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Turning unclean well water into potable water with simple filtering system



Rulni Sakarebau has applied her knowledge and skills to filter water

CDRM&CDS Indonesia

By Reigen Sidarius Sakoikoi

Rulni Sakarebau (36), a housewife with 5 children, recounted the knowledge and skills she has gained from the training on water filtering that CDRM&CDS facilitated in her village. "In May 2015, I attended training on simple water filtering in my village, Betumonga, Mentawai Islands, Indonesia. Before, we used to have rain water for drinking, and we had to fetch the water from distant springs to meet our other needs for bathing and washing. Actually I have a well at my house, but the water is muddy and smelly.

In this training, I witnessed how the muddy water became clear and I thought the water is potable. The fil-



tering technique is not that difficult, and we could find filtering materials such as sands, gravels, stones, and charcoal easily for free. We just need to buy bucket and plastic pipeline.

We all have applied this filtering technique in our village and homes.

We have solved our problem for clean water in our village and we do not need to go far away to fetch water anymore. The training on water filtering has been very helpful and useful for us in Mentawai Islands, Indonesia. ■

LWSIT put efforts to bring transgender persons into mainstream development

LWSIT India

The term Transgender describes as individuals those are neither recognized as male or female by the society. They are considered as others. Because of social discrimination and non-recognition, they are being socially excluded and deprived from many benefits. Consequently, they also prefer to remain isolated from their family and relatives. Rather, they like to mingle and live with other transgender persons at the vicinity to share their feelings and live separately among themselves. In general, society also does not have enough confidence upon Transgender persons; neither engage them in any labour intensive works nor provide any gainful employment to sustain their livelihood. Consequently, the Transgender persons prefer some safe way to keep themselves away from their native place, roaming around and begging in trains to earn some income to maintain themselves and to meet their daily necessities. Besides, because of their biological factor, they prefer to use women dresses and costumes, involve in sex activities which led to health hazards including infected with HIV.

Ever since April 15



Joint group meeting among TG members is in progress



Members performing Odishi Dance at a cultural program

2014, the Supreme Court of India (the apex court) recognized the Transgender as Third gender and stated that, it is not a social or medical issue but a human rights issue. However, asserting the rights and entitlements by these Transgender still remains as a big challenge.

In view of such circumstances, LWSIT put its best efforts to mobilize these Transgender persons those living in unauthorized slums in urban slums, through one of the Gender Empowerment Project (GEP) in Cuttack city, Odisha. Two Self Help Groups have been

formed with 33 members (1. Bahuchura Mata TG Group – 16 members and 2. Maa Mangala TG Group – 17 members) and provided them awareness on prevention of HIV and AIDS, health education and sanitation, etc. Besides, LWSIT facilitated to open the bank accounts for both the groups, by which they have deposited Rs 95,720/- and Rs 26,463/- in banks. Besides, groups have given total loan of Rs 14,900/- which was used for multipurpose benefits. Both the groups collectively donated Rs 10,000/- towards Chief Minister's

Relief Fund with earmark to support the earthquake victims in Nepal.

With support and encouragement received from LWSIT, there are nine members of these Transgender groups are engaged in dance programs and have attended several cultural functions as per request from various institutions including Govt. There are three members from the groups are acting as teachers in one of dance academy called 'Matru Sakti Dance Academy' in Cuttack city. LWSIT provided material assistance to three persons to initiate livelihood program. In order to mitigate the problem of sanitation, LWSIT extended support to construct toilets for their use. A member of the group also attended and international conference on prevention of and protection from HIV and AIDS held in Thailand which was supported by ELCA. Five members have participated in National Competition cum Festival of Dance, Drama & Music at 7th Satasahi Katak Nrutyotsav, – 2016 and LWSIT received "National Nrutya Ratna Award – 2016". Members of the TG community actively participated in the 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' by cleaning the railway station platforms of Cuttack. ■

Chhaupadi-free society in Dailekh: Women break barriers



LWF Nepal

Women of Dailekh district used to stay in Chhaugoth (an isolated shed away from their house) during their period. But with increased awareness, women are breaking the tradition.

Devisara Majhi of Rakam Karnali VDC in Dailekh was upset when she had her first period as she had to live in a Chhau for many days. “We feel cold during the period and the Chhu-ikulla (the shed prepared for living during Chhau) was even colder. As we need to have separate bed (pieces of worn clothes in fact) for sleeping, these are not sufficient to cover our needs,” she said. Women were also not allowed to take nutritious food like milk and yoghurt during their period. Tulasi Majhi believed that to go under the monthly cycle was due to the sins committed in the past. “I have to stay in a Chhaugoth during period and I could not sleep the whole night due to fear,” she said.

This malpractice was prevalent in many villages of mid- and far west-

ern regions of Nepal and still being practiced in some areas. Girls were not allowed to see the face of others for seven days during their first menstruation. They had to live in Chhaugoth. Many women have been attacked by wild animals and sometimes even raped while staying in Chhaugoth but they could not speak about such issues due to the fear of the society.

