

# Rain COMMUNITY

Vol. 1 Issue 4, Oct. 2017

## Publisher's Note

After conducting trainings at Viswo Niketan Secondary School, it was important to receive feed backs and opinions from the Principal. Thus, interview with Heramba Raj Kandel, the Principal of VNSS has been presented as the lead story of this issue.

Analyzing the condition of Bansighat Community, the issue of WASH condition there has been raised as the main agenda. Looking into the sanitary conditions of Kathmandu, the status of Public toilets has been featured. The focal group discussion for construction of girl friendly toilets at Jana Prabhat School was a major activity this month, and the testimonials have also been extracted from this event.

October 15 is celebrated as Global Hand washing Day. Thus, the activities of GUTHI for this day have been reported in this issue.

## Inside

Slum Dweller's struggle for water .....	3
Status of public toilet in Kathmandu Valley .....	4
Students and Teachers Decide on the Toilet Design .....	6
Celebrating the Global Hand Washing Day eith joy .....	7
Voices .....	8

## "I learnt to upgrade my Rainwater System"

- Heramba Raj Kandel, Principal, Viswa Niketan Sec. School



Heramba Raj Kandel, the principal of Viswo Niketan Secondary School is very satisfied and happy with the rainwater harvesting system at the school. On 25th October Manashree Newa and Niva Maharjan talked with him about WASH status and RWH systems at the school. The following information is based on the conversation with Kandel:

### 1. How is the water and sanitation status of the school?

I think the water and sanitation of the school is average. After the earthquake, the toilets along with some buildings got destroyed. Currently, we have constructed toilets; however the management of toilets are not yet satisfactory.

### 2. To what extent the school has been providing awareness to the students about sanitation and waste management?

Solid waste management and sanitation have been a part of our course. More importantly, students have introduced a Cleanliness Club "Safa Club". They collaborate with the Eco Club to organize various activities. Cleaning campaigns are organized alternate Fridays to incorporate the sense of responsibility and to clean the school premises.

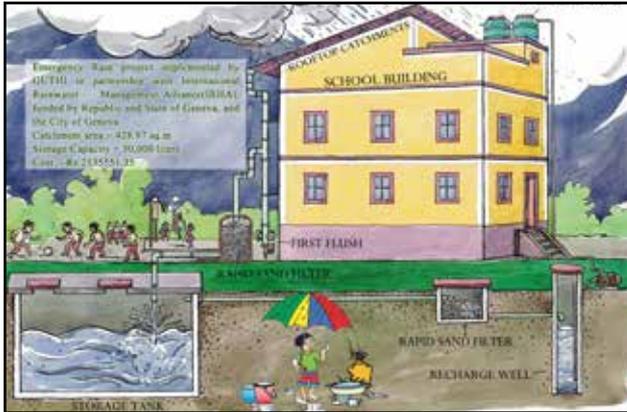
### 3. How was the water demand at school managed before the installation of RWH system?

Fulfilling water demand was a bit difficult in the past. For drinking purposes, we purified the well water. But for the cleaning purposes, there used to be a shortage and the toilets used to remain dirty.

## I learnt to upgrade my..... (contd from page 1)

### 4. What benefits have you received from the RWH system?

We have been benefitted and very satisfied with the RWH system. We use the rainwater for cleaning, hand washing, toilet use and even for drinking. Bhim Upadhyay, Secretary of Ministry of Water Supply and Sanitation inaugurated the RWH system in our school, which led many to know about the harvesting



process. People frequently visit our school to observe the RWH system installed by GUTHI and IRHA with the support, Canton of Geneva, City of Geneva and City of Meyrin

### 5. How have you planned to manage the infrastructure that is built now?

GUTHI had provided technical trainings to the teaching and non-teaching staff about the system. Our office helper Vinod Kumar Shrestha, who also received the training, takes care of the system. Also, there is a designated focus teacher and the Safa Club members who monitor the RWH system. So, I believe RWH system will last longer.



### 6. The teachers and students have received the trainings so do you find any changes in their behaviors?

Changes are prominent after the training session. Constant follow up from GUTHI has encouraged the students to apply the training practically. Children have been using dustbin and water more economically now.

### 7. What is the perception of the school teachers towards the RWH system?

Teachers are satisfied and show positive response. They are thankful to GUTHI, IRHA, Canton of Geneva, City of Geneva and City of Meyrin for providing resources to manage their water demands.

### 8. Have you also been practicing RWH at your home?

I don't have a systematic rain water harvesting system, but I have planned to do so. Currently I have been using simple pipes and small drums to collect rain water from the roof.

