

INF NEPAL UPDATES

May 2021



Greetings to you all.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Through this update, we would like to share you with some of the news across INF Nepal's working areas. Some of the major highlights from the last month include the registration of Green Pastures Hospital with the Health Ministry and our preparedness to COVID response work. For this month we have featured our Fistula work of Surkhet.

COVID Update: We are RESPONDING

COVID-19 is taking the world by surprise; it has disrupted the social and economic order in ways we have never imagined before, causing a great deal of uncertainty and raising issues requiring thoughtful responses. Motivated by INF vision and character, all of our plans, preparations during this second wave of COVID crisis will be directed with the "People First" approaches and broadly categorised into three primary objectives:

Objective 1 Support INF Hospitals for preparedness and response to COVID

Objective 2 Support communities and government stakeholders for COVID preparedness and response

Objective 3 Promote health and safety through staff care and support to INF staff

Many of the planned actions and emerging priorities include ensuring the health and safety of our staff members and assessing the financial and psychological needs, supporting infection prevention and control efforts across INF's working areas, supporting INF's hospitals to prepare isolation wards for staff

and in-patients, providing much-needed food and hospitalisation support to vulnerable people and families, such as persons with disability, persons affected by leprosy, single women-led household, supporting the Government and other stakeholders with additional resources needed to scale up the preventive measures and for the management of the quarantine, isolation centres and health facilities, addressing longer-term socio-economic impact [livelihoods, gender and inclusion] of COVID crisis for the vulnerable communities.

WE HAVE SIMILAR BURDEN BUT LESS CAPACITY TO COPE:

The COVID crisis that Nepal is facing similar to India, if not worse, but our health infrastructure is so fragile that it couldn't cope with the current challenges. Ministry of Health is saying, Nepal could reach its peak point very soon, and the next three weeks are crucial for us. The Government is also requesting all the humanitarian community to support the Government's efforts to respond to its essential needs and prevent and mitigate adverse health impacts.

You can support INF by donating at:

WWW.INF.ORG/COVID19

Hospital Registration

A very significant milestone to celebrate!!

Green Pastures Hospital [GPH] in Pokhara has been registered with the Nepal Government's Ministry of Health and Population [MoHP]. The 100-bed hospital and rehabilitation Centre will provide services for the management of Leprosy, Dermatology, General Disabilities and Rehabilitation, Spinal Cord Injury, Ear diseases and Palliative Care.

A special thanks to the MoHP and all other government bodies who supported us in this journey. We would like to extend our gratitude towards our partners, staff, and clients for their continued support and trust in our services. Thank you to everyone who has been part of the story of Green Pastures Hospital in Pokhara.

Felicitations by Health Directorate

On the occasion of World Health Day on 7th April, the Provincial Health Directorate [HD], Gandaki felicitated INF for its support and collaboration with HD in managing the COVID Crisis since March of 2020. INF supported the HD's effort to address the crisis by providing PPE sets and the dedicated human resource for five months in its communication needs of generating and disseminating public awareness.



Supporting the government health institutions

INF Donated health hygiene materials to the Infectious and Communicable Disease Hospital, Lekhnath, Kaski and Urban Health Centre, Ward No. 15, Pokhara. With this support, it is expected to help maintain the hygienic environment in these public health centres.

During the handover, INF Nepal's Executive Director mentioned that INF would continue to support government institutions as the organisation's capacity allows. Government health officials and local representative thanked INF for this gesture and hoped to get help from INF in the future.



KAPILVASTU

Inclusive Leadership

Leadership training was provided to women and people with disability. A total of 30 participants attended the training, of which three of the participants were male participants. This training was aimed at addressing the training needs of women and people with disabilities to empower them for future leadership roles. The training directed at enhancing participants' management skills, democratic decision-making, and ability to play a more effective, cooperative role in their communities and represent women and people with disabilities. The training used mixed of presentation, games and demonstrations.



JUMLA

Where there is WILL, there is WAY.....

People of Kankasundari RM-5, Baduwal Bada, were facing a significant problem regarding the walkway path in their locality for a long time. The path was narrow with the big stone making it very difficult for the villagers to walk. During the rainy season, this pathway would generally be underwater due to the flooding. Villagers wouldn't be able to cross the path, thus disrupting the daily lives of the people. Villagers raised this issue to their local representatives on several occasions, but no concrete action was carried out.

This inaction and idleness of authorities led members of three SHGs - Himanadi, Bindasaini and Kalimala formed by the INF Nepal WEAL project to come together to build an improved pathway for their community themselves. INF Nepal supported the 45 sacks of cement and some of the labour cost. The SHG members also contributed to the locally available raw materials like sand, stone, and labour. Now they have accessible path making their lives way easier.



ROLPA

Action for CHANGE

INF Nepal Rolpa facilitated a meeting among Sunchhahari Community Forest Users' Group [FUG] and a government primary school of Ward 4 Premchitra village in Syuri of Rolpa. Nine representatives from the FUG attended the meeting. During the meeting, the members of FUG assessed and identified the disaster risks in the schools and also discussed how such possible disasters could be prevented. They decided to build a retention wall in the landslide-prone area nearby the school to protect the school compound of Sunchhahari Primary School. The project supported them with construction materials [wire net box] to build the retention wall and raw materials. With INF Nepal's project support and community people's contribution, the retention wall has been built. There are a total of 65 students and five teachers who now feel safe.



SURKHET FISTULA

The Surkhet Fistula Centre was closed for almost one year from the first coronavirus lockdown until the return of the Fistula Surgeon from UK. Reopened in March it was a joy to see the ward full until the second wave of coronavirus arrived. Even in this short time 23 patients with fistula or other urinary problem have been treated and sixteen women have returned home happily to a life without incontinence and shame. Almost all of the new patients have come through the efforts of the fistula outreach team and we hope that it will not be too long before the patients still waiting for surgery are able to come and fill the wards again.



KALIKOT

Group Facilitation Training

INF Nepal Kalikot conducted a Group Facilitation Training for the group facilitators selected from each SHGs. The three-day training was held in three different places - Lalu, Rupsa and Kumal Gaun.

A total of 180 group facilitators [149 female, 31 male] participated in the training. The facilitation training was aimed to equip the members of the SHGs with facilitation skills, planning skills, keeping members involved, resolving conflicts, issues and creating real leadership opportunities among the facilitators.



Orientation on Disability

The way we think can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or it can reinforce common myths and misconceptions.

An Orientation Training on Disability was held at Kumal Gaun. A total of 15 participants - team leaders and community mobiliser attended the training course. The training used the participatory approach where the participants were introduced to some of the real issues and discrimination faced by people with disability. This training was aimed at educating and informing the participants and promoting the inclusion of people with disability and mainstreaming the disability issues in development interventions of the project activities and the communities. Uma Chaudhary from Nepalgunj facilitated the training.



Celebrating World Health Day

INF Nepal Kalikot celebrated World Health Day on 7th April at various places such as the Community Health Centre Dhari Kumalgau, Ratimati, Rupsa and Malkot village of Naraharinath RM by supporting these health centres with equipment such as digital weighing machine, blood pressure measuring set, thermometer, emergency light, water filters, gas cylinder, and bedsheets. The celebration programme also saw a local Deuda song and dance from the SHG members. Song was focused on health hygiene and sanitation.



BANKE

Awareness-raising on Trafficking

Male are key members of the household and communities, their involvement motivates and supports the female. Educating male about the human trafficking issue as they are also equally vulnerable to human trafficking and exploitation. Their involvement and engagement in project activity empower them to make the right decisions for their lives and their family members.

Similarly, school students of grade 8, 9 and 10 were also oriented on Human Trafficking. Since students of these age groups are vulnerable to trafficking, educating and sensitising them would help to prevent different forms of trafficking.

Account Management Training

Account Management Training was organised for the SHG group leaders of Leprosy affected people from Banke and Bardiya. A total of 12 people participated in the training from six SHGs. The SHGs are involved in saving and credit activities. The training was aimed at providing the basic information regarding the importance of proper book-keeping and management of accounts. The training was based both on theory and practical aspects of daily and monthly saving and credit related activities.

POWER Project working through Gender Focal Persons

POWER Project is a joint project with Consortium of ADRA, LWF, Caritas and INF Nepal. At INF this project is inbuilt into five existing project in five different areas - Jumla, Bajura, Mugu, Kapilvastu and Rolpa.

The project has a total of 310 Gender Focal Persons. The role and responsibilities of the Gender Focal Persons are to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of gender in the group and community, serve as the resource person on gender-related issues for the group, identify Gender-Based Violence [GBV] cases and other related cases in SHGs and communities, provide support to victims/survivors and refer them to concerned authorities for further legal support and counselling.



Major Achievements



310 Gender Focal Persons from communities trained and mobilised



45 Violence cases identified and referred to relevant authorities for legal support



63 Advocacy Campaigns organised against GBV and women rights



Survivors of violence are linked with livelihood opportunities from existing projects and RM/ Municipalities/Ward Offices



Local Government are committed to allocating budget for women.

BAJURA

Training on Composting/ Vermi composting

Three-day training on composting / vermi composting was arranged in Badimalika Municipality 9, Martadi aiming to establish "*One Home One Kitchen Garden*" and enable people to make compost at household level. Total 25 beneficiaries [22 female, 3 male] were involved in the training from different 12 settlement improvement committees of Badimalika ward 8 and 9.

The project officer of INF Nepal and the officer from the Agriculture Knowledge Centre facilitated the training. The participants were taught about know-how steps of composting, scope and importance of compost and vermi compost, setting up of a kitchen garden, concept for using local botanical pesticides and organic fertilizers, nutritional values of different seasonal vegetables, compost making practices, concept and benefits of Effective Micro-organisms [EM] and using practices cultivation practices of different seasonal seeds on kitchen garden, practical work on compost making by using local resources.



MUGU

Empowering the Disability Networks

INF Mugu organised a two-day training for the members of five ward-level disability networks in the working area. The training aimed to promote an understanding of disability issues, develop an understanding of appropriate and effective ways of interaction, and foster an understanding of the ways to meet the needs of people with disabilities. The ward level Disability Network Committee also formulated the action plan during the training. The training was conducted in the respective wards and attended by 29 members [15 female, 14 men].



Successful Registration of Agriculture Groups

Five agriculture groups formed by the SHGs were successfully registered in the Agriculture Unit of the Rural Municipality Office. This registration will help get grants and other technical assistance from the government and other institutions in the future, which will eventually lead to uplifting income level and the livelihood of the SHG members.



FEATURED STAFF

MIRA GURUNG

Team Leader

Kapilvastu

Mira Gurung is from Tulsipur, Dang. She has been working in INF Nepal as a Team Leader based in Kapilvastu, the southern plains of Nepal. She has been serving in INF Nepal for the last eight years. She started her work with INF Nepal as Team Leader in the Community Health and Development project in Bajura.

Field staff like Mira move into their working areas so they can genuinely walk alongside the local community. This level of commitment requires them to live apart from their families and loved ones, but it speaks volumes to people.

Mira says that working in these communities has created an emotional ties with the people. She has learned a lot about the diverse culture, the lifestyle and the daily struggles of villagers.

Travelling is one of Mira's passions and working in INF has been an opportunity for her to also enjoy her work while travelling in different communities.

Please pray with us for Mira and all of our field staff for God's protection and wisdom as they reach out to the people in these remote communities.



"I feel immensely proud and it is very satisfying to know that my work is making a positive contribution to these communities. The joy I get to witness through their smiling faces, hopeful eyes, their blessings and gratitude are the sources of my inspiration."



Did you know?

There are twenty protected areas in Nepal - ten National Parks, six Conservation Areas, one Wildlife Reserve and one Hunting Reserve. Nepal is a home to diverse floral and fauna species, natural ecosystems, ranging from lowland Terai region to the high Himalayas. The diverse climatic and topographic conditions have favoured a maximum diversity of flora and fauna in Nepal. The country occupies about 0.1 percent of the global area, but harbours 3.2 percent and 1.1 percent of the world's known flora and fauna, respectively.

National Parks [NP]

1. Chitwan NP
2. Sagarmatha NP
3. Makalu Barun NP
4. Langtang NP
5. Rara NP
6. She-Phoksundo NP
7. Khaptad NP
8. Banke NP
9. Bardiya NP
10. Shivapuri NP
11. Shuklaphata NP
12. Parsa NP

Conservation Areas [CA]

1. Annapurna CA
2. Kanchanjunga CA
3. Manaslu CA
4. Api Nampa CA
5. Gaurishankar CA
6. Krihsnasar CA

Wildlife Reserve

Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve

Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve

FEATURED STORY

A Renewed Life ...

For years, **Sabitri*** endured the pain of obstetric fistula without any medical attention. Thanks to INF Nepal Fistula Outreach work, in 2020 Sabitri was identified by a local Female Community Health Volunteer who was trained on fistula by INF's fistula outreach worker and in spring of 2021, Sabitri was taken to the Fistula Centre for treatment. Sabitri's story is one suffering and, ultimately, a renewal of hope, a renewed life.

"I had gotten pregnant at the age of 19, I struggled at home for 5 days with labour pain and later I was carried to the community health post. I lost the baby and I got a fistula, then the pain of living with fistula." This was the start of Sabitri's 26-year struggle.

In remote places of Nepal, people don't have proper access to health care, where protracted labour often goes unassisted, or badly assisted, fistulas occur far more regularly and often go untreated.

Forty-five years old Sabitri is from the Baitadi district of far west Nepal. She was married when she was only ten years old and her husband eleven years old. She has faced both normal and difficult deliveries and has lost two babies. During her first delivery, Sabitri developed a fistula as she went through a long labour. Unfortunately, the baby did not survive. She suffered continuous urine incontinence and nerve damage.

After her first pregnancy, for fifteen years there were no further pregnancies and Sabitri thought it was because of her urine leaking. There was no one else in the village with this problem and she was despised. The villagers used to spit and call names. No one came near her, she was always alone. Life was hard. In the hot weather, she developed ulcers from the urine burns and, tired of continuously changing she would sleep in the wet clothes.

Sabitri and her husband travelled to several other hospitals even in India seeking treatment but to no avail. Then, after 15 long years, Sabitri discovered that she was



pregnant again. This time she was able to deliver the baby boy at home without difficulty.

Another unsuccessful pregnancy followed, the baby could not survive. Six years ago her little girl was born while she was out in the forest cutting grass and with the same sickle, she cut the baby's cord, wrapped her in her dress and brought her home.

Sabitri's struggle went on, even her son would not come closer and eat the food cooked by her due to her urine leak problem. For a mother, Sabitri had to endure much more emotional pain and trauma battling the unknown. One of the FCHVs identified Sabitri's problem. She contacted the Fistula Centre. Finally, in March 2021, she got the operation at the Fistula Centre. She had to wait with a catheter for two weeks before knowing if the operation was successful. When the catheter was removed she was dry and very happy.

"I have a new life. Before this, I thought there would never be treated and I would have this trouble until I died. But at last, I had treatment and I have been saved so I am so thankful for this hospital and the free treatment that I received."

Sabitri made friends with other women who had also suffered the same problem. She learned that she is not the only woman living with fistula under the sun.

INF's fistula team is committed to providing more than just surgery for women but restoring women to full health filled with hope and dignity.

** Name changed for anonymity.*

For more information and updates:

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