

Voice of the Voiceless



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KIRDARC celebrates Menstrual Hygiene Day

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is a problem for adolescent girls and women in developing countries like Nepal. Poor water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools, inadequate education and lack of menstrual hygiene management items causes girls to experience menstruation as shameful and uncomfortable. Because of fear and humiliation from leakage of blood and body odor, most of the menstruating girls do not attend school during the period (53% in Nepal, according to Nepal Fertility Care Centre). The frequent absence from the school implies an average annual absence of at least six weeks from school directly affecting girl's academic progress. Besides this, menstrual waste is largely ignored in school. Often, school toilets for girls are missing bins for menstrual waste collection and causes pollution in the school environment. Likewise, because of cultural taboos, girls and women are facing difficulties, preventing them from seeking support and help and impose restriction on their diet and activities when menstruating. They are compelled to stay in a room which is far from the house, not allowed to touch any person and water taps and not allowed to go the temple. These are violation of the women rights, equality, non-discrimination and

right to dignity. These are the issues which are deeply persisting in our communities. Thus in recent year, international concern for MHM, has focused on the need for dignity and privacy, on raising awareness to break the silence and stigma, making safe and effective MHM absorbents accessible, and improving the school environment.



School girls preparing sanitary pad at Jumla

Thus to break cultural taboos and raise awareness on importance of good menstrual hygiene management for adolescent girls and women, each year on May 28, Menstrual Hygiene day is celebrated by global community.

This year theme is “Menstruation Matters: Everyone Everywhere”. In Nepal, the slogan is contextualized as “Men in Menstruation”.

KIRDARC Nepal in coordination with government agencies and I/NGOs, third international MHM day was celebrated in **Jumla** district by organizing different activities at district and VDC level. The main objective of MHM day celebration was to serve as a platform to bring together individuals, organizations, and media to create a unity and raise strong voice for the adolescent girls and women to break the silence and stigma. Different kinds of activities were organized to celebrate the day. Training on sanitary pad production to the adolescent girls of the schools was organized on May 27, in four cluster (Bijayanagar, Dillichaur, Kudari and Narakot). Total 87 school girls, 11 female teachers and 3 male teachers from 12 schools of 1 Municipality (Chandanath) and 9 VDCs were oriented on menstrual hygiene management and sanitary pad production. Similarly radio program was organised on May 28, between WSSDO, DEO, WCO and DHO with the objective to outreach greater beneficiaries. Interaction was mainly focused on menstrual hygiene problems cultural taboos and steps from government agencies to break these superstitious belief and cultural taboos both at community level and schools. Also issues regarding menstrual problems at schools

were discussed. There was active participation of school girls, female teachers in all clusters: and all the stakeholders were enriched in-depth knowledge of menstruation.

MHM Day celebration at Kavre district

KIRDARC Nepal with financial support from Water Aid Nepal celebrated the MHM day in collaboration with District Health Office (DHO), District Education Office (DEO) and District WASH Coordination Committee (DWASH-CC). Several rounds of meetings were held with the district level concern stakeholders (DWASH-CC, DEO, DHO, School teachers/RPs) as well as with Water Aid Nepal and NFCC. The day was celebrated to develop common understanding on importance of MHM day among the concerned stakeholders in Kavre district.

The activity was mainly focused on sensitizing the menstruation hygiene and its proper management with a vision to equip Kavre district with proper MHM plan and MHM friendly infrastructures. District and VDC level stakeholders (government and non-government) were sensitized on the issue. Local political leaders are also sensitized and ready to influence and enforce the policy for implementation. All stakeholders committed to provide/contribute to safe and free menstrual space.

“KIRDARC Nepal is only organization which is in the first row among all others for doing good coordination and contributing on WASH campaign of the district. This is only one organization who initiated the all the program activities under the banner of DWASH-CC which has really make us more responsible (DWASH-CC/government stakeholders towards the WASH campaign. It is really wonderful job done by KIRDARC Nepal and hope for its continuation in further days.” Mr. Ramkaji Kafle, DWSSDO WASH focal Person”

Change is not possible unless and until we start. So let's start to think positive from ourselves first and then think about others to change the society. DDC will definitely contribute to launch the MHM campaign in the district along with all stakeholders in the district. Mr. Bidur Gautam, WASH focal person from DWASH CC (DDC)

Youth Conference an AASA initiative

With slogan of youth are present and children are future youth conference was organized on 17 June 2016 at Surkhet. There was participation of 200 Youths from VDC and municipality of Surkhet district. This event was organized by District Development Office, District women and Child Office and **Animators and Adolescents Association for Social Action (AASA)** network. There was wider participation of stakeholders such as Chief District Officer, Vice Chancellor from Mid-western University, Surkhet, Chief Women Development Officer, Government and non-government office, political parties and journalists.

In the conference, a paper was presented by AASA, Network to highlights issues of youth, and challenges faced by them.



Participants of the conference

After paper presentation, discussion was held on paper. Five points declaration was declared based on paper presentation findings. The major points of declaration highlighted on child marriage and appealed all stakeholders to eradicate child marriage and support on this campaign. Similarly, they appeal the stakeholders to eradicate existing corruption in the district with strong mechanism. As there is not any separate committee to deal with youth issues they appealed for formation of district youth council at all district. They force for effective mobilization of *yuwa sworojkar* program to create job opportunity inside country.

All the stakeholders appreciated the conference as it was first initiation by AASA, Network. The program was successfully concluded with delivering good message regarding youth issues. They agreed to make a plan for youth development and endorsed in DDC. As agreed, all DDC budget regarding youth and children will be guided by this action plan in upcoming fiscal year. DDC committed to circulate the decision to all VDCs.

Building the foundation of HRBA

KIRDARC has implemented a project for the period of Jan-2016 to 2018 called 'AADHAR', "**Building the Foundation of Human Rights Based Approach in Local Development Process for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Mid-West Nepal.**" It is being implemented in 5 districts of the Karnali region covering 25 VDCs, with strategic intervention in Surkhet. The project assumes that without ensuring the conducive environment for those marginalized and excluded citizens/communities to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from local development process, it is not possible to eliminate poverty and restore their human dignity. Consequently, the project aims at empowering people (marginalized and excluded groups), facilitating between right holders and duty-bearers, as well as, strengthening community-based groups to flag human rights (HR) violations, particularly economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights. This project is implemented by KIRDARC and consortium partners (Women Welfare Society (WWS), Midwestern University – Conflict and Peace Studies (MWU-CAPS) and Mission East (ME)). WWS will impart its expertise of gender and social inclusion, Mission East will support on disability inclusion, CSOs capacity strengthening through Change Triangle Approach and MWU-CAPS will devise local community and organization friendly HRBA tool kit. Some district level campaigns like celebrating world health day

and menstrual hygiene day have also taken place. The main idea of celebrating these days were linked with women's right to health and



People gathered for discussion

current social malpractices that has hampered enjoyment of realizing right to health. In addition, AADHAR has also started forming youth and women groups at VDC levels to conduct weekly human rights class through reflect model, which is envisaged to generate empowerment among them to finally get involved to promote and protect human rights violation at local level through social initiatives.

The project is now in its initial stage and looks forward to work with National Human Rights Commission, University, Government agencies and local CBOs and CSOs to build the foundation of human rights based approach to local development. It is a highly ambitious project that envisages localizing NAP-HR, reduce HR violations, mobilize CSOs to mainstream GESI and play watchdog to prevent human rights violation, develop HRBA tool-kit to fit in local context, roll out academic curriculum in MWU/CAPS, and conduct policy dialogue at regional and national level.

Happy Village Campaign at Surkhet District

Belchaur Self Help Group (SHG) was formed in Kunthari VDC ward no-5, Belchaur village at Surkhet district in 2008 with the initiation of health post. In initial period SHG was only focused on spreading health awareness activities but after the KIRDARC Nepal intervention on the VDC through SABAL program in 2011 various activities were initiated such as capacity building of group i.e. leadership, saving credit, REFLECT session through which the group is empowered on their rights, social issues, developed leadership and social transformation. Now Belchaur SHG has become as model group in Kunathari VDC.

With the concept that change begins from home the SHG started **Happy Home Campaign** and the campaign was successful. Now the SHG had initiated a campaign called **Happy Village** to make the village happy and prosperous. Happy village aims the establishment of society with equity, peace and social justice where all people in the society could enjoy respected and dignified life and exercise their rights without any discrimination. For happy village, they had developed a plan. They had also developed guideline for facilitation and declaration of happy village. Different steps are also identified for developing the happy village.

Step 1: This step is about realization and commitment. In this stage, SHG conducts group meeting shares concept about happy village and its need and makes realization to people about happy village campaign rational and its impact. Group members will be oriented on their roles and responsibilities of group members to make happy village.

Step 2: In this step the group makes vision and action plan. Indicators of happy village will be developed by the group. In this section they will identify two levels of activities and plan, first is those activities which could be implemented by group initiation and second is those, which need support from government and nongovernmental agencies. They categorize the indicators of happy village in household and society level in different areas.

Step 3: This step implements vision and action plan. Now SHG implements those activities which they can effort at community level i.e. sanitation campaign, school campaign, tree plantation etc. Those actions which they can't implement themselves, they will interact with government and nongovernment organization at district and share their action plan and get commitment to implementation their plan.

Step 4: This stage monitors and evaluates the happy village campaign outcomes.

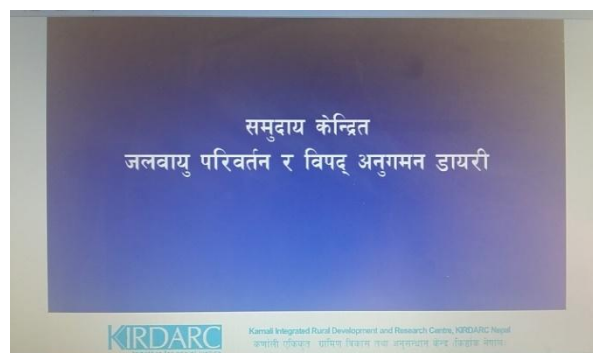
Step 5: This stage declares the village as happy village.

Step 6: After declaration of happy village, different committees will be formed for regular monitoring of impact of happy village.

On 1st June-2016, Belchaur SHG organized an interaction meeting with a presentation on happy village concept, its indicators and action plan. They invited different stakeholders, VDC Secretary, teachers and leaders of different political parties. All the stakeholders were impressed by happy village concept and they expressed their commitment and solidarity to the campaign and promised to provide support.

Analyzing the impacts of Disaster and Climate Change

Mountain people are more at risk from the negative consequences of Climate Change and the least equipped to withstand and adapt to it. In order to identify the impacts of climate change at mountain region, KIRDARC has developed disaster and climate monitoring diary to monitor the change of climatic condition which effects day to day life of the people residing in that region. The monitoring diary also includes other parameters like disaster, agricultural productivity, water availability and so on. Beside that KIRDARC has installed the rain gauge to measure rainfall pattern in its working districts. Data collection with the use of disaster and climate change monitoring diary has started to collect information on impacts of DRR and CCA. To get the data from the ground level, data collected by Local Disaster Risk Management



Climate change monitoring diary

Committee (LDRMC) and ADCR members every day, the data obtained from the diary then collected, compiled, monitored and analyzed. On the basis of obtained data from local level, KIRDARC is also planning to develop database for data visualization. It helps to identify the local level issues and raise voice to develop proper adaptation plans and programs at local to national level.

Establishment of DRR and CCA Resource in KIRDARC

With the aim of strengthening organizational capacity and let to know the information related to DRR and CCA of Karnali and other region of world, KIRDARC established a regional resource centre for DRR and CCA at its



Resource centre at Kalikot

program districts Humla, Mugu and Kalikot recently. Initially, the resource centre includes KIRDARC Publications, Audio Visual, Newspapers, and Emergency Response Materials: First Aid Kit, Go Bag, Audio-Visual etc.

Dolpa celebrates 17th Sanitation Week

Sanitation access of Dolpa is 87% to achieve the set goal of Nepal government to declare Nepal as an open defecation country till 2017 AD (Sanitation Master Plan-2068 BS).

17th Sanitation week was celebrated from 3rd to 11th of June with the key stakeholder WSSDO, DDC, DEO and DAO with facilitation of KIRDARC - Nepal and Red Cross, Dolpa with financial support of SNV and UNICEF Nepal.

Different kinds of programs were conducted to celebrate the sanitation week such as rallies with play card and banner for better



Glimpses of the event

sanitation, environment day celebration with street drama and tree plantation, clean up campaigns, monitoring of sanitation and hygiene practice of Government and Non-government office. These kinds of campaigns helped to raise awareness among district stakeholders and local community regarding best sanitation practice and hygiene.

Consultation meeting of NCSMI

To discuss on current mountain issues regarding the impacts of climate change and its impact in livelihood of mountain region/indigenous communities and enhance civic engagement to improve socio-economic well-being of the communities and facilitate appropriate development actions, KIRDARC Nepal organized the consultation meeting of Nepalese Civil Society Mountain Initiative (NCSMI). The meeting decided to prepare the draft strategy and operational guideline/rule of procedure of NCSMI and involve wider stakeholders for their effective engagement. NCSMI is conceptualized as a development initiative owned by civil society and facilitated by governments to debate, advocate and ensure sustainable mountain development in Nepal after the National Conference on Climate Change and Environmental Threats: Protecting Lives and Livelihoods of Mountain People' (30-31 October, 2014 Rara, Mugu) which was organized by Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE). KIRDARC Nepal in strategic collaboration with different development partners

organized 'in order to draw the attention of policy makers and different government and non-government organizations and to promote and protect the rights of mountain people.