### 9. Do you think other schools also have to adapt and install such system?

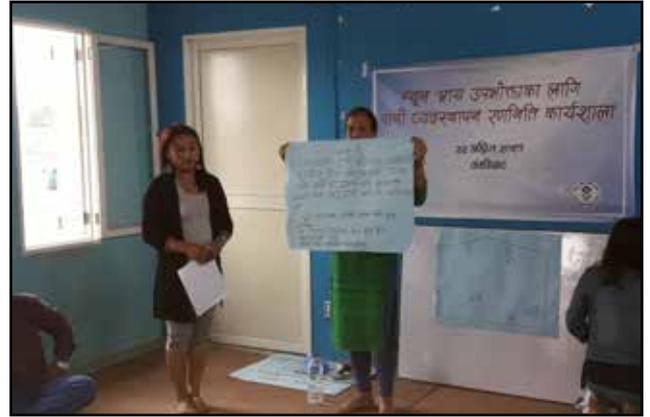
Visitors often come to our school to observe the rain water harvesting system. They have also expressed their interest in installation of RWHS.



## Slum Dwellers' Struggle for Water

Slum dwellers of Bansighat morning begin by queuing up to collect water from the nearby water sources especially during the dry season. Water in Bansighat comes from a combination of the community tanks, private tanks, jarred water, community well and canals. Water from community well and canals are of poor quality but the poor communities still have to rely on them.

In order to meet their water demand, under Low Income Consumer Services Unit (LICSU) program, 4 community tanks of each 5000 liters capacity were built. LICSU had helped with the provision of infrastructure and subsidized water in 2007/2008. Unfortunately, in current scenario, LICSU is passive.



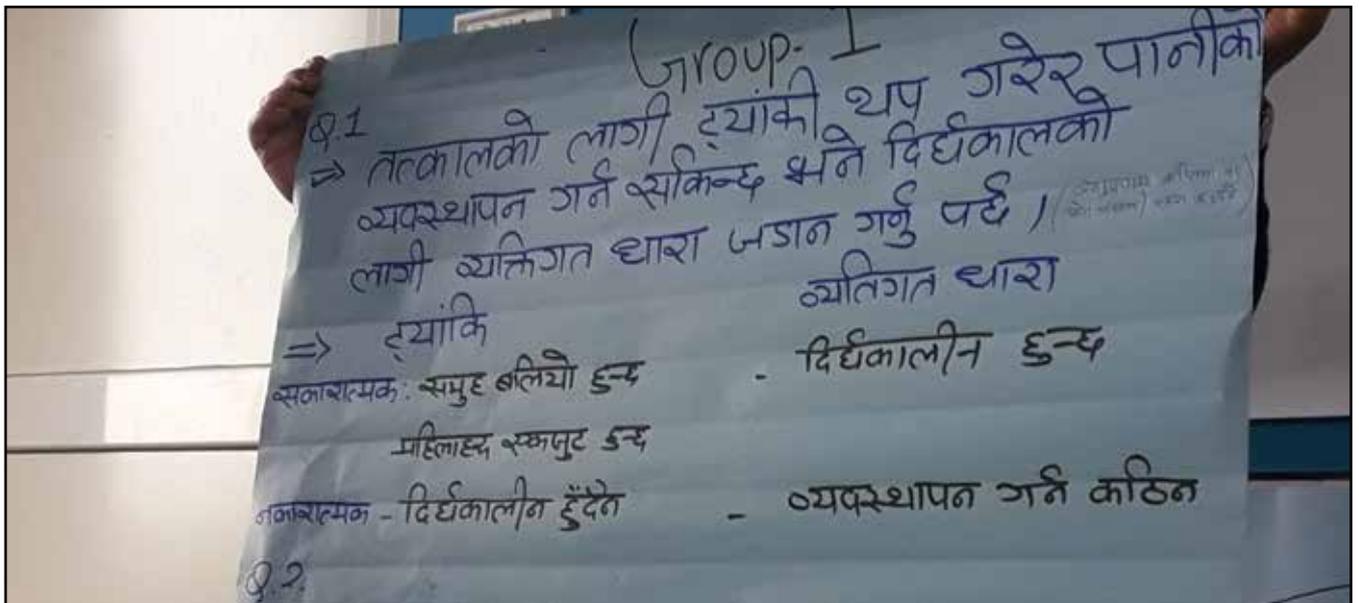
But what can we do when we are not supplied water?"

Similarly, considering the difficulty of the people to carry water to their homes, the local committee "Tole Sudhar Samiti" has been struggling to receive a Melamchi water pipeline connection on their community. "We are continuously making efforts to convince the government into giving us water supply pipeline. This system will benefit all of the people. The water will be supplied to them at their doorsteps. We have appealed to the Kathmandu Valley Water Supply Management Board to consider our water demand so let's see how it turns out," shared Bina Buddhacharya, Secretary of Bansighat Tole Sudhar Samiti.



