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## Poshir Uddin wins adverse climate in rice cultivation



### RDRS Bangladesh

Poshir Uddin lives in Aam-kathal village in Panchagarh district. By profession a farmer, Poshir Uddin mainly cultivates rice in his 25 decimal lands. He, and all other farmers of the area had been cultivating a long duration traditional variety of rice called 'Swarna'. But drought and erratic rain become a regular calamity since past few years. The adverse climate affected rice cultivation very badly. Spring harvesting also became difficult for the farmers as Swarna variety is a long duration crop. Consequently, they had to face huge loss. Poshir Uddin was unable to meet the needs of his 4-member family.

Poshir was a group member

of Hafijabad Union Federation facilitated by RDRS Bangladesh. RDRS has been pioneering drought tolerant rice variety BIRRI dhan56 in drought pruned areas since 2013. The objective of introducing the new technology is to increase food production and crop diversification. Poshir came to know about the drought tolerant variety. In 2016, RDRS distributed 300 kg seed of BIRRI dhan56 to the farmers in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh districts. Poshir also received 5kg seeds. He cultivated the seeds with the assistance of RDRS staff.

At the milking stage his new experiment BIRRI dhan56 field faced shortage of rainfall for 15 days.

But his yield was not affected. After 107 days he harvested crop and get 490 kg rice from his 25 decimal (4.8 ton/ hac). In traditional variety he would obtain 3.0 ton/ ha yield. The result was outstanding. Since the new variety rice is a short-duration crop, he was able to cultivate spring crops as well. It added more benefit. Being encouraged by Poshir Uddin's success, other farmers have also decided to cultivate the drought tolerant variety in next season.

Poshir Uddin is now a model farmer of Aam-kathal village. He expressed sincere thanks to RDRS for initiating such new technology which has ensured food security for his family. ■



# Bibi Maya promotes green vegetables



Bibi Maya and her husband work on vegetable farm.

## LWF Nepal

Bibi Maya Tamang, 35, a resident of Bhaise, Bhattedanda village development committee of Lalitpur district, was a mere housewife having 4 family members including two children.

They used to live a miserable life as the major portion of their earning used to borrow money for their livelihood and other household expenses from a local money lender on 24 percent interest rate.

Before she joined a local cooperative, she had subsistence farming. Her situation changed

after joining a women-run cooperative and doing vegetable and livestock farming. Not only Bibi Maya, but her neighbors also used to cultivate the staple crops only.

First she borrowed NRs 10,000 (€ 90) from the cooperative to cultivate seasonal vegetables such as garlic, cauliflower, cucumber, mustard, etc. in 1 Ropani (495 square meters) of land. The harvests were good. Later, she borrowed NRs 50,000 (€ 454) to raise a water buffalo. Now, she has 3 buffaloes. She earns NRs 100,000 (€

909) from vegetables and NRs 50,000 (€454) by selling milk annually.

Encouraged by the successful vegetable and buffalo farming, she bought two more Ropanis (990 square meters) of land for farming. The cooperative played a catalytic role in increasing women's access to and control over land and capital.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal provided her technical backstopping. Now she cultivates vegetables twice a year whereas she used to produce maize, barley, etc. only once a

year.

Besides improving their living condition from vegetable and buffalo farming, Bibi Maya and her husband provide inputs and technical suggestions to other group members as experienced lead farmers.

Their major contribution goes to preserving greenery, providing green and fresh vegetables to the family and nearby community, thereby inspiring the villagers to grow green vegetables. Her husband, who is a person with disability, helps her whenever he can.

# Together we can make the difference



## LWSIT

Chakraipur is a Schedule Tribe community under Bharkata Gram Panchayat consisting of 84 landless families whose are mostly agricultural laborers and crusher workers. Some of the families are involved in traditional bamboo crafts business called Mahuli. Socially and economically the community was very back warded and literacy status was poor. They cultivated the lands in the rainy season only as share croppers due to low irrigation facilities and drought-like situation. Due to erratic rainfall they do not get adequate production every year and they have no alternative livelihood option also. This area is situated near the stone mines.

In the year 2010, after the intervention of LWSIT in the community, 24 women formed two SHGs named Surajmukhi Mahila Swanirvar Dal and Surajmukhi Swanirvar Dal. Gradually they started to get involved in the development process by taking initiatives for their betterment. They have gained knowledge on different developmental aspects by taking part in the different trainings, awareness programs and also are aware about various government rules, regulations and government sponsored facilities under the guidance of LWSIT.

In the latter part of the year in 2015, some land mafias came to the community seeking to encroach on land for stone mines and crushers and they started interacting separately with the land owners for purchasing the lands at minimum rates illegally. The group members got this information from a reliable source. After that they went to talk

to the land owners and requested them not to sell the lands. But land owners did not agree. At that time, the people of the community faced a very critical situation by losing the land from which they manage their food requirements for a minimum of half the year.

Apart from this, if the land mafias open any stone mines or crushers on those lands then the total atmosphere of the area will be in dangerous and polluted with dust which will cause different diseases. No tree will be alive, no cultivation will be done, and no grazing field will be there for their cattle. They have already got awareness about the demerits and harmful effects of the stone mines and crushers from several awareness and training programs and so they were afraid.

In order to find a solution the community conducted a meeting under the leadership of the different groups. One of the group leaders Ms. Chabi Soren took the main responsibility to organize the people of the community to resolve the problems by organizing a series of meetings. She was able to convince all the people of the community to unite against the initiation of illegal mines and crushers on those lands. They have started agitation and proclaimed that they will protect the land at any cost. After that they have enclosed the disputed land with red tapes and flags according to their own customs as a caution to the land mafias.

After that they have informed the local Police station and block authorities and got suggestion from them to submit written requests to the District Mining Officer, Dis-



trict Land Revenue Officer, Project Officer cum District Backward Class Welfare Officer to stop the initiative of opening stone mines illegally. They have completed all the procedures through their own efforts. District level government officials took immediate action by enforcing injunction to stop initiation of the illegal mine on those lands.

Though till date the land mafias have stopped their initiative to open illegal mine, they are still trying secretly to influence some powerful persons of the community with lots of money to advocate for them in the future and also ensure that the agitation will be weak. The group members are now facing a very difficult situation as to how long will they be able to protect the lands from the hands of land mafias but now they have succeeded.



## 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.

## Country Members



ASIAN ZONE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENT COOPERATION NETWORK



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