

Asia Arsenic Network

Activity Report - March 2006

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Reported by: Md. Abu Shamim Khan, Operation Manager (Jessore)
Md. Al-Amin Mollah, Admin & Accounts Officer (Jessore)
&
Sayed Sunny, Admin & Accounts Manager (Dhaka)

Panjia Project (Phase -2)

1. Result of Tubewell Screening: During the period of 27 February to 23 March 2006, the tube well screening was carried out in Ward Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of Panjia Union. For the screening two field workers (1 male and 1 female) were selected in each Ward by interview with the help of Chairman of each Ward Arsenic Mitigation Committee (AMC).

After thorough training, the field workers checked the arsenic concentration of tube well water with the NIPSOM field kit and painted red the spout of tube wells which water contained arsenic exceeding 0.05mg/L, the Bangladesh standard for arsenic in drinking water, and green on the tube wells with arsenic below the standard. The colors help villagers know their tube well water was safe or not. In summary, 1,134 (97.3%) out of 1,166 active tube wells in those five Wards were arsenic contaminated.

2. Awareness Raising Program: With the intention of changing the behavior of villagers regarding the use of water, several awareness-raising programs were undertaken for the project by using the flip chart. Since arsenic-contaminated tube wells were painted red during the screening period, we observed that many households were not drinking water from those red-painted tube wells. The fact indicates the importance of effective awareness raising activities.

The flipchart is tailored as a story so that people would be attracted and pay attention carefully. In the flip chart, various symptoms of arsenicosis are explained and nutritious food is introduced with photographs. Ideas on alternative safe water devices such as a pond sand filter (PSF), a dug well sand filter, a deep tubewell and rainwater harvesting are also illustrated.

The flipchart performance was conducted at a total 66 places in 3 Wards of Panjia Union during 6 March to 28 March. About 3,144 people participated in the program. Details of the flipchart performance are summarized in the table below:

Period	W #	Village	Place	Male	Female	Student Male	Student Female	Child	Total
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6/3-19/3	3	Sagar Dattakati	Para/21	113	322	0	0	167	602
			School/3	0	0	88	103	0	191
		Belkati	Para/16	114	439	0	0	133	686
			School/3	0	0	55	57	0	112
20/3-22/3	4	Baghdanga	Para/6	42	129	0	0	24	195
			School/4	0	0	167	189	0	356
23/3-28/3	5	Manoharnagar	Para/10	56	213	0	0	196	465
			School/3	0	0	261	276	0	537
6/3-28/3	Total			325	1,103	571	625	520	3,144

3. Arsenic Mitigation Committee (AMC) Meetings: A Union AMC meeting was held on 25th March at Panjia Union Parishad, attended by 22 AMC members. First, Abu Shamim Khan explained the screening result to the members and said that we were getting fund for safe water supply form Rotary's Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Project Committee for Panjia and Bidyanandakati Unions under Keshabpur Upazilla. All the AMC members were very happy to know the news. Union AMC Chairman of Panjia, Mr Nizam Uddin, told the Ward members to arrange Ward AMC and village meetings and encourage people to form Users Committees. The following dates and places were decided at the meeting for Ward AMC/village meetings:

Date	W #	Time	Place
27-3-06	1	4.00pm	Gorbhanga Madrasa
28-3-06	3	4.00pm	Belokati Eidgah Miadan
		5.00pm	Sagar Dattakati Primary School
29-3-06	4	4.00pm	Bagdanga High School
		5.00pm	Gorbhanga Madrasa
01-4-06	5	4.00pm	Manoharnagar Primary School
02-4-06	6&9	4.00pm	Panjia Union Parishad
04-4-06	7	4.00pm	Rajnagar Bankbari Primary School
05-4-06	8	4.00pm	Kamalapur Primary School

Chairman of Union AMC, Mr. Nizam Uddin, thanked AAN for the activities so far carried out. Chairman and Ward Members offered their all types of cooperation for our activities in Panjia.

