



Choutari

World Vision International Nepal (WVIN) Newsletter Issue 76: June—July 2014

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National Director's Note

Dear Friends,

I took on the role as National Director for WVIN at the beginning of July. Since then I've had the opportunity to meet with all of the staff in Kathmandu, visit three ADPs in Jumla and Udayapur and meet with donors and peer INGOs in-country.

Throughout this time I've been asking myself two questions: Are we doing the right thing? Are we doing it well? The first question is difficult to answer with such a nascent understanding of the country and its political context, capacities and needs. It's something that will need more information and analysis before I can answer the question with any confidence. In the meantime, I can say we are focussed on the right areas of maternal child health and nutrition, livelihoods, education and child protection.



As to the second question: We are doing some things very well. I met women's groups who have benefitted from WVIN's livelihoods projects and they were clear about the impact World Vision has had in their lives. One woman told me that before she started with the project she had no confidence and no money. Now, she says, she is able to stand up in public and give a speech. And she has enough money to send her children to school, something she never had as a child. I heard story after story from individuals whose lives are changed due to the work of WVIN.

While the individual level remains important, we continue to work on improving systems that directly impact the lives of children. WVIN has successfully strengthened local government systems for child protection, building capacity of child protection committees, building awareness in the community and then linking the two.

So what is the future going to look like for WVIN? I have so many dreams about how we can contribute to the well-being of children in this beautiful but needy country. We want to effectively complement the work that the government is doing to further child-focussed development; we want to maintain our focus on the individual while significantly increasing our impact at the national level; we want to be creative and take intelligent risks and; we want to see entire communities transformed for better lives.

Having spent time with the team in this office, I have a confidence that this is the right place at the right time, with the right people. It's a privilege to be here.

Project News

Achham East Area Development Programme

Chalsa VDC declared Chhaupadi Shed- Free

On 10 June, Achham East ADP organised an event to declare Chalsa VDC a Chhaupadi Shed-Free Zone. The declaration was marked by signing an Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) between the District Development Committee (DDC) of Achham, Village Development Office (VDC), Women and Children's Office, and Astha Nepal. Chief Guest of the declaration was a Constituent Assembly member, Bharat Saud. The Chairperson of VDC read the commitment paper and code of conduct about the Chhaupadi Shed-Free zone. Chalsa is the eighteenth Chhaupadi shed-free VDC out of a total of seventy-five VDCs in Achham.

Members of political parties, community leaders, Government authorities, women's network, children, I/NGOs, journalists, traditional healers and VDC-level stakeholders were all present at the event where rallies were also held. Altogether 600 people took part.

Doti West Area Development Programme

Tailoring training held

From 16 April – 20 July, eight individuals selected from marginal and vulnerable households in Mahadevsthan, Dahakalikasthan, and Bajhkakani VDCs took part in three-month vocational training on tailoring run by Doti West ADP and local partner RDC (Rural Development Centre). After the training the eight were also each given a sewing machine, measuring tape, scissors and an iron.

Life skill training for Child Club members

In June and July, Doti West ADP held 14 life skills sessions in seven VDCs. The training was led by trained girls of the seven VDCs. The major component of life skills like goal setting, effective communication, sympathy, empathy, problem-solving, and learning how to say no, were taught.

The purpose was to give children a chance to recognise their own qualities, develop skills to help them when they are being teased or bullied by other children, as well as to teach them how to say no. 366 children from different child clubs took part.



Goat rearing training

In July, Doti West ADP helped local partner RDC give training in goat rearing to 33 households of Lamikhal, Mahadevsthan, Kakalikasthan, Dahakalikasthan, and Bajhkakani VDCs. Each participant was also given two goats to support their livelihood.



Day against Child Labour marked

On 12 June, Doti West ADP marked the Day against Child Labour, in Mahadevsthan, Dahakalikasthan and Chhapali VDCs. The purpose was to make the community aware, through different activities, of the negative aspects of child labour. The messages were conveyed through Doteli songs and other entertaining programmes. Child club members also shared with Village Child Protection and Promotion committee (VCPPC) members on how to identify child protection-related issues in the community. 242 children took part.

