs on organic agriculture, arts and crafts, and more.
- Support girls in villages to enable them to go to school. They are also given bikes, since they often have a long journey to get to school.
- Search for relatives and support them to take care of the children.
- Make sure that children get a chance to visit their parents in prison.
- Run programs allowing children to go to school during the day and stay with their mothers in prison at night. They also educate mothers in prison up to Year 5 level and give them vocational training.
- Support prisoners who have been released, so that they can be reunited with their children.
- Speak out for the weakest in society and fight for prisoners – especially women and their children – to be treated in a fair and humane way.



Boys at Indira's children's home clean out a water tank.





Nima

Nima's world is a dark concrete courtyard surrounded by high walls. A building on one side has a series of narrow openings. It's an old stable, which now houses ten prisoners in every stall. Nima knows there is another world outside the walls, but he can't remember what it looks like.

When Nima is two years old, his mother dies. The only person who can take care of him is his father. But he is in prison. Nima is taken from his home village to his father, in prison in the capital city, Kathmandu.

Many other children live with their parents in prison. The children play with one another. They make balls out of old socks, and play volley-



Nima Rima, 15

Wants to be: An engineer.
Hobby: Drawing.
Favourite reading: Science magazines.
Favourite film: Spiderman.
Likes: Doing new things.
Makes me angry: When people don't return things they have borrowed.

"When you're painting a thangka you have to concentrate very hard," says Nima. "If you're not concentrating you might as well go home, or so says our teacher."

Nima a few years ago, when he had been living at Indira's children's home for several years.



grew up in prison

ball and football. But Nima rarely joins in. He likes watching the men play chess and he loves drawing.

He draws and draws, but he is never satisfied with his drawings. He always throws them out and starts again. His drawings are dark. Black and grey, sometimes with a splash of red that looks like blood.

Years in prison

The prisoners receive food rations from the guards, and each one cooks their own food on a camping stove. Breakfast is a slice of bread or a biscuit. Dinner is almost always just rice. But once a week they get some vegetable curry with their rice.

During the day Nima's father and the other prisoners make hats. The children often have some kind of lessons for a few hours during the day. But Nima isn't that interested. He

often sits and wonders what is outside the walls. He hears noises from outside, but he doesn't know what is making them. In prison all the days look the same. Days become weeks and months, and eventually, several years.

But Nima knows that there are times when all the prisoners are happy and there is almost a party atmosphere when a certain woman comes to visit. She brings food and fruit, and sometimes clothes for Nima and the other children.

The woman's name is Indira Ranamagar, and she is teaching the prisoners to read and write. She reads them newspapers, and tells them that they and their children have rights, even though they are in prison.

A new world

When Nima is five, he falls ill

with a high fever. The prison doctors don't have any medicine and his father is really worried.

It's dangerous for Nima to live in the prison now. It's cramped and dirty, and everyone sleeps so close together. Bacteria spread quickly and it can be hard to recover from illness. The next time Indira visits, Nima's father asks her for help. She agrees that Nima

needs to get to a proper hospital straight away.

"When Nima is well again, he could come to my children's home and start school," she suggests. Both Nima and his father think this is a great idea.

When Indira takes Nima by the hand and leads him out of the high walls through the heavy iron gates, a whole new world opens up before him. Nima has no memory of life outside prison. It's a world that moves too fast. That flickers, twinkles, rumbles, beeps and howls.

What is a chair?

"I was terrified," says Nima. "How do those cars move? Everything moved so fast. And there were people everywhere, and shops, and bikes."

"And colours! I had never seen so many colours before. It made me giddy."



"Thangka painting helps my school work"

Painting thangkas is an old Nepali and Tibetan art form. It exists in both Buddhism and Hinduism. The paintings are of stories, packed full of details and symbols. It takes many years to become a good thangka painter. You have to work slowly, and remain completely focused. Nima is an apprentice at the moment, learning the art form with a thangka master.

"He can tell immediately if I'm not focusing," says Nima. "He says 'If you're not concentrating, you might as well go home now'. When you're painting a thangka, that is all there is. There is nothing beyond that, nothing to distract you."

"Painting has made a big difference to my school work. I find it easier to concentrate. For example, when I'm working on maths, maths is all there is. I don't get distracted."



"Nima, who is sitting in the middle, spent the first five years of his life living in a prison. When he came to Indira's children's home he loved drawing, and now he's learning to become a thangka painter."



Nima, in the middle at the front, a few years after he came to Indira's children's home. He is grateful to Indira for rescuing him from the prison.



Nima draws whenever he gets the chance.

Nima grasps Indira's hand tightly all the way, and asks her about everything he sees.

At the hospital, Nima sees a doctor and gets some medicine. He stays in hospital for a few weeks. When he is better he moves to Indira's children's home and finds lots more children who Indira has saved from prison.

"When I got there I saw

rugs and furniture that I'd never seen before," explains Nima. "I pointed at a strange object and Indira explained that it was a chair. For sitting on. I thought it was so big! Imagine that, never having seen a chair before. And I remember getting to taste mango. I had never tasted it before. It was the most delicious thing I had ever eaten!"

For the first time in several years, Nima was no longer a prisoner.

"I got a bed of my own! And I could go wherever I wanted to. Even outside."

Ablaze with colour

Now Nima is 15 and is interested in mechanical engineering. He has moved to a house in a city near Kathmandu, where Indira runs two homes for young people – one for girls and one for boys. They learn to be independent and to do all their practical chores. In the evenings they take it in turns to cook dinner.

In the mornings the young people attend school and in the afternoons they learn different handicraft skills. Some learn wood carving and ceramics. Nima is learning to paint traditional Nepali paintings known as 'thangka' paintings.

He still loves drawing and painting, but now his paintings are ablaze with colour.

"I'm so happy now," he says. "I go to school and I have a big family. Indira is like a mother to me."

Nima's dream is to become an engineer. He laughs.

"Now I know that it's petrol that makes cars move forwards, and that the TV doesn't have people sitting inside it!"



Thangka painting is an old Nepali art form. The paintings have many details and symbols.



The young people get the chance to learn long-established handicraft skills like wood carving. Indira has shown that girls can become wood carvers. In the past only boys did that.



Roshani

moves from prison to Indira's children's home

It's Roshani's first night sleeping on the street. She holds her breath, listening. What's that sound? It's only a few hours since the police banged on the door of Roshani's home. They took her mother and father.

The police said that her mother and father were going to prison. Roshani doesn't know why. There was nobody to take care of the children, so Roshani's two younger brothers had to go to prison with their parents. ➔



Roshani, 9

Wants to be: A nurse, and take care of sick people.

Favourite game: Fire and ice. A kind of tag.

Favourite book: My English book.

Favourite film: Don't say no.

A romantic film.

Likes: Mango

Makes me angry: When people tease and bully others.

First Roshani ended up on the streets, then she lived with her mum in prison for a year. Finally she got to go to Indira's children's home.



Two of Roshani's little brothers got to come with her to Indira's children's home, but their youngest brother is with their mum in prison.

Roshani's neighbours were meant to take care of her. But when she gets to their door, they don't let her in. They have locked the door. She knocks and knocks. And shouts. Night falls. Shadows move in the darkness.

Threatening noises. Roshani, who is six, curls up on the pavement. Her heart is in her mouth. There are ghosts everywhere. It feels as though they are creeping around her. She can't sleep.

Then next day Roshani is still on the street. She has nowhere to go. But somebody sees her and calls the police. They pick Roshani up and take her to her mother – in jail.

Better than living on the street

"I was so happy," explains Roshani. "All I wanted was to be with my mother and father."

At first she got to live with her mother – there were eleven people in their small cell.

"The prison officers would shout and yell at us, and it was cramped," says Roshani.

But it was still much better than living alone on the street.

A few weeks later the family were moved to another prison. Roshani's father came to the men's prison and the rest of the family to the women's prison.

"On Saturdays we were allowed to go to the men's

side and visit my father. He used to keep some of his rice for us every week."

There were lots of children to play with in the prison. The building was like a labyrinth, with stairs and small rooms everywhere. There were no doors between the rooms.

"We played hide and seek there," recalls Roshani.

Going to school

Indira Ranamagar from Prisoners Assistance, an organisation that helps prisoners and their children, visited the prison often. She gave out food and clothes, and taught the prisoners to read and write. She also took care of children from the prison by taking them to one of her children's homes.

When Roshani and her brothers had been in prison for one year, Indira took them to her children's home outside Kathmandu. They live there now, with over seventy other children, in a large house in the countryside. They go to school and learn agricultural skills. The children also take care of the animals – 24 goats, a few dogs and one cow.

"I love being here," says Roshani, "although I do really miss my mother and father. But in a few days' time I'm going to the prison to visit them."



Visiting mum



When Roshani visits the prison, her mother wants to look after her.



It's wonderful to see each other, but it makes you a bit sad too.