4. Ward AMC/Village Meetings: Five Ward AMC/village meetings were held in four Wards in March as below:

W #1: It was held at the Gorbhanga Madrasa on 27th attended by 19 persons including WAMC members. Villagers were eager to know how many DTWs were going to be allocated for them. The WAMC and villagers requested a total of 8 DTWs for W #1 so that all the villagers would be benefited. AAN responded that another 5 DTWs would be enough to cover the Ward fully.

W #3: The Ward #3 AMC organized two meetings at Belkati Eidgah Miadan and Sagar Dattakati Primary School on 28th March. Altogether 34 persons attended. At the both meetings AAN explained the tube well screening results, various types of alternative safe water devices, symptoms of arsenicosis, etc. After telling them of the Rotary fund we informed that AAN had a plan to install 5 DTWs in the Ward. Though WAMC

Chairman was not present at the meeting, the Advisor was present and she thanked AAN for the installation of DTWs. AAN requested the Advisor to join with us on 29th March in a PRA program to discuss with villagers about the DTW site.

W #4: It was held at the Bagdanga High School on 29th March attended by 24 persons including WAMC members. Firstly we explained the tube well screening results, patient information, etc. About safe water options, WAMC Chairman told that one more option would be enough in the Ward since the area is not so large and Union Parishad had already allocated one DTW for them. Finally we requested the WAMC Chairman and members to join in the PAR program on 1st April for site selection.

W #2: On the same day, 29th March, another AMC meeting was held in Ward #2 attended by 6 persons. It took place at the Gorbhanga Madrasa. AAN informed the meeting that it would be possible to install another 2 DTWs in the Ward and requested the WAMC Chairman to join the PRA program on 1st April for site selection.

5. Site Selection: Under the supervision of the Ward AMC, villagers produce a map of their village using PRA methods to identify the best place for a new alternative safe water device. During the mapping, various local conditions are taken into consideration such as locations of the existing safe water sources, distance from homesteads to the new device, and so on. It must be ensured, also, that the water source is in an easy access by women.



Making a village map to identify the best place for an option.

6. Users Committee Formation: Towards the end of March, eight Users Committees were organized as shown in the following table. Every Users Committee has an executive body consisting of 9 members.

Date	User Committee Name	Ward	No. of User Families
28 th March	Gorbhanga Bazar Committee	1	50
29 th March	Monohornagar Bagdanga High School	4	40
29 th March	Imannagar Gazi Para	1	52
29 th March	Paunch Bankabarsi East Sarder para	1	37
29 th March	Paunch Bankabarsi South Sarder Para	1	30
30 th March	Mandardanga West Gazi Para	1	35
30 th March	Belokati Gazi para	3	37
30 th March	Belokati Zoarder para	3	45

7. Training for Baseline Survey: Prior to the baseline survey planned in Bidyanandakati Union, a training program was carried out for interviewers on 29th March at Teghori High School in the Union. The main subject of the training was how to interview people using a pre-structured questionnaire consisting of questions concerning the

demographic information, domestic water use and knowledge on arsenic problems, as developed for the baseline survey. It was decided to select about 200 households in 3 villages of Titabajitpur, Kaliarari, and Baga.

Option Follow-up

KRK Pipeline Water Supply System: The pipeline water supply system construction was completed in KRK villages in June 2004. The system is a combination of surface water treatment unit with multistage filters and pipeline network. However, day by day the water quality of filtered deteriorates for sand problem. The KRK Pipeline Committee applied to AAN for financial support to change sand, the total cost of which was Tk. 6,311 and AAN agreed to contribute Tk. 3,500 only. The committee agreed and undertook the work of changing sand.

Arsenicosis Patients

●**Mr. LH** (Marua village): He was admitted at Yamagata Dhaka Friendship Hospital on 14 March for check-up. He had been complaining of pain on the chest.

●**Mrs. R.** and her son, **R.** (Marua village): They were hospitalized at Yamagata Dhaka Friendship Hospital since end-January for medical examinations and some treatment. They were discharged on 18 March.

Others

Financial Support from Rotary: A Project Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Project Committee under Rotary International District 3280 and AAN on 29 March for the Keshabpur Safe Water Supply Project. The Agreement aims to install 60 DTWs in Panjia and Bidyanandakati Unions.