

Voices from the Field

Nepal Earthquake Response Project 2015/16



About the Project

ENPHO with support of Oxfam has implemented **Nepal Earthquake Response (NER-2015/16)** project in Mahalaxmi Municipality (Imadol, Tikathali, Siddhipur, Lubhu, Lamatar) and Nagarkot Municipality (Nagarkot, Tathali, Bagheswori, Sudal) immediately after the mega earthquake of 25 April 2015. Project contributed to the emergency response and recovery activities on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions by providing safe water, sanitation facilities, hygiene kits and awareness amongst the marginalized and vulnerable communities of the earthquake-affected areas. Furthermore, it has also focused on disseminating the knowledge to reconstruct earthquake resilient structures and enhancing emergency preparedness and response capacity to the earthquake victims in two earthquake affected municipalities and 32 wards in Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts.

This publication includes some of the voices from the people of Mahalaxmi Municipality and Nagarkot Municipality sharing their stories describing how they have received support through NER- 2015/16 project.

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Menstrual hygiene management for transformed lives



Setting the wheels towards water management



Safe Water: Dropping the dropout rate



Setting the wheels towards water management

“Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities have made transformations in our school. Rainwater harvesting has contributed in resolving water problems. The support has made the school environment safe and healthy,”remarks Ms. Bishnu Bhandari.



Photo: Lasata Manandhar/ENPHO

Ms. Bhandari, 45, is principal of Shree Gyanjyoti Lower Secondary School located in Dandathok, Lamatar-4, Mahalaxmi Municipality of Lalitpur district. The school has had to face acute water problems with two hours of access to supplied tap water in a day. The school also has been coping with sharing the tap water with local community. Available water was not sufficient and students did not have adequate amount of safe drinking water in school. Consequently, the school became unaesthetic with poor environment.

Now school has installed rainwater harvesting system with 1000 liters of storage tanks, 10 liter water filter and built two hand-washing stations. A separate tap to provide water to the local people has also constructed.

The collected rainwater is used for handwashing and toilet flushing which is sufficient for 40 students. ***This water management practice adopted by school stands as one of the best examples to the local people who are trying to make a clean and healthy community. Various awareness activities on WASH have changed the behavior of students towards safe and healthy hygiene practices.***

Freedom for hygienic behavior

Ms. Ranjita Tamang, 20, lives in Gairigaun-2, Mahalaxmi municipality of Lalitpur district. Along with many other girls of her age has no separate bathing space at their houses. “We have to cover ourselves with clothes to bath and be quick as possible. We feel awkward when a person stares at us while bathing. There is no other way to feel safe and comfortable to have bath”, Ranjita said.



Photo: Lasata Manandhar/ENPHO

After the construction of bathroom, our embarrassment and difficulties are gone. We are not afraid of getting exposed during bath, says Ranjita. Now, she is pleased to see two bathing rooms near their home and delighted to see change in her daily lifestyles.

“It is virtually very difficult for the adult girls especially in menstruating days to bath at open spaces. Bathrooms would not have been in our priority list, but constructing the one has provided us the protective environment.” Ranjita said.

Menstrual hygiene management for transformed lives

Dhungeni, ward 2 of Mahalaxmi Municipality of Lalitpur district is a dalit community. The area lacks access to improved sanitation and proper hygiene behaviors. Poverty and illiteracy are also the major problems of that community. Ms. Shanta Pariyar- 28, an active community mobilizer says “Open defecation and unsanitary behaviors are rampant in our community. I had been trying to change the situation for a long time. But I haven’t been able to improve the existing situation even with others support.”



Photo: ENPHO

Menstruation still remains a taboo and menstruating women are considered as dirty in that community. “One of the girls in the community took pain killers during her menstruation, which later resulted in health complications,” remarks Ms. Pariyar.

Now she is aware on the importance of proper sanitation and hygiene behavior, she is more determined to change her community. She actively sought to aware the need of proper menstrual hygiene management (MHM) within her community. The local residents after getting aware of the importance and need, they are committed to change themselves.

The local residents have changed their previous unsanitary behaviors and notable differences can be observed in the communities. Women and girls have started practicing better approaches during their mensuration. Now they are requesting training on making alternative sanitary napkins. This has made her proud and satisfied and she has become the exemplary face regarding MHM issues in her community.

“People used to cover up their noses while going around the community. But now, I am delighted for my community on change and achieving proper MHM along with proper sanitation and hygiene,” Ms. Shanta said.

Safe Water: Dropping the dropout rate

Mr. Milan Kayastha is Principal, Saraswati Secondary School situated at Sudal-7, Nagarkot municipality of Bhaktapur district. “We had no access to safe water. There was only one tap to supply water to the entire school. We collected water and consumed directly without treatment”,recalls Mr. Kayastha. Many school related issues were directly linked to water scarcity. Students had to carry water from home as the water at school was not sufficient. This condition further gets worsen during the dry season as most of the water sources in the community dries up significantly. This unavailability of water also lead to dropout of students. These students had to collect water rather than getting education.



Photo: TejKiran Joshi/ENPHO

Now school has 8000 liter of water storage RCC tank (Reinforced Cement Concrete Tank) with 500 liter capacity Bio-sand filter for treatment of water. This has helped to solve the issue of water scarcity in school. ***“Now, students do not need to bring drinking water from home and they can concentrate on studies”,Mr. Milan shared. Improved behavior of hand-washing has been also observed amongst students and staff as hand-washing stations have been built in school. This support has helped to reduce the dropout rates of students.***