Roshani's mum does her hair.

in prison



When Roshani visits the prison, her mother has cooked dinner for her.

Visiting time is over. The mothers call a few final words to their children.



Roshani hangs back and waits by the locked prison gate to say goodbye to her mum and little brother.



"Don't be sad Roshani," says her mother as they part. "We'll see each other again soon!"

Joshna's first day of freedom

Joshna is five years old and has been in prison for two years. Today, she is finally getting out. Indira Ranamagar is going to take her to her home for prisoners' children.

11:00 A.M.

Indira talks to Joshna and her mother.

"I'm so happy that Joshna is getting out of here and can start school," says Joshna's mother.



1:00 P.M.

Everybody knows Indira at the central prison in Kathmandu. She has left this prison with many different children. Today, it's Joshna's turn.



Welcome, Joshna!

The other children at the home in Kathmandu welcome Joshna. She is given a beautiful scarf. That's how you welcome someone in Nepal. It's called 'Sawagatan'.

2:00 P.M.



4:00 P.M.

At first Joshna is shy. It's a bit scary to leave her mother, and prison.



3:00 P.M.

Joshna has made a friend already – Mamita, who used to live in the same prison. There is lots to discover in the house. And you can look out the window. You couldn't do that in prison.





6.00 P.M.

Indira and Joshna play together. There were no cuddly toys in prison.



7.00 P.M.



Everyone eats their evening meal together. Large portions of rice with vegetables. Afterwards, each person washes their own plate.



8.00 P.M.

Bedtime. Joshna sleeps beside her friend. Indira or one of the other adults at the children's home always sleep alongside the new children. They need to feel safe.



Learn a greeting!

Put your hands together like Bibash, 11.

Bow your head down towards your hands.

Lift your head up and look the person you are greeting in the eyes.

Say 'Namaste' and smile.



Reading aloud for mum

"When I visit my mother in prison, I usually read to her. She is so proud that I have learned to read! She has never been to school. I'm going to be the best in my class and then I'm going to earn money. When I'm really rich I'm going to build a big house for my mother and me."

Swastika, 12



From priso



The boys built this house with the help of their construction tutor.



Suman immediately starts working on the farm together with the other lads, who he already knows from Indira's children's home. Today they are planting tomatoes.

