

Sani's World Tour with Lhani



Sadhu Ram Tamang

Sani's World Tour with Lhani



Sadhu Ram Tamang

Author: Sadhu Ram Tamang

Publisher:



giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



Ziviler Friedensdienst
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Commissioned by:
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Publication: October 2021

Copyright @ Author

Illustrator: Anuj Shrestha

Layout: Eva Gaderer

Acknowledgement

I am truly indebted to the Civil Peace Service (CPS) of GIZ Nepal for supporting me to take part in the Peace and Human Rights Education training organized by the Academy for Conflict Transformation in the Forum Civil Peace Service, Germany. This course stimulated my writing about a story of a girl, Sani and her World Tour with the moon, called Lhani in Tamang language.

I am grateful to Sophie Schmitt, Program Coordinator CPS-GIZ, for her sustained encouragement, insightful feedback and for creating a conducive environment to write and publish this book. With this, we carried forward the vision of educating every child and laying the foundation for peace through education as a fundamental human right. I am equally thankful to All People Development Center's (APEC) team for creating a space to use this storybook in seven communities secondary schools where they have been working to promote peacebuilding through dialogue initiatives.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Gal Harmat, PhD. for her encouragement to set the initial outline of the story. I am grateful to my colleagues, particularly Shaileshwori Sharma, Peace Advisor CPS-GIZ and Deeva Yonzon Lama, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor CPS-GIZ for their thorough review of the story. Similarly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Yoga Raj Sapkota, Local Professional Human Rights Forum Ilam (HURF) for his insightful elaboration on this story from the lens of human rights. In addition, I would like to mention our children Abha and Anis with whom I have carved this story capturing feelings of curiosity, sadness, surprise and happiness from their points of view. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Anuj Shrestha for his extremely creative illustrations for this story.

And last, but not the least, I am grateful to Jo-Anne Pach Koirala, former longstanding teacher at Lincoln School, for her invaluable editing of the language and concepts in the story.

Sadhu Ram Tamang

Foreword

Stories have been a powerful tool through which to share experiences, emotions, imaginations, and creativity of human beings since ancient times. A story portrays the feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, fear, and so forth. Thus, storytelling is a fundamental part of being human. Stories are classified as fairy tale, folk tale, fable, myth, parable, legend etc.

Storytelling evolves into narratives, in written and printed forms. Traditionally, songs, chants and epic poems tell stories in a dynamic, rhythmic, and metaphoric style. These stories have been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. For example, the *Bonpos* (spiritual healers) in Tamang society are the ones who have been instrumental in narrating through the oral tradition stories about the creation of life, and the universe, spirits, and the next life. Traditional storytelling by word of mouth, especially by the elders, still takes place whenever a group of people get together to socialize, often in a fireside setting.

The song *Lhani yu-yu, momki goila pinla* meaning: 'Come moon, have grandma's attire' is one of my favorite verses, I have sung this song breathlessly for hours while being a friend with the moon and stars lights during my childhood. For children the beauty of that bright moon and stars against the night sky reminded them grandma dressed in her beautiful dress. My imagination to be with the moon and stars as free as they are and to solve the problems of the children has stayed with me since childhood.

The different types of stories told by my grandfather are still present in my mind and heart and have always been path finders to reach better solutions even in present-day circumstances.

The story **Sani's World Tour with Lhani** presents the real situation of lack of girls' education that I have witnessed in my childhood. Girls were excluded from getting an education in school. Rather they were occupied with a multitude of household activities from dawn to dusk. The patriarchal society did not supporting girl's education.

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 26 states, all children have right to education. Education aims to provide for the full development of human personality and to strengthen respect for human rights, promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among all people and maintaining peace. Therefore, this book aims to emphasize the right of education for all children.

Sani's World Tour with Lhani

Sani lives in Chandrabhumi village. She has just turned seven years old. Sani lives with her parents and two brothers in a small house. They have a farm where they grow their own food. They feel fortunate to have cows, goats, roosters, hens and chicks.





Chandrabhumi village has clean flowing streams coming through the forest from the top of the village. There are hills, meadows and a small lake. There are temples called chhorten, a water-mill and also a school.



Sani is an active girl. She is happy to walk in the meadow, hike up hills and play in the sand. Near the stream she enjoys making boats from leaves. There she watches the movement of the fish.

Sani loves the feel of water. She fastens leaves as boats placing them in the running water. There she builds canals to channel the flow of the water. Sani feels refreshed when a breeze blows her hair and touches her cheeks.

When she sees changing cloud shapes, she loves to picture what they are. A goat shape changes into an elephant and now as it seems to float into a horse. When the sky is clear and calm, a gentle wind blows clouds into wonderful shapes.

Sani also likes to dance at the sight of a rainbow and wonders how these colors and the arched bow can appear in the sky. Like most children, she enjoys making mud shapes into houses and animals. The stones and twigs add to her world of play.





Sani and her brothers light a fire by collecting dry straw and twigs. They cover it from wind to keep the flame low in order to cook potatoes. They know that food tastes especially delicious when cooked over a fire.





