

Greetings to you all.

Things had been unsteady last year. Because of the commitment you all have shown to us, we could keep our staff and expatriate volunteers on board serving through our hospital, community programmes, and INF Initiative for Financial Sustainability work [IIFS].

Empowering the disadvantaged communities and individuals is at the heart of INF's work. This update brings you stories of empowerment, some latest updates, and news across INF Nepal working areas.

Social Audit of INF Nepal Programmes and Hospitals

INF Nepal has organised a Social Audit of all the programmes and hospitals incorporating the annual project activities of the past Nepali fiscal year in the presence of its stakeholders and beneficiaries. This has been expected to improve the institutional governance and organisational performance. The annual progress, major achievements, challenge and learnings were shared during the programme.

INF Nepal intends to make social audit an ongoing organisational process covering all aspects of INF in order to strengthen and add value through inclusive participation, transparency and accountability with the right holders and stakeholders.

Social audit of all programmes and hospital has been completed while INF Nepal, Green Pastures Hospital [GPH] social audit is underway and will be concluded shortly.



Social Audit at INF Banke Shining Hospital



Social Audit at INF Surkhet Shining Hospital

Emergency Acute Care Service

With the vision to become Nepal's leading centre of excellence in the care and prevention of disability, GPH has initiated Emergency and Acute Care Service to provide a complete and excellent service to victims of trauma. With this service, GPH can serve victims of trauma immediately after the incident and provide timely diagnosis and management of the issue, thus significantly reducing patients' chances of developing further complications. More than 25 patients have already benefited from this new service.

Leprosy Orientation and Comprehensive Training



Faith-based leaders attending the orientation programme

INF Nepal Shining Hospital Banke organised the Leprosy Orientation Programme to the religious leaders of Phattepur, Raptisonary Rural Municipality [RM]. A total of 18 religious leaders of different faiths attended the orientation programme. The programme was aimed to address the social dimension of leprosy through awareness-raising and attitudinal change. As the faith-based leaders have a strong influence in the community they play a vital role in reducing discrimination and stigma.

Similarly, a Comprehensive Leprosy Training was provided to 28 health workers of Banke and Bardiya districts to build their capacity, so that they will be able to deliver a more effective leprosy service from their health centres. The participants were selected from the areas with a high incidence of leprosy cases. These health care workers are the trusted allies and point of contact in the community for the early identification, treatment and referrals.

Small Irrigation Scheme Support

INF Nepal Kapilvastu programmes supported small irrigation schemes in the five places of the working area with an overall objective of increasing agriculture production of poor farmers. As farmers in the project area highly rely on the rained farming system, their production is highly affected by erratic rainfall and climate condition. Especially, during drought period, it is not possible for all for farmers to grow crops, and face a difficult situation.



Irrigation scheme support in Kapilvastu

Empowerment comes the Pickle way

Seven days pickle making training was conducted in Martadi Bajura with an aim to generate income by establishing pickle enterprise for COVID-19 affected women. This training was jointly organised with Small and Cottage Industry Office Bajura and INF Nepal Bajura programme. A total of fifteen participants were involved in the training.



Participants presenting varieties of pickle

During the seven days of training, participants learned to make different types of pickles from locally available resources. Skills regarding food preservation, post-harvest technological know-how, information on grading, packaging and marketing were also imparted through the training course. The trained participants are more positive about future involvement in income generation through pickle making.

Capacity building of Health Service staff of Nepal Government



Health workers attending the slit skin smear training

INF Nepal Surkhet Shining hospital conducted two different trainings : Slit Skin Smear training basic module and refresher module for the laboratory staff of Nepal government. The objective of the trainings was to enhance their capacity for leprosy diagnosis and treatment. A total of eight participants from different health facilities of Karnali province participated in this cohort.

Warmth for the Winter

INF Nepal Jumla Programme distributed warm clothes and food packages to 100 persons with disability affected by COVID-19. They were very happy to receive the food support and warm clothes as many of them had a tough time arranging food due to COVID-19. Winter is very challenging time of the year for many vulnerable people in Jumla. The clothes were provided to fight through rough and cold winter weather with enduring dignity and protection. This opportunity to serve people with disability is one way of portraying that no one is left behind in our coronavirus responses and that their particular needs are met.



People with disability receiving warm clothes and food package

Tailoring a way of Empowering Rural Women

INF Nepal Jumla programme provided the tailoring training to the five female from subsistence farming household to improve their livelihood. The selection were made and recommended by their SHGs, considering the weak financial condition. Five of these women received the vocational training on tailoring for two months at Gothijula, Kanakasundari RM, and INF Nepal Jumla programmes also provided them with the sewing machine, clothes and other essential equipment's needed for the training. The life skill courses of tailoring opportunity were designed to empower these women from low income



Participants during the tailoring training

households and capacitate them to contribute to their family income. They are looking forward to start-up their own small tailoring business using the skills and become more confident and happier.

The Influencing Voice of SHGs

INF Nepal facilitated Self-Help Group [SHG] in Sunchhahari RM, Rolpa has helped set up a bridge that connects the remote Naumule village to the rest of the Municipality. The SHG formally requested the ward office to support the villagers need for a proper bridge. The SHG member's voice was heard, and the ward office sanctioned a sum of NRs 50,000 [USD430]. With this amount, the SHG members and the community set up and repaired the suspension bridge with locally available resources. This bridge has helped the villagers to travel and carry out their daily work.



The bridge connecting Naumule village which was repaired by SHG.

Appreciation from the Local Government

The Badimalika Municipality, Bajura has recognised INF Nepal for its COVID-19 response, relief and recovery works, responses to natural disasters and the livelihood support project in Bajura District.



Apart from the response work, INF Nepal Bajura programme has provided livelihood support to the migrant returnee, and member of COVID affected households through the agriculture-based livelihood interventions.

INF Nepal is currently implementing its community development programmes in three rural municipalities [Himali RM, Badimalika and Budhinanda Municipality], while for the past six years INF Nepal has also implemented community development works in Swamikartik and Khapar RM.

Community Service Centre and Community Police Service

Pokhara-1, Simpani, Bagar have jointly appreciated INF Nepal for contributing NRs 42,270 [USD 364] for managing the blood donation programme.



Better Access to Irrigation

INF Nepal Mugu programme has supported the construction of a 15-metre long irrigation canal in Bumcha village. Forty households of Srijanshil, Sakibarma and Laliguras SHGs of Soru RM have been directly benefited through this irrigation canal. Farmers in Bumcha village who previously struggled to irrigate their crops can now irrigate their fields through this canal scheme. Lack of proper irrigation system caused serious water problems during the cultivation season. This support has led to ownership and unity among the villagers giving them hope for more production than previous years.



The temporary pipeline used earlier for irrigation at Bumcha



The 15-metre long irrigation canal built with the support from INF Nepal Mugu

Safe Dignified Menstrual Access



School girls preparing the reusable sanitary pads

Many women and adolescent girls face social taboos during the menstruation cycle in the western part of Nepal, prohibiting them from participating in normal family activities as they are considered impure. INF Nepal Mugu programme organised one orientation programme to 200 girls of four secondary schools in the working area. The programme aimed at raising awareness, providing access to safe, dignified menstruation by removing the barriers faced by female students and capacitating them to maintain safe menstrual hygiene. The orientation was followed by training the girls to make the sanitary pad from the locally available resources to maintain safe menstrual hygiene.

STAFF FEATURED

Tham Bahadur Gurung

*Counsellor, Social care unit
- GPH, Pokhara*



Tham Bahadur Gurung [47 years] is a Patient Counsellor of Social Care Unit at GPH. He has worked in INF for the past 16-years in different roles and capacities

Tham is also a former leprosy patient and has visible deformities in both hands. At the young age of about 18, he went to India to earn his living and search of a better life for himself and his family.

While staying in India, Tham developed an ulcer on his palm. He received a minor dressing for his ulcer in India without having any diagnostic test. Years later, Tham visited GPH and got diagnosed with leprosy. Tham faced extreme discrimination due to his visible deformities in the early days. He shared one "While in the treatment period at GPH, I used to visit the hospital from my home in Syngja district [adjoining district to Pokhara]. One day, I entered a hotel on my way to have tea and breakfast. The hotel owner was observing my hands while I was having tea. After finishing it, I asked for the cost. While I was paying

the owner asked me to take the cup with me. That was very disrespectful and rude behaviour. After that I never went to any hotels, no matter how hungry I was. The situation now has changed a lot. People are now more aware of the disease."

As Tham counsels the patients, he comforts them with wisdom and words of hope that he personally lacked during his early days. He joyfully says, "I am eternally thankful to GPH, which not just treated my disease but also enabled me to live my life with dignity."

Tham has a purpose-driven life. He is a living proof that there is a full life even while going through some bitter experience in life. Apart from his core work of caring and supporting patients, he takes an active part in the hospital's social life, including participation in choirs in INF celebrations.

Please pray with us for Tham as he works with INF Nepal GPH team in realizing the INF's vision of bringing life in all its fullness. May God fill him with his grace, wisdom and power to serve others with kindness and compassion. May his life inspire many others, in giving them lasting hope.



Tham counselling a leprosy patient

Care for Cure, towards Zero Leprosy

Even though leprosy is said to be eliminated in Nepal, the truth of what happens to those who catch it, lives with them. Stigma and the fear of being affected are strong and hard to live with. People are subjected to discrimination and social exclusion simply because they are, or have previously been, affected by leprosy.

Give a **VOICE** to some of the world's most marginalised people.
Join our movement and become our Partners who **CARE**.

**CARE
FOR
CURE**
towards zero leprosy

FEATURED STORY

No More Smoky Kitchen

Raimati Pun Magar [27 years old] lives in Phagam village of Rolpa with her husband, a son and three daughters. Phagam is one of the most remote and geographically challenged communities of Sunchhahari RM in Rolpa district. The village is 58 kilometres east from Libang [the district headquarters of Rolpa district], and it is inhabited by Magars [ethnic community] and Dalits [so-called lower caste community]. It is one of the villages highly vulnerable to natural hazards like landslides and soil erosion. Every year, many landslide incidents occur in this village, which damages the property, cultivable land, walking trails, motor roads and even lives.

Raimati is also a member of SHG formed by INF Nepal in her village. Raimati and all her fellow SHG members had traditional open fireplace for cooking. All of them had to spend quite a time in the kitchen for cooking and other household's chores. Whenever Raimati made a fire in her kitchen, thick smoke would fill the room, as there was no proper smoke exit system. The smoke had blackened the kitchen wall, ceiling, utensils and clothes. Such kitchen environment had made the cooking hard for Raimati.

In one of the monthly meetings, Raimati's SHGs discussed the issues faced by all women in the village because of the traditional fire place. INF Nepal worked with the local government stakeholders and supported improved cooking stoves under Mini Project funded by Interact Asia. Raimati also received an improved cooking stove.

Now Raimati's kitchen has an improved cooking stove installed.



Raimati cooking on improved Kitchen Stove

She can now cook comfortably without staying in smoke-filled kitchen.

"I would like to give a big thanks to INF Nepal for making our lives easier. Now my children and I are out of risks of smoke borne illnesses. Our house especially the kitchen also looks much cleaner", says a Joyful Raimati.

Did you Know?

Mt Everest [Sagarmatha] grows by nearly a metre to new height! The world's highest summit Mount Everest is now 0.86m taller. As per Nepal and China's joint measurement efforts, the new height was announced. The earlier accepted height was 8,848 metres [29,028 feet].

Updated official height: 8,848.86 metres



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