PIA-level Child Club Week Celebration

From 27-29 July, Doti West ADP jointly with local partner CDC (Community Development Center) organised a Child Club Week Celebration. Various competitions like volleyball, quiz, street drama and running races were held in Lamikhal, Girichauka, Chhapali, Dahakalikasthan, Mahadevsthan and Kalikasthan VDCs. The objective of the event was to build up the confidence of children through different types of extra-curricular activities. 110 Child Club members took part.

Kailali West Area Development Programme

Vocational training for youths

In June, Kailali West ADP also helped local partner Community Based Organisation Development Centre (CBODC) hold basic vocational training such as sewing, and beauty care. The objective was to improve the skills of youths and give them an opportunity to have an income. 72 youths took part.

Workshop on VDMC

On 9-10 and 21-22 June, Kailali West ADP and local partner Ekta Samaj held a two-day interaction /workshop with Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) about role, responsibility and response should a disaster occur in either Shreepur or Geta VDCs. 31 members from Shreepur and 29 from Geta VDCs took part.

Orientation on DAP survey

From 12-13 June, Kailali West ADP held an orientation on Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) survey for ADP staff and community survey volunteers which was led by National Office DME specialists. After an initial orientation on methodology a field plan was prepared. 28 took part in the orientation and preparation of a field plan. Focused Group Discussions in which 349 children aged 12-18 took were then held in different VDCs.

Awareness—raising activities held

In July, Kailali West ADP helped Ekta Samaj hold a series of street dramas in Shahajpur, Geta, and Shreepur VDCs on reproductive health for adolescents and youths. The dramas were acted by young people and observed by more than 1,400 people. Public speaking competitions were also held in Shahajpur and Nigali VDCs in which 14 and 10 students took part respectively.

VDC– level best farmers felicitated

On 11 July, Kailali West ADP held an event to felicitate the best farmers, for their efforts to be change agents in regards to agriculture and livestock in and beyond Programme Impact Areas (PIA) VDCs. Farmers were chosen by a selection panel of cooperatives, District Livestock Service Office (DLSO), District Agriculture Development Office (DADO), service centre representatives and local communities. The DLSO veterinarian, DADO service centre representative, division cooperative and training centre representative, cooperative Chairpersons and Managers, and farmers were all present at the function.

Geta VDC declared fully immunized Zone

On 16 July, Kailali West ADP and Geta Sub-Health post jointly declared Attariya Municipality, wards 11, 12, and 13 of Geta VDC to be fully immunised zones. Under the MCHN project and CHN campaign, Kailali ADP has played a crucial role in making the declaration and event successful. Kailali ADP was honoured by the health post with a certificate of appreciation for its contributions.

Orientation on personal hygiene and sanitation

In July, Kailali West ADP and Ekta Samaj held an orientation on personal hygiene and sanitation practices (hand washing, water purification) with adolescents, mothers- in-law, and daughters- in-law in the most vulnerable clusters of six PIA VDCs. The objectives were to raise awareness of the importance of hand washing, and methods of water purification. Altogether 436 mothers, daughters, and adolescents took part in the interaction programme.



Together we can end preventable deaths



Morang Area Development Programme

World Environment Day marked

On 8 June, Morang ADP jointly organised a week-long campaign on World Environment day with District Development Committee, Plan Nepal, District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Coordination Committee (DWASHCC), Newa, District Forest Office, Biratnagar Sub-metropolitan city, Him Nepal Aayojana Dharan, and Water Environment and Life organisation.

With the theme “*Himal Bachau, Batabaran Jogau*” the campaign started with a rally in Biratnagar in which more than 250 took part. The chief guest, the Chief District Officer (CDO) committed himself to more effectively promote a safe environment.

Different activities like tree planting, photo gallery, pictures promoting protection of the environment, and open discussion on how to reduce environmental pollution were held. Sanitation programme and distribution of sanitation placards also took place during the campaign.

IPM Closing Ceremony held

On 18 June, after a 16-week training in Baijanathpur and Lakhantari VDCs the closing ceremony of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) was held. During the training farmers learnt more about organic farming. Practical and theoretical exercises were given to the farmers. The training promoted organic farming, and the decreased use of pesticides. 75 farmers took the training. Apart from the farmers, political leaders, teachers, CMCs, Child Club members, district cooperatives members, and NGO partners attended the closing ceremony. A cash prize was awarded to the best trainee.

Sindhuli East Area Development Programme

Child Club formation and training

On 10 July, Sindhuli East ADP held training on Child Club formation and Management for the community-level volunteers from Kholagaun, Bahuntipung and Toshramkhola VDCs. The process and methods of Child club formation were discussed. Five new Child Clubs were formed in Kholagaun and Bahuntipung VDCs.

From 19-20 July, they held a one-day training on Child Club Management, Leadership Development and Life Skill Training for the child club members at Kholagaun VDC. Similarly, from 24-25 July, ADP held a one-day training on those same topics for the Child Club members in Bahuntipung VDC.

The trainings were mainly focused on the members of those VDCs, and of newly-formed Child clubs.



Training on health and sanitation

From 28-30 July, Sindhuli East ADP jointly with local partner Village Women Consciousness Centre (VWCC) held training on health and sanitation. The training was given to 29 volunteers from Sumnam Pokhari, Khangsang, and Kholagaun VDCs and three project staff from VWCC. The training focused on highlighting on volunteers and staff the need for construction of toilets for maintaining proper hygiene and sanitation, and encouraging people in the community to construct and use toilets. While assessing the situation in Programme Impact Areas (PIA), the number of households (HHs) having toilets, HHs with toilets under construction and HHs without toilet was recorded.

At the end of the training, an action plan from each ward, of each PIA, was made in order to declare the PIA as an Open Defecation Free (ODF) Zone, its sustainability, underlying activities, date/time, the person/group responsible, etc. Altogether 33 participants took part.

Sunsari Area Development Programme

District and VDC level consultation held

From 26-27 and 29 June, Sunsari ADP held VDC- and District-level consultation with the community and stakeholders respectively. The main objective was to consult with the community regarding project activities so that projects are based on the need of the community, are sustainable and participatory. The progress of the ADP's projects was presented, group work was carried out by the concerned stakeholders of the different sectors, and major activities were prioritised based on community needs. Participants discussed and presented their ideas, and made suggestions. The inclusion of multiple stakeholders was necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the programmes and most importantly for the programme's sustainability after the phase out of the ADP.

One district- and 4 VDC-level consultation workshop were held at which representatives of government line agencies such as the District Health Office, DADO, DLSO, DEO and VDC, community stakeholders, child representatives and NGO members were present. Altogether 160 people took part.

First Aid training

From 25-28 July, Sunsari ADP held a four-day First Aid training. The purpose was to teach how to give First Aid and prepare the community to give first aid treatment when needed. The training had several practical sessions. Teachers are the first person to be in contact with a students when any accident happens in a school. So it's very important for teachers to have such knowledge. Now schools in the community will have someone to give first aid. 23 teachers from various schools of six VDCs took part in the training.

Child Protection (CP) News

Training to VCPPC members held

From 14-19 June, Doti West ADP held Child protection training for Village Child Protection and Promotion Committees (VCPPC) members as well as political leaders, in Banjhakani, Kalikasthan, Dahakalikasthan, Mahadevsthan, and Lamikhal VDCs. The training focused on the conceptual understanding of child rights and child protection laws and policies. Participants were orientated on community-level child protection systems, and the role and responsibilities of VCPPCs. A session on identification of the most vulnerable was also held to identify such children in the community. At the end of the training VCPPC members prepared an action plan. Altogether 116 people took part in the training.

Meeting between VCPPC and political parties held

From 17-20 June, Doti West ADP held an interaction meeting between political parties and VCPPCs in four VDCs, namely Lamikhal, Dahakalikasthan, Mahadevsthan and Banjhakani VDCs. The purpose was to discuss the financial provisions for children in the VDC, child protection issues in the VDC and how the lack of such protection can hinder a child's development. Stakeholders were also given the opportunity to make submissions on the child protection policy of each VDC. 83 local political leaders and community people took part.