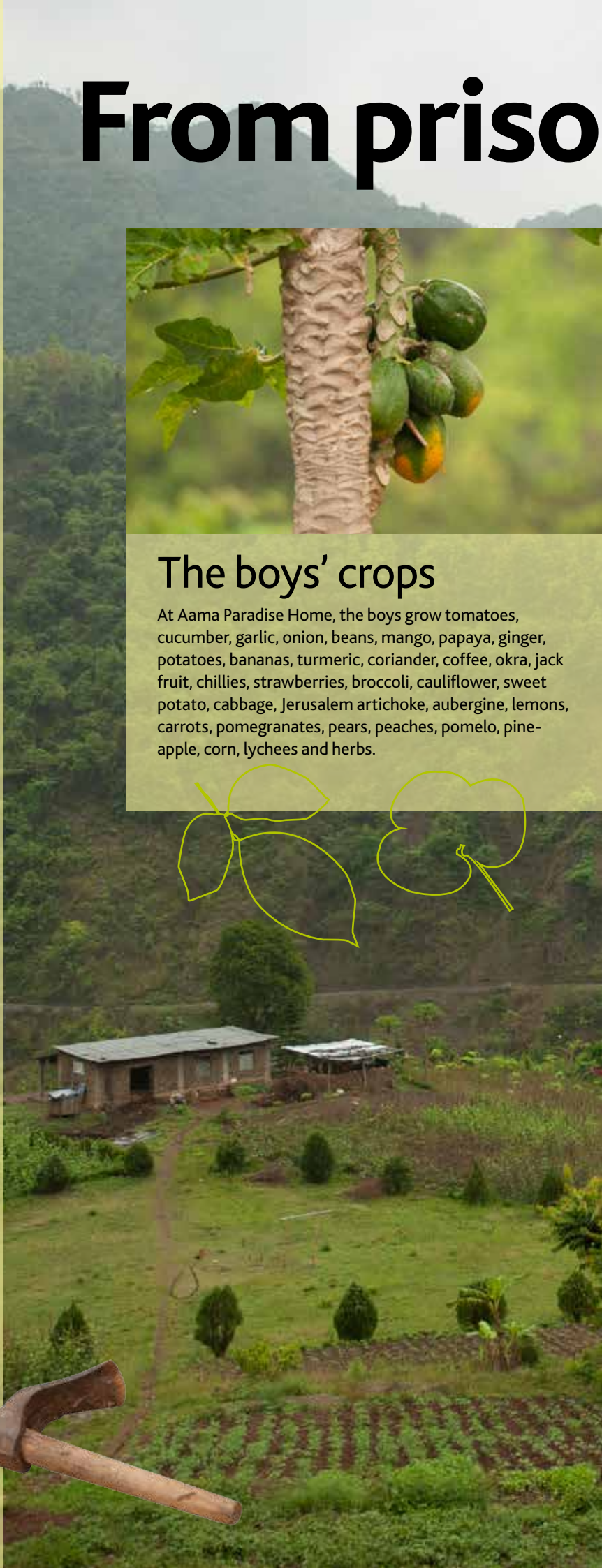


Indira blows on the fire to get it going. There is no electricity here. "I want this place to be as simple and close to nature as possible," says Indira.

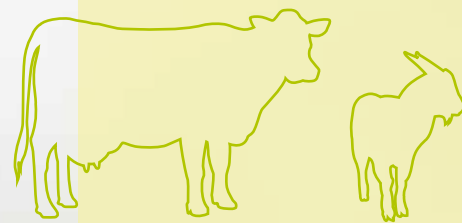


The boys' crops

At Aama Paradise Home, the boys grow tomatoes, cucumber, garlic, onion, beans, mango, papaya, ginger, potatoes, bananas, turmeric, coriander, coffee, okra, jack fruit, chillies, strawberries, broccoli, cauliflower, sweet potato, cabbage, Jerusalem artichoke, aubergine, lemons, carrots, pomegranates, pears, peaches, pomelo, pineapple, corn, lychees and herbs.



n to paradise



Suman, 18, is excited and full of high expectations. Today, he is moving to Aama Paradise Home in the jungle highlands. It's Indira's farm, where young people from prisons can learn to grow crops and look after animals.

The clouds sweep across the sky, almost touching the buildings. You can see for many miles from here. Clean water gushes in streams that have their source in the Himalaya mountain range. The water flows to the organic plantation, the wood-fuelled kitchen, and to the outdoor shower among the mango trees.

This farm is run by a group of teenage boys. Most of them have been rescued from prisons in Nepal and have grown up in one of Indira's children's homes.

Indira found Suman on the street when he was 5 years old. He lived on the street with his mother, who was an alcoholic and couldn't take care of him.

"Without Indira I wouldn't be alive today," he says. "I have a fantastic life thanks to her. And now I get to come here. It's so beautiful!"

Sleeping under the stars

The other boys at Aama Paradise show Suman around. He knows them, because they grew up together at Indira's children's home.

After lunch it's time to plant tomatoes. An agricultural



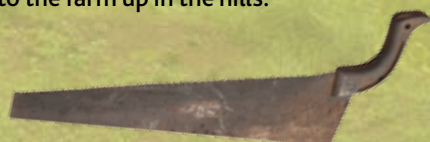
Indira found Suman on the street when he was five years old. Now he is 18 and has just moved to the farm up in the hills.

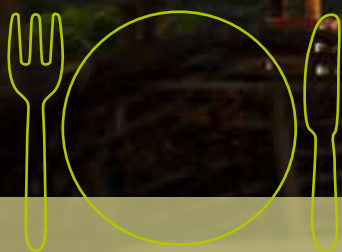


The lads get to learn how to make planks.



The bed gets a bottom and is finished. Tonight Suman will sleep outside in his bed.





Indira is cooking chicken for dinner. The boys love her cooking.



tutor shows how it's done, in a lesson that blends theory and practice.

There is also a carpenter on the staff, who shows the boys how to build everything from furniture to houses.

After work the boys run down to the river that flows through the valley.

Swimming there helps them cool off. They often fish in the river too.

For dinner, Indira is cooking chicken on the open fire. There is no electricity.

When it's time for bed, the boys pull their beds out into the yard. They want to sleep outside. 🌍



The boys cool off in the river after working on the plantation. They often fish here too.



"This root should be cooked in the embers of the fire," says Indira. "You should eat it at least once a year. It will keep you healthy." Indira and the boys found it in the jungle.



Mushroom treats snake bite

There are many plants in the jungle that can be used as medicines.

The boys in Palpa often go into the jungle to search for them. Today they have found an unusual mushroom, called a 'veiled lady mushroom'.

"If you get a snake bite, you can put this mushroom on the bite and it sucks out the poison," explains Indira.