Bansighat squatter settlement is located on the banks of the Bagmati river in Tripureshwor, and is home to approximately 150 families. Water, undoubtedly, is an evident issue among the people as many times, the 4 tanks do not receive enough water. The supply mechanism is also irregular. Citing to it, Pratikshya Khadka, a local water vendor shared, "There are times when we do not receive water in time hence we can not supply water to the people and the people scold us.

The water crisis indeed is a big challenge of the Bansighat slum dwellers. Whatsoever, the people are getting aware to raise their voices and share their concern for equitable water service delivery in squatter areas and to receive a quality and bountiful water at their doorsteps.



## Status of Public toilets in the Kathmandu Valley

✍️ Neha Basnet

Toilets are one of the most important infrastructures that are needed for everyone to relieve themselves as well as to keep the surroundings clean. In case of public areas like markets, bus stations, tourists spots, public gathering and others, public toilets serves for the safe and dignified public sanitation facility.

As per the study done by NGOFUWS in 2012, there were 68 public toilets. The number has now increased to 84 toilets in Kathmandu Valley out of which 9 are non-existing and 25 toilets are newly constructing and being constructed (WaterAid, 2015)

The total population of Kathmandu valley as per the CBS report 2011 is 2.5 million and the floating population is 1 million. With 76 functional toilets available for this population it can be observed that one toilet serves for 46,052 populations which is not at all sufficient.

GUTHI had conducted a study on 16 selected public toilets from five municipalities Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Thimi and Kritipur. From the study it was found that most of the toilet operators lack proper information about the contract and their responsibilities since, their responsibilities, as perceived by them, was confined to paying rent on time to the municipality.

The study done on the structure of the toilets revealed that about 38% of toilets were built following the design prescribed by the Government Guidelines for the operation of public toilet where as 62% did not follow any guideline. It was found that very few

(1% of public toilet) has the tactile, ramps and door lock system for the person with disabilities however others don't have. The maximum number of public toilet users was found to be street vendors, pedestrian and laborers.

Even through outer inspection, it is evident that most of the public toilets lack basic amenities like door lock, dustbin, light, ventilation, windows, hand washing basin, sanitary materials, water etc. The public toilets lack cleaning calendar and any monitoring mechanism. Due to this, there is a very poor sanitary condition at the public toilets. There are no provisions for operator training for maintenance and cleanliness; and neither has there been any provision for the health insurance for safety. In most of the public toilets, repair and maintenance work is not done regularly rather it is done only when the customers complain.

The status of public toilet can be better explained through a case study of Shrijana Gurung, a vegetable vendor. 39 year old Shrijana travels 10 km everyday from Thankot to Kathmandu on public vehicle to sell the vegetables. However, her business place is not confined to a single street. Rather she travels at different places like Kalimati, Swayambhu, Thamel and Ratnapark.

The reason for her to use different locations for the business was the availability of sanitation services. "I prefer to use public toilet where there is facility of water so that I can clean myself and the toilet after



Figure : Pictures of public toilet situated at Ratnapark (opposite of Bir Hospital)

use. So, I change my business area based on toilet availability”.

She has even more difficulty during her menstruation as most public toilets lack water. “There have been plenty of situations where I had to leave all the groceries and rush to my home simply to use a toilet. You can imagine my urgency when I had to travel 11 km leaving business just to use toilet; it really hampers my business and my income.”, Shrijana shared. So issues related with the public toilet doesn't limits to its availability only. Rather, the functionality and sustainability is strongly interrelated with different dimensions like health, education and economy.

Thus, the public toilets in Kathmandu Valley need much improvement. Not only the infrastructures, but awareness regarding basic sanitation and hand washing techniques should also be wide spread among the toilet users.



Figure : Srijana Gurung, Street vendor



## Activity

# Students and Teachers Decide on the Toilet Design

“We never go to the toilet for defecation. We either do it at home or control it.”, Manita Thapa of class 7 said casually. The current status of female toilets at Jana Prabhat Secondary School is very poor and depressing. But the teachers and the students have no choice other than using the same dirty toilets every day.

Understanding the present situation of the toilets, GUTHI with the support of IRHA is constructing female friendly toilets at the school. Thus, with an objective to understand the problems and needs better, and to receive suggestions from the teachers and students, GUTHI organized a Focal Group Discussion (FGD) at the school on 16th October, 2017. There was a presence of 8 female teachers and 14 students from grade 6-9.

From the discussion, it could be figured out that there are many toilet related problems in the school. Firstly, the toilets are not enough for more than 250 female users in the school. Due to this, the students have to queue up for a long time and they end up missing half of their class. So, it was realized that sufficient number of toilets should be constructed to ease the problem.

