

**For thousands of children forced to work in South Asia's hand-made rug industry, RugMark provides an education and a better future.**



## **AKASH LAYA MAGAR**

***“RugMark provides lodging, food and education and helps children to contact their parents....***

***Now, when I grow up I want to be a social worker.”***

**“My name is Akash Laya Magar.** I am 13 years old and come from Laxchaminiya - a small village in a remote part of the district of Rautahat - about 400 km east of Kathmandu. My family is very poor - we always lived hand to mouth and my father is an alcoholic. We were so poor that when I was 12 they sent me and my sister to Kathmandu to work in a rug factory.

It was an awful life. We had to live in a dirty, dark room in the broker's house, get up at 4 am and start work straight away with no breakfast. We had to work through to 9 o'clock at night, and we only ate once, then we just went straight to bed, usually by ten at night. We were always hungry and tired. We weren't allowed to leave the factory and we were often beaten and shouted at. There was nothing interesting in what we did, all we had to look forward to in our lives was our breaks.

**When the RugMark inspectors came to the factory, the broker tried to hide me** and the inspectors had to fight very hard to get me out. But they did, and now I live in the RugMark Rehabilitation Centre. Now, I have been given an opportunity to study at the RugMark School. I don't want to have to worry about money when I get older, like my parents do. If Rugmark is not in Nepal many children, like me, would have to work in terrible conditions.”

**Former child weaver, Akash Laya Magar, 13, now living and studying in the RugMark Rehabilitation Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal**