

## “I become an independent Lady”



My name is Zin Mar Wai. I am a 35-year-old, a single woman from Asikalay village, Pyapon Township, Ayeyarwaddy Delta. I live with my five siblings and am the youngest. My family owns a small farm land and our family's major income is from farming. But it never covers for the whole family's expense.

After cyclone Nargis hit in 2008, many Organizations came to the village and I started learning about Development works. But I did not participate in any activities because I struggled in my day by day living condition.

On 8th of March 2012, The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) supported the community in my village to celebrate the International Women Day. On that day, the LWF staff encouraged the women in the village to form a women group for saving

and loan activity. I was interested in it and decided to become a group member. At the beginning, the group members saved sixty cents (in USD) once a month at the Group meeting. The group members can borrow money from the group's fund at two percent interest rate. The rate is very cheap compared to the 10 to 12 percent rates we used to borrow from the money lenders. After a few months, I was able to buy a piglet with this group's fund.

In 2013, the group members nominated me to attend the 5-day Snack Making Training, organized by LWF. I went to Ohn Pin village, Dedaye Township to learn how to make Myanmar traditional snacks at the training. It was a good experience for me to travel to the new place and gain more knowledge.

After the training, I started sell-

ing the snacks in the village. People enjoy crisp-fried snack, beans snack and jelly I made and I earn extra income from this business.

Moreover, I trained the other five women group members to start the snack selling business. Some villagers from neighboring villages also came and asked me to train them as well. Now, I receive more orders for social and religious events from neighboring villages. My business is growing and I am now able to rebuild my old flimsy grocery shop. I have planned to expand my business with more items. I feel like my life becomes more and more meaningful with this extra support and I do not need to be worried for my day to day living. This is a benefit of being a part of the women group. ■

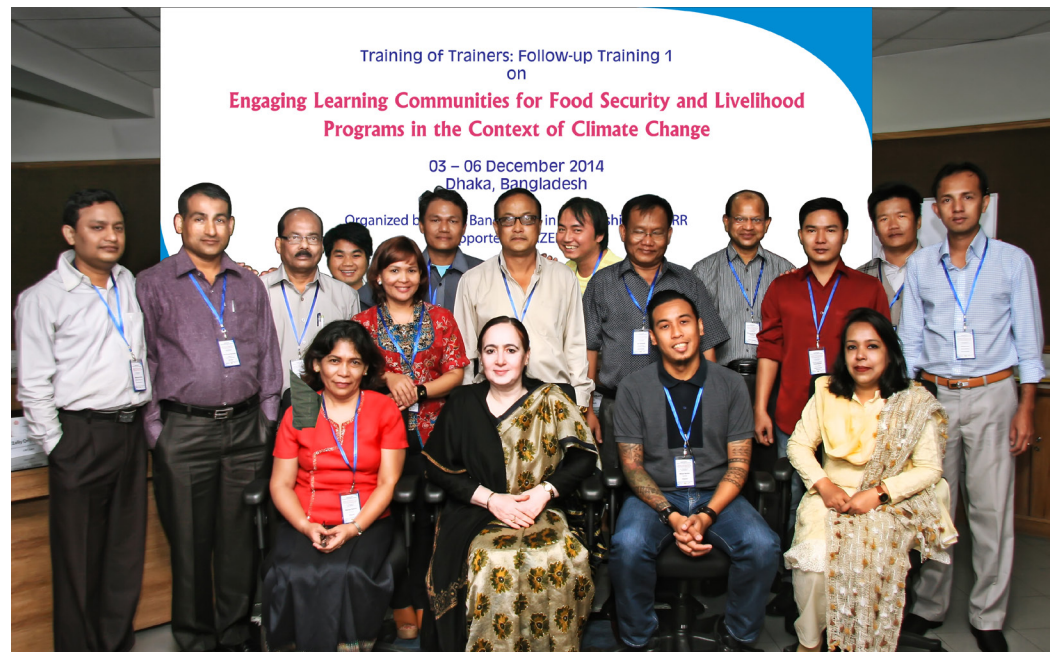
*Interviewer- U Wai Zin (Community Empowerment Facilitator, LWF Myanmar)  
English Translation - Thu Thu San (Assistant Communications Officer)*

# ToT on Community-managed Climate Change Actions concludes

Sabrina Sharmin, RDRS Bangladesh/08 December 2014: A four-day training course on Community-Managed Climate Change Actions held in Dhaka concluded on 6 December 2014. RDRS Bangladesh hosted the event as part of a collaborative initiative of the AZEECON and IIRR. A total of 13 participants from AZEECON member countries Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar and Nepal took part in the training course.

AZEECON (Asian Zone Environment and Emergency Cooperation) and IIRR (International Institute of Rural Reconstruction) have taken a collaborative initiative to conduct Training of Trainers for the members of AZEECON. The purpose of the training is to build and strengthen the capacities of their staff towards more community-level climate change work. As per plan, the training course will be conducted in three phases. Each phase is designed as one main course along with a follow-up.

The main course of the first phase (Course 1) ‘Facilitating Food Security and Livelihood Programs in the Context of Climate Change’ was conducted in June 2014 in Cambodia. In order to enhance further participants’ learning, IIRR conducted a



four-day follow-up capacity enhancement training in Dhaka during 3-6 December 2014. The main objective of the follow-up training was to enhance the knowledge and skills of the participants in engaging and mobilizing communities towards designing and implementing adaptation programs for food security and livelihoods. Ms Marissa B. Espineli, Director of the Regional Center for Asia of IIRR; and Mr Wilson John D. Barbon, Program Specialist for Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation of IIRR facilitated the training event.

The follow-up training was mainly focused on sharing and learning from the experience of the participants in applying the knowledge gained from the Cambodia course (Course 1). Additional five new

topics have also been discussed to complement the topics discussed in Course 1. Alongside the classroom discussion, RDRS organized a field visit to Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI). Following contents were discussed and exercised in the training session:

- Key Concepts on Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
  - Designing Community Level Training Effectively
  - Selecting Training Methodologies
- End of the training, the participants came up with



- Principles of Community organizing and Mobilization for Community Adaptation
- Facilitating Group Process at the Community Level: Input and Exer-

a 6-months action plan on their own organizational perspective. The second phase of the training course is scheduled to be conducted in June 2015 in India. ■



# 10 Years after Nias Earthquake, Yusnia Harefa become a member of community resilience unit

By Nisa Rachmatika, Communications Coordinator, CDRM&CDS

In March 2005, the earthquake with a moment magnitude of about 8.6 rocked Nias Islands, and killed approximately 1,300 people. This was the second highest earthquake in the world since 1964. Yusnia Harefa (36) was one of the survivors from that deadly earthquake.

Yusnia told when the earthquakes happen, she and her five children were asleep. Luckily, her wooden house protected them from the ruins. After the shock subsides, they immediately ran to the higher place because they worried if the sea would rise. In the meantime, Yusnia took time to pray and calming her children who was crying. She tried not to show her children the dead bodies which were buried by the ruins.

This disaster affected their lives afterward. The children could not go to school because the buildings have been damaged. In the evacuee camp, the food only provided for the children, while the adults only ate bananas and coconuts. A lot of livestock land has been cracked, and there was no more water. The typhoon also destroyed the granary, made crops vanished.

### Tried to Revive After the Earthquake

Two years later, small earthquakes still frequent. Economic life began to decline, due to lack of agricultural products. Moreover, Yusnia's husband was passed away, made her feel despondent and beaten. "At that time I was very scared. How can I feed and sent my little children to school? This fear even bigger than my fear of earthquakes that might happen again," she told.

Her children, is her main motivation to revive. She decided not to give up, and started actively involved at village organization. She also became the member of Community Resilience Unit (Satlinmas), a community organization focused on disaster preparedness which initiated by CDRM&CDS. At present, Satlinmas in her village conducted tree planting and water & sanitation program. By involving in organization, she learnt to gain better agricultural product. Now, beside rice planting, she also did pig raising and plant banana tree.

"For a widow woman like me, what I have done was unusual in my village. Nonetheless, by involving in the organization, now I dare to speak and socialize," she told happily.

Tetehosi I village, the village Yusnia stayed, is one of the CDRM&CDS work areas. After the tsunami, CDRM&CDS conducted several trainings and pro-



grams related to disaster alertness and livelihood in this village. "The training which given by CDRM&CDS really useful for us, because Tetehosi village is prone to disasters such as floods, landslides, and tsunami. Now our understanding of disaster risk reduction has

been increased."

Yusnia explained the knowledge that she had from the trainings. For example, when earthquake happens, she told to avoid the trees, power cable, and power pole; and go to the highest place. Moreover, to anticipate the rising seas,

she already provided jerry cans which tied in front of her house. However, Yusnia admitted that the early warning system in her village still limited. "But every family already had slit drum in their own houses, which will be emitted when disaster happen," she told.

Besides training for the villagers, CDRM&CDS also facilitated disaster preparedness training for elementary school children. Yusnia sang a song about earthquake which often taught to the kids: "If there is an earthquake, protect your head. If there is an earthquake, hide under the table. If there is an earthquake, stay away from the glass. If there is an earthquake, run to the esplanade."

"The most important thing, do not panic when disaster occurs," she said.



## LWD distributes \$150,000 in donations to flood affected families in Battambang



Ms. Sin Savannary, LWD Program Assistant hands the donation in cash to a flood-affected family.

Photo: LWD © Leak Ratna

**Battambang, Cambodia (June 2014)** – Life With Dignity (LWD) distributed today recovery aid to 2,470 families, all of which were the poor families seriously affected by flood last year, from 47 villages of 6 communes in three districts of Bavel, Kamrieng and Phnom Pruek in Battambang province, northern Cambodia. Each family received a donation of \$60 in cash.

The humanitarian aid for the affected people was donated by ECHO channeled through Dan Church Aid/Christian Aid (DCA/CA) and administered by LWD. It aimed to reduce vulnerability and improve livelihoods for poor and vulnerable flood affected households in Cambodia.

Speaking at the distribution ceremony at Ou Daunpov pagoda in Khleang Meas commune,

Mr. Tim Dareth, Bavel District Governor, expressed his deepest thanks to ECHO, DAC/CA and LWD for their generous donations to families affected by severe flash flood late last year to recover their household economy.

Mr. Dareth said the flooding last year left a great damage to the paddy rice and other main properties of the local farmers. Experienced from that, he advised the local communities to be prepared to cope with the disaster in the future by carefully listen to the weather forecast update disseminated by the local authority.

Ms. Sin Savannary, Program Assistant for LWD, highly appreciated the support from ECHO and DCA/CA and deeply thanked the local authorities at all levels for their good cooperation and strong support to

LWD’s working group to implement their tasks successfully.

Ms. Phun Sieb, one of the flood affected families from Kampong Makak village of Khleang Meas commune in Bavel district, expressed her gratitude over the support she received. The flood water inundated her house and farm as high as one meter deep last October and destroyed all her vegetables, bananas, papayas and some other fruit trees, which were the major source of income for her family of four.

She said that she would spend some of the donated money to buy 40 kg of milled rice to eat, while the rest would be used to buy string bean and lettuce seeds to grow, and have her land ploughed.

According the aid criteria, the selected beneficiaries are those who hold ID Poor Cards Group 1 and 2.

## About AZEECON

AZEECON is an informal, member-led regional network of field programs and Associate Programs of Lutheran World Federation/Dept of World Service active in promoting disaster risk reduction in seven countries.

AZEECON's primary role is primarily capacity-building - facilitating practical, peer-to-peer learning in the broad field of LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation & Development) responding to mem-

bers' needs and priorities. AZEECON offers a convenient and cost-effective platform for member organisations and staff to gain knowledge, exchange ideas and interact regionally.

Over the past 5 years, over 500 staff have participated in the range of capacity-building activities conducted in topics such as Trafficking, Food Security, Climate Change, HAP, SPHERE Standards, Youth, Advocacy, RBA etc.

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