LWF Nepal started Resilient Livelihood and Sustainable Food Security Program in the district in partnership with Social Service Center and the project ran Transformative Classes for the women of Rakam Karnali VDC. The main objective of the classes was to make women literate and to empower them. During such classes, they discussed Chhaupadi. These women, who believed to be ‘impure’ during the period, came to know that this was the natural process. This knowledge helped them to work for abolishing such malpractice. Chairperson of local Kalika Women’s Group Nandakali Majhi says, “After

attending the class, we came to know that menstruation is a natural process and we started our campaign for eradicating this malpractice in consultation with all women.”

They started their struggle for eradicating Chhaupadi from their houses and then went out to the village. The women have also begun dismantling the sheds (Chhaugoth) they used to live in during their period. The women were compelled to form a retaliatory group after they faced obstacle in some areas. As a result, they have been able to declare Rakam Karnali village as ‘Chhaupadi-free VDC’ in December 2014. Majhi said that the campaign was successful as it was started from individual homes.

Amar Shahi, Secretary of Rakam Karnali VDC, says that the campaign became successful after women dismantled 22 Chhaugoth of the village. It has brought a huge change in the life of the rural women. He said that the change is incomparable. Girls and women no longer stay in Chhaugoth during their period.

Changes after three years with LWF Myanmar



Daw Khin Mar Kyu and her husband picking betel leaf in the farm



Daw Khin Mar Kyu preparing food to cook for diner

LWF Myanmar

“My name is Daw Khin Mar Kyuu, my husband is U Kyaw Shwe. I have 6 children. Among them, four children had gone to other area for job opportunities. We are living at Tuu Myaung village, Daydayae Township, Delta area.”

“Our family faced many difficulties before. My husband had planted seasonal crops and I sold the product to send my daughters to school. After my daughter passed grade (5), she dropped out of the school and helped me. At that time, my youngest daughter was going to grade (8). As our income is not good enough for our daily food and supporting for education, we were in debt all the time. My husband’s hobby is planting crops, also it is only he can do.” Says Daw Khin Mar Kyuu.

She continued, “When Nargis Cyclone strike in 2008, we lost all our prosperities, crops, house and animals. We have to struggle a lot for food and our younger daughter’s further education. She go to grade (9). My eldest son also support as much as he can. This time, an accountant of a member of Village Youth Group from Tuu Myaung village was nominated my daughter as a member. My daughter

attended much training and shared her experiences and knowledge to the family. In 2012, I was involved in the Women Empowerment Group that was initiated by LWF Myanmar even I was not interesting. It is because of the encouragement of the members. Good news is that my daughter passed matriculation class in this year. But, I was in debt because of supporting to my daughter for education. At first, I start save money 1000 MMK in the group.”

She continues sharing, “As soon as I was a member, I lent money for 50,000 MMK. I can settle my debt and start run small business. As the interest rate is very less and settled after two months. Now, our Women Empowerment Group has 10 lakhs in hand. LWF also provided capital fund. So, our group can now able to lent money to the member for running small business.”

Daw Mar Kyuu continues share how she lent money and use it, “I lent 300,000 MMK again with the agreement of settling within 7 months. I discussed with my husband and agreed to buy rice to store. As my son also support as much as he can, all our debts are about to re-settled. When the 7 months is due, we sold rice from store. All the debts are

settled and profited for more than 100,000 MMK. With the profit, I could support to my daughter for studying at University. Then, I lent 300,000 MMK again and invest the money for my husband’s betel leaf plantation.”

“Actually, I had participated to Women Empowerment Group without interesting, but it changed our family life because of saving and loan program. Whenever there is the training, I also joined for general knowledge. Soon, my daughter got a job, my son also keep supporting for our family requirements. Fortunately, betel leaf market is in good time so that we can spent more money for food. Salary of my daughter is also saving for building our house. Our life starts changing from the day I joined at Women Empowerment Group.”

She concluded sharing her experience as, “Now we can support for the community development, our new house built completely unexpectedly and betel leaf plantation also getting developed very well. It is because of participating at Women Empowerment Group, I won’t leave the group. I will contribute as much as I can to be sustained the group. Thank you LWF Myanmar.” ■

Worms keep hunger at bay



RDRS Bangladesh

Until recently, Komola Begum and her family of five lived from hands to mouth as her husband, Md. Aynal, is a landless farm laborer. Even though Komola worked as a servant in a rich villager's house during the 3-month lean season, when there is no work in the fields, they still went to bed hungry. But life has improved since Komola joined a Community Climate Adaptation Group (CCAG) in 2013. Opting for vermi-compost training

and provided with 1,050 earthworms and 30kgs of cow dung with a ring slab, sieve and net, she established her compost heap in October, 2014. Komola and her three children added to the pit from the kitchen waste, leaves and other vegetable matter collected around the village. From her first effort, she made 28kgs of compost that she put to good use on her kitchen garden and a leased field. The harvests exceeded Komola and Aynal's expectations. Realizing the technology's

potential, Komola invested in more rings and cow dung to expand her production. The result in 2015 was over 300kg of vermi-compost much of which was ploughed back into the land. But this time she earned 9,000Tk from selling vegetables and another 2,250Tk from the sale of worms to her neighbors who want to copy Komola's success. Through the simple act of bringing worms into her garden, Komola's family need not starve again during the lean season.

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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