Transforming Lives, Transforming Livelihoods

From Labour to Plumber

“I was born in remote village of Sinja Valley where the development progress is almost isolated. My parents were illiterate so instead of sending me to school I was sent for grazing cattle and field work for almost 6 months. For the rest of the period I was compelled to do labour work in my village and sometimes in India. There was huge scarcity of water supply in my village but after the intervention of WASH project implemented by KIRDARC Nepal from the financial support from Water Aid the problem was solved. The project was not only about supplying water in the village, it was integrated. I received various trainings related to plumbing and my capacity was strengthened. I was assigned to operate and maintain the existing water supply system and I did my job well. I was further assigned to work in other water supply system at VDC. I was happy when I got overall responsibility of plumbing work of hot water bathroom construction as well as CGD latrine in adjoining ward of my VDC. I received similar offer to work in various VDC's of the district. When I was a labour I rarely received Rs 400 per

day but now I am skilled so I get minimum Rs 800 per day and the work is very easy. I used to spend my days playing cards and there used to be many conflict in the family. But now I am earning well from my job and there is no more conflict in my

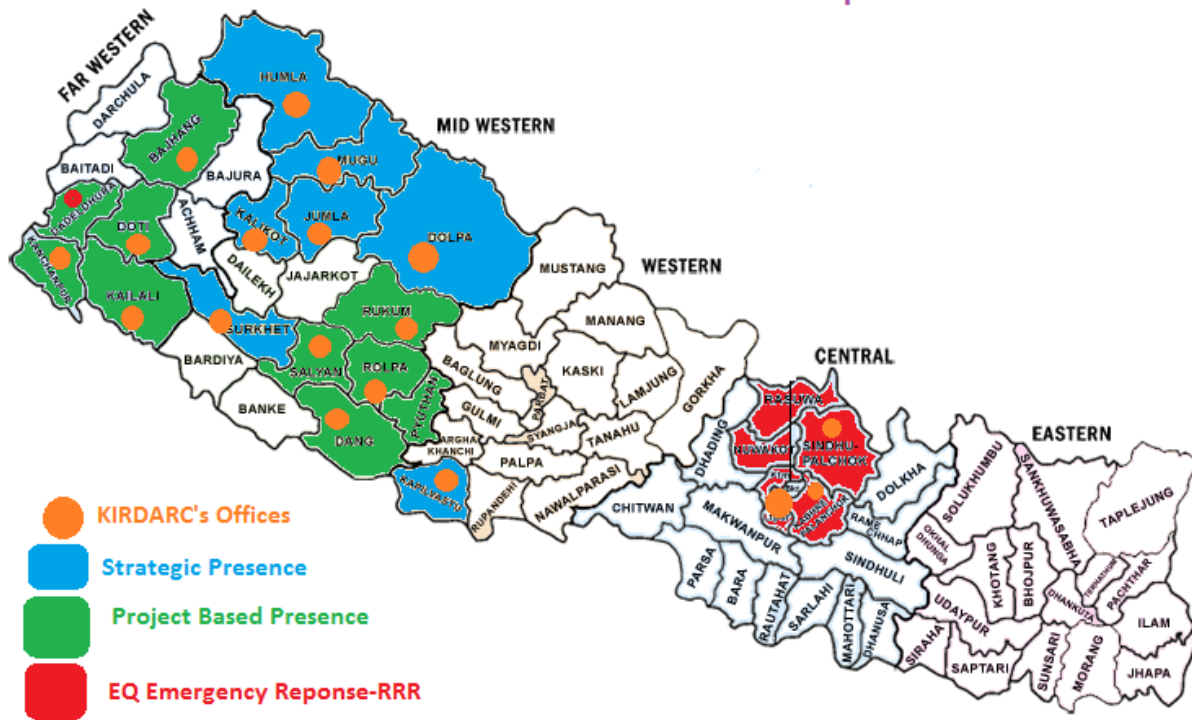


Nanda Ram Rokaya fitting the water pipe

family. I would heartily thank KIRDARC Nepal for turning a labour into skilled plumber and changing my socio-economic conditions.” I am very happy and satisfied.

(Nanda Ram Rokaya, Chema, Badki-4, Badki VDC, Jumla district, Nepal)

KIRDARC's Presence Across Nepal



Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) Nepal since its establishment in 1999 has been recognized as a leading agency for change in Karnali, the mountain region of Nepal. It has the vision of, “A just and prosperous society with people having equal access to and ownership over resources and opportunities, where people are enjoying their fundamental human rights”. Through its active and constant engagement with communities and collaboration and coordination with other development partners, KIRDARC has set an example of right-based development model: human rights promotion, community empowerment, media and civil society mobilization, development initiatives facilitation, and policy advocacy. It has been working with 700 CBOs, 15 local NGOs, 7 networks, 70 schools, 150 government mechanisms/thematic committees, reaching to 280,000 people across Nepal

For More Information

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