The other major problem is the lack of water. There is no water to flush, wipe or even wash hands. So the students opt to control their bowel rather than disposing it. Due to lack of water, the toilets also remain dirty most of the time. Females specially have problems during menstruation. Thus, while constructing the new toilets, water should also be properly managed so that the users do not have to compromise on their cleanliness and health.

The present female toilets have open urinal built in an old style. This not only hinders the privacy of the toilet users, but also takes up a lot of space. The open urinal for female also creates unsanitary condition and posts high risk of contamination. Along with this, the design has made it a hub for prohibited activities like cheating,



smoking, bunking classes, using mobile phones, etc. The students lock the main door to do such activities, making it unavailable to other students as well. Thus, the teachers and the students suggested constructing a single row of toilets without a main entrance. “This can decrease the ill-activities to a great extent”, said Jayashree Bajracharya, a teacher at the school.

The pad disposal in the toilets is even worst. There is one dustbin for pad disposal, but the students feel shy to dispose it in front of everyone. Thus, the pads are being haphazardly thrown all over the toilet, and even in the flush tank. There are even instances when the dogs chew into the pads. So, the students and teachers collectively requested to place the pad disposal bin a little higher above the ground so that the bin doesn't tip over or is not taken outside by the dogs. They also requested a separate pad disposal bin in each toilet.

For a long term operation, a good quality taps, locks, basin and pipes were also realized to be important. It is also important that the toilets have good provision of lighting and ventilation.

Thus, the focal group discussion at Jana Prabhat school was very fruitful as we got an opportunity to understand the actual needs and problems at the school. The teachers and student were very happy to learn about the new toilets.



## Activity

# Celebrating the Global Hand Washing Day with Joy!

“Ma’am, let us dance again!!” was the collective voices of the children from Bansighat community center. GUTHI celebrated the Global Hand washing week with much joy and enthusiasm, while making sure that the children understand about the importance of hand washing.



simply by water. It needs soap for complete germ free condition. This was done with the help of glitters.

The children were then taught hand washing practically. A group of 5 children were assisted in conducting hand washing practically. The children with long nails got their nails trimmed too.

GUTHI had organized a hand washing event at Bansighat Community Center on 11th October, 2017, where the children learnt about the importance of hand washing, danced the hand washing steps and practically learnt hand washing. Since the week is a global advocacy dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding about the importance of hand washing with soap, the children from Bansighat were involved and taught hand washing in a fun filled way.

The highlight of the program was hand washing dance. The children were taught hand washing steps to match the beats of a famous new Nepali song “Nylon ko Saree ma”. The children thoroughly enjoyed dancing to the beats. Teaching them dance in this way will certainly help them remember the hand washing steps for a long time. A video of the dance was shot and published in GUTHI’s YouTube channel on 15th October, the Global Hand Washing Day.

The children were first taught about importance of sanitation and personal hygiene. They were demonstrated how bacteria can be travel from one person to another through just a handshake. The children were shown that the bacteria cannot be washed away

This way the hand washing week was celebrated with great energy. Even after a week of the program, the children still requested to dance in the hand washing song. They promised to teach the dance and the steps to their other siblings and their parents too.



## Voices

A Focal Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted at Jana Prabhat Secondary School on 16th October, 2017. The main agenda of the discussion was to understand the problems and needs regarding female toilets better, and to receive suggestions from the teachers and students for construction of Female Friendly Toilets. Following are some of the voices collected:

1) Samikshya Poudel, a student of class 8 said, "There are two toilets in the student's toilet and one of them is very dark. No one likes to go there. As a result, either everyone is lined up for the other toilet or they go to the teacher's toilet. So, I hope, if the new toilets are being constructed, they are bright and have proper lighting."

2) Maiya Maharjan, a teacher shared, "The children put their used pads in the flush tank, put it in toilet holes, or throw it randomly. So, toilets are always dirty. And to add more, the dogs take the used pads outside. So, if the new toilets are built, pad bins should be present in every toilet and they should be a little higher from the ground."

3) Bijayashree Bajracharya, a teacher, shared, "If GUTHI helps us to make a toilet clean-up calendar too, we teachers and students are ready to clean them on regular basis."

4) Manita Thapa, a student of class 7 said, "There are a lot of cheats all over the toilet during examinations. So, if the new toilets are built in a single row, i.e. without a main door leading to other toilets, cheating can also decrease to a great extent."



GUTHI

Ambe Complex, Teku, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Phone no.: +977 01 4255040  
Email: mail@guthi.net | Url: www.guthi.org  
Fb: www.facebook.com/guthinp



REPUBLIC  
AND STATE  
OF GENEVA

POSI TENERAS LUX



VILLE DE  
GENÈVE



This publication is brought you by GUTHI in partnership with International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) with the support of Republic and State of Geneva, City of Geneva and City of Meyrin