

Promoting Hygiene and Health Education

The Hygiene Promotion and Health Education Training Component aimed at preventing or mitigating water, sanitation and hygiene related diseases and facilitating community participation in decision-making. The component targeted mostly school children of 263 villages who were encouraged to participate in a group process using participatory methods. This project component was implemented in three months by two local NGOs, NGO Gender Group in Bogale, Dedaye and Pyapon, and NGO Social Vision Services in Kungyangon and Kyauklat. All component activities were closely supervised by UN-Habitat. Over 13,000 children benefited from hygiene awareness activities across the five townships.

UN-Habitat held in-house discussions with both local NGOs on the objectives and expected outputs of the component in addition to all the necessary arrangements that needed to be made at field offices in order to coordinate and provide support to both implementing partners. UN-Habitat Township Coordinators were responsible for facilitating local authorities' permission, organizing children and communities, finding locations at which to conduct health education sessions (mostly monasteries, pavilion halls, schools, sometimes houses of village leaders, etc). Information, Communication and Education (IEC) materials developed and tested in the field by UN-Habitat were sent to field offices long in advance to be distributed to children as well to be left at schools as part of education materials.

Community Water Supply and Sanitation Recovery Project



Key Achievements

- Community mobilