

Monthly Activity Report - November 2005

Date: 15-Dec-2005

Reported by: Md. Shamim Uddin, Arsenic Centre Manager

1. Panjia Project

DW #8 Drilling: The drilling of DTW #8 was started in Mandardanga westpara on 10th November and finished on 23rd November 2005. It took a longer time than other DTWs since there was not enough water in the deep aquifer at the first site and the drilling work had to be done at another site. The depth of the DTW is 705 feet and it was sealed successfully. The water quality was checked on 29th November, and most of parameters are within the Bangladesh guideline values except bacteriological contamination because it was necessary to use cow dung during the drilling period. It is hoped that the bacteriological contamination will decrease within December and villagers will start drinking.

Gombhira Program: Gombhira programs were performed for awareness-raising in Had village Baliaghata para of Ward #9 on 14/11 and Immannagar village Sarderpara of Ward #1 on 16/11. There were 250 participants (50 male + 120 female + 80 children) in Had-Baliaghata and 380 (100 male + 200 female + 80 children) in Immannagar-Sarderpara. Although there are DTWs in those areas, some families are still using arsenic contaminated TW water. The purpose of gombhira program was to increase the awareness among the villagers about the importance of taking safe water for healthy living. Some local songs were also used to deliver messages on water related diseases and its remedies.

Flipchart Performance: The flipchart program was conducted in 9 places (schools - 5 and paras - 4) of Ward #9 of Panjia Union. There was a total of 263 participants (232 students + 31 teachers) in the programs at 5 schools, and 108 participants (26 male + 61 female + 21 children) at 4 paras. At the end of each flipchart program, the participants asked some questions about arsenic, arsenicosis and safe water options, which were duly answered by AAN.



Nutrition Program: Nutrition programs were arranged in 4 places at the sites where the deep tube wells were newly installed by AAN. The dates and the number of participants are summarized in the table below.

Option No.	Village/ Para	Ward No.	Date of Nutrition Program	Participants			
				Male	Female	Children	Total
DTW #3	Gorbhanga-West	2	20-Nov	10	50	100	160
DTW #2	Gorbhanga-East	2	21-Nov	10	52	72	134
DTW #4	Gorbhanga-Bottola	2	26-Nov	10	25	50	85
DTW #6	Panjia-West	9	29-Nov	8	47	110	165

AAN Community Support Coordinator first introduced locally available cheap nutritious vegetables and then taught the villagers how to cook *kichuri* with rice, *dal*, and vitamin-rich vegetables while cooking together with some women. She explained about the importance of taking nutritious food as well as safe water to prevent arsenicosis. At the end of the nutrition program, the cooked *kichuri* was served to the children.

Mapping Using PRA: A social map was drawn in the afternoon on the same day of a nutrition program by using PRA tools at each DTW site. The map was drawn within the area of user families where a DTW was installed by AAN. Through the PRA mapping, villagers recognized why the spot was selected for the DTW and those who had initially refused to come to the DTW changed their attitudes.



After the completion of the mapping, AAN explained the villagers about the arsenic contamination of shallow tube wells and importance of taking safe drinking water.

Maintenance Training and Handover Ceremony: After the PRA mapping, a “DTW operation and maintenance” training was carried out at each site. AAN explained them about possible problems and taught how to repair them. A toolbox was also provided to the Users Committee. Each Users Committee will be able to solve any technical problems which may occur to their DTW. In the evening the Users Committee arranged a handover ceremony where AAN provided the ownership certificate to the committee.

Nameplate Setting: Among the 8 newly installed deep tube wells, a nameplate was set at 7 sites during the period of 18th to 30th November. Each nameplate is inscribed with the committee name, landowner’s name, installation date, depth, and the name of the implementation organization.



Listing of Suspected Arsenicosis Patients: AAN found 115 (67 Male, 48 Female) suspected arsenicosis patients during various awareness-raising programs. AAN is planning to have those suspected patients checked by arsenicosis specialists. The distribution of the suspected patients is shown below:

Suspected Arsenicosis Patients Listed by AAN through the Awareness-raising Activities in Panjia Union

Ward No.	Village	Program	Date of Listing	Male	Female	Age	Total
1	Imannagar	Monitoring	22 Sep, 16 Nov	9	13	30-75	22
	P.Bankabarshi	Monitoring	23 Sep	5	0	30-42	5
	Madardanga	Monitoring	28 Sep	1	0	42	1
2	Gorbhanga	Flipchart, Monitoring & Survey	8, 26 Sep, 8 to 21 Nov	16	22	25-75	38
3	Sagardattakathi	Gombhira	10 Sep	2	0	27-45	2
	Belakathi	Monitoring & Survey	22 Sep, 8 Nov	1	1	35-40	2
4	Monohornagar	Gombhira	10 Sep	6	1	36-60	7
6	Manderdanga	Gombhira	10 Sep	6	2	40-85	8
7	R.Bankabarshi	Monitoring & Gombhira	7, 10, 22 Sep	6	0	30-55	6
8	Kamlapur	Gombhira	10 Sep	1	0	38	1
9	Panjia	Gombhira, Nutrition & Survey	10 Sep, 12-14, 29 Nov	7	2	30-45	9
	Had	Gombhira	10 Sep, 14 Nov	7	7	24-58	14
Total				67	48	24-85	115

Although AAN targeted Ward Nos. 1, 2 and 9 for activities during the current Panjia Project Phase I, there were some people from other Wards who wanted to have their skin symptoms checked. This may mean that many people are aware of arsenic contamination of TW water and arsenicosis.

2. JICA/AAN Options

KRK Pipeline: During the visits to the pipeline water supply system with a team of ex-ODA monitors from Japan on 15th and with 3 students of Holland on 30th November, I talked with the users and the caretaker about the processed water quality. I also observed the treatment plant and confirmed that it was producing good water. Users were satisfied with the processed water quality.

Monitoring of Inactive Options: AAN monitored some safe water options (Panchvulate PSF, Agrovulate PSF, Subarnakhali PSF #1 & #2) in Sharsha Upazilla since we had found problems previously. AAN discussed with the users committees of Subarnakhali PSF #1 & #2, and we

expect those PSFs will be activated soon. The water quantity of ponds at Agrovulate and Panchvulate is too small to activate those PSFs. So, emergency wells are recommended at these 2 sites.

3. Follow-up Activities

Site Visit for Experience Sharing (Users Committee of Chupria PSF #1): After the reformation of the Chupria PSF Users Committee, AAN arranged an experience-sharing tour on 17th November to the PSF sites of Khalishkhali and Boyerdanga villages. The representatives of the new committee (4 male, 5 female) and President of Chupria Mohila Samity learned the role of Users Committee to operate PSF throughout the year. The Chupria PSF is now working well and the new Committee will be able to repair any kind of technical problems on PSF. To fence the PSF pond, villagers provided bamboos and labor and AAN provided net.



Treatment of Arsenicosis Patient in YDFH: The arsenicosis patient Nasir received surgical operation on his fingers at Yamagata Dhaka Friendship Hospital (YDFH) in August. He recovered and returned home in Gopenathpur. From the beginning of October, however, water was coming out from the operated part of the left small finger. As a result Nasir was re-admitted at YDFH on 26th November.

4. Others

Visit of Ex-ODA Monitors: Five Japanese ex-ODA monitors visited AAN laboratory and JICA/AAN project sites in Sharsha Upazilla on 15th November. They visited (1) Samta village to meet with arsenicosis patients and to see PSF, (2) Basotpur village to see various safe water options, (3) Kadamtola School para to see an abandoned dugwell sand filter due to users' indifference to maintenance, and (4) KRK pipeline. At a meeting held in the evening Jessore office the ex-ODA monitors said they were shocked with the graveness of arsenic contamination in Bangladesh and commented that to supply safe drinking water to the people exposed to arsenic contamination must be a big challenging job.



Visit of Three Dutch Students: Three students from Holland (University of Amsterdam, University of Rotterdam and Wageningen University) visited Samta PSF, dugwell sand filter, arsenicosis patients and KRK pipeline in Sharsha Upazilla on 30th November. After the field visit, they said they were able to gather knowledge on arsenic issues and learned about the role of NGOs and Users Committees for sustaining alternative safe water devices. I also took them to a highly arsenic contaminated village of Jhikargacha Upazilla where several patients had already died. They are planning to conduct a research there and expecting help from AAN during their research period.

Safe Water Option Demand Survey: After the Eid holidays (1st-7th November), AAN conducted a survey to know the demand of urgently needed safe water options in 47 villages where >80% tube wells are contaminated by arsenic in Keshabpur Upazilla. The survey was conducted from 8th to 18th November. The purpose of this survey was to prepare a plan for Panjia Project Phase-II. The number of the safe water options urgently required was 158 in 47 villages.

Installation of a PSF in Comilla: To construct a PSF at a madrasa/orphanage in Fenua village, Comilla, AAN Engineering team and Country Manager visited the site on 27th November. The necessary materials were purchased by the end of November and the construction work will start from 1st December.

Laboratory Wastage Disposal: Since the installation of AAS in AAN laboratory, we had stored 400L wastage in plastic containers. We disposed the wastage in the municipal drainage after proper neutralization with sodium hydroxide on 24th November. Before neutralization of the wastage, pH was 1.5 and 7 after neutralization.