Sani listens to songs of birds and tries to imitate them. This is music to her ears. Everyday she feels very happy when she is outdoors enjoying the beauty of nature.



Sani watches her brothers, cousins and other boys playing, singing, reading and writing in the nearby school.

She often saw them playing from a distance whenever she came back from working in the fields. She had never seen any girl in the school. Although she was curious why only boys go to school, her work kept her too busy to think more about it.

From dawn to dusk, she worked. When she was not working in the fields, she was collecting water, gathering fodder for the cattle, feeding the cattle, or carrying water from the nearby stream.

She had less time to play with her brothers and other boys. Even if she had time, her parents would then engage her in other household work, such as assisting in preparing food, cleaning the floor or the washing utensils.

Sani was always curious to know what they learnt in school and whenever she found some free time, she would ask her brothers to share their learning with her.



Sani is thrilled when she sees the moon she calls, 'Lhani'. The starlight friends in the night sky also make her smile. She especially likes the moon which appears to her to be both cool and bright.

She often looks out and talks to Lhani at night.

Sani often talks to her, "Dear Lhani, I look forward to seeing your bright face every night. But when you disappear hidden by clouds, my heart feels dark as well. Have I told you that you are my only friend? Oh, how I wish to meet you someday!"

She thinks Lhani and her starry friends almost look like her grandma's shiny dress. She is equally attracted to both.



Sani imagines she would meet Lhani by climbing up a tall tree. Maybe a Pine tree or a Deodar tree. She thinks of scaling the trees all the way to the top. Maybe dear Lhani would be much closer then.





She would climb the tall hill around her village to meet Lhani. But no matter how high she went, Lhani always seemed just as far as before.

Now, she begins to imagine how she would climb Himalayan mountains even Mount Everest in her attempts to meet Lhani.

Sani sings Lhani a song for two weeks, calling Lhani to appear to her. She wishes to offer her grandma's attire as portrayed in the song.

Lhani yu-yu

momki goila pinla

(Come, come Lhani

have grandma's attire)

Finally, Sani's song is heard. One night, Lhani comes to her.

Sani steps onto Lhani and sits in her lap where she is overjoyed as they fly through the sky.

Sani and Lhani set out for a world tour for two weeks from the new moon to the full moon! In Lhani, she saw a wise and cool guardian, so she asked a number of questions while travelling around the world.



SANI

What is the purpose of schools?

LHANI

A school is a place where children go to learn languages, arts, dance and music. They learn about their surroundings and the world. Just as the moon brightens the night sky, schools brighten up children's understanding of the world.

If you look down to earth, you will see many bright spots all over the world. These are all schools to educate children.

Education is one of the fundamental rights of children. So I see more schools popping up everywhere nowadays.

SANI

I wonder why girls are not allowed to go to school? Are schools only for boys?

LHANI

It makes me sad that girls are excluded from going to school in some places on earth. If it were up to me, I would change this immediately so that all children were able to go to school.

Girls and boys are like two wings of a bird. Unless both the wings develop equally, the bird cannot fly right! Girls and boys deserve the equal opportunities to study, learn and develop their capabilities. Education is the key to unlock those wonderful abilities that are within each child.

You know Sani, just like I shine my light on the world at night, education has the power that can illuminate the whole world. Every child deserves to shine his/her light fully.

Sani and Lhani now zoom in a school situated in the lap of Ganesh Himal in Nepal. Sani sees students with books, coloring pens, papers, scissors, and pencils.

SANI

What are they studying?

LHANI

They are studying how to read well, write clearly, draw and make crafts. They also study the importance of relationships among families and communities. They enjoy studying mathematics, science, computer and social science. They also have learning projects related to plants and animal life.



SANI

Why is education important for children?

LHANI

Education is important for children because it will give them new ideas. It helps them to use their senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. It develops their thinking, reinforces their thoughts, and strengthens their character. It teaches them to love their neighbors, care for surroundings, animals, plants and care for themselves. It develops a society in which children are aware of their responsibilities.

All in all, education is the process of acquiring knowledge that will lead them to a better life.



SANI

Wow! I can see the whole Earth.

LHANI

Indeed, education gives us wings to rise and eyes to see the world better. Education should be universal like my light. Education is for every child of the world wherever they live.

I will share this message to all the parents of my village. I am sure they will understand the importance of education for girls as well. And they will send their daughters in school. This will be the happiest day for me. I am already dreaming about being in school with my friends, Saraswati, Hera, Luna, and Diana.





Sani and Lhani are traveling all around the world. They travel above oceans, islands, mountains, valleys, cities, villages and meadows where Sani sees the order in nature as a source of knowledge. Sani is deeply grateful for this world tour.

As they parted, Sani and Lhani promised to meet every month. Since then, they meet regularly. If you closely observe the full moon, you can even see Sani lying peacefully in Lhani's lap.

The homophones of word Lhani (Moon) in
some languages

Corsican	Luna
Esperanto	Luno
French	Lune
Haitian Creole	Lalin
Italian	Luna
Latin	Luna
Portuguese	Lua
Romanian	Luna
Slovenian	Luna
Spanish	Luna
Tamang (Nepal dialect)	Lhani