Child Protection training for teachers, SMC and PTA members

From 20-22 June, Doti West ADP jointly with local partner CEAD held a three-day Child Protection training. Most of the School Management Committee (SMC) members, chairperson, Parent and Teachers' Association (PTA) members took part. They agreed to develop a school-level child protection policy and on the appointment of a Child Protection focal teacher in schools. All chairpersons committed in installing girl-friendly toilets in their schools as well as a complaint box. They discussed the Chaupadi tradition where girls are not allowed to read books during menstruation. The SMC members agreed that such prohibition should not be followed, and they committed themselves to establish child-friendly community, school and home.

District-level learning and sharing meeting

On 23 June 2014, Doti West ADP with local partner CEAD Nepal held a one-day learning and sharing meeting at district level. Major progress, best practices, major learning's, and challenges were presented by the Child Protection focal person of each VDC. At the end of the meeting the 45 persons from different organisations who took part were invited to give their feedback.

Human Interest Story

Girls go back to school

Shahida and Hamida have a reason to smile. They are able to reconnect with old friends, put on school uniforms again and enjoy being back in a formal learning environment. They have gone back to school.

Going back to school is not always an easy transition for young girls living in rural villages in Nepal. The challenges are many, especially when they choose to go back to school after a break. As much as they wish to go back, many never get the opportunity and even if they do, they find they are not able to cope with the demands of study, so they find that most of their peers have reached higher grades while they are relegated to studying in lower grades. But for Shahida, 15 and Hamida, 16 things have been different. They have successfully transitioned from informal education to school, bridging the learning gap and now enjoy the benefit of going to school despite their age.

Shahida and Hamida belong to a minority Muslim community and hail from a village in Sunsari district, which lies in the eastern Terai region. Living in the same neighbourhood, both used to attend the same Madrasa (Muslim school). However, both of them stopped attending school when they were in the third grade so that they could help their parents raise their younger siblings and do housework. Their daily routine used to include helping their parents in the fields, cooking, cleaning, washing, feeding the cattle and taking care of their younger siblings. Looking at what usually happened to girls and seeing their sisters getting married at an early age, both Shahida and Hamida knew what their future had in store for them. They never imagined that they would be able to rejoin school again until they enrolled in the informal primary education classes that World Vision helped run in their community a few years ago. The informal classes last for four hours and are held with the help of a trained teacher in the courtyard of a student's house, mostly in the mornings during the planting and harvest season, or in the afternoon at other times. Almost all school subjects are taught and extra-curricular activities like singing and dancing are also held, albeit in the absence of a formal school environment.

After Shahida and Hamida joined the informal classes two years ago, both had an opportunity to learn a range of subjects like Nepali, English, Social Studies, Science and Maths. This helped them catch up with their primary years of education. After they finished attending two years of informal classes, they appeared for an examination, the result of which determined the class they would be eligible to rejoin in a formal school. Last year, both Shahida and Hamida were both admitted to the sixth grade in the nearby government school. Today they study in the seventh grade. The school they attend has been helped by World Vision to create a child-friendly learning and teaching environment. Given the girl-friendly toilets and absence of corporal punishment, the transition for both Shahida and Hamida has been easy.

Bina Shah, who has been a teacher and mentor for Shahida and Hamida shares, "I am so glad to see both my students back in school." She has been trained in running informal classes and has been teaching for the past three years. She says, "It is mostly girls who attend these classes as most of the drop outs from school are young girls. We reach out to parents who are not sending their girls to school and bring them here. There are challenges as this is a very disadvantaged community and parents are not cooperative sometimes, but when they see other girls coming to our classes they allow their daughters to join the class."



(Shahida and Hamida study in their courtyard)

Hamida's mother Jaimul Khatun says, "My older daughter got married early but I want to see Hamida finish her schooling now that she is back in school."

Shy yet determined, Shahida and Hamida both share a favourite subject, English, and have a goal now, to complete school and be educated. They are happy to be back at school and have made many friends. Hamida says, "I have many new friends in school and one of them invited me to her family gathering during the Tharu festival and it was so much fun."

Since 2011, World Vision has been helping run informal primary education for young children who have dropped out of school or have never been to school, providing training and salaries for teachers, teaching and learning resources, and stationery. At present there are seven informal primary education classes being run in six Village Development Committees in Sunsari district. Around 120 children attend these classes. 25 children have already re-joined school as a result.

By Alina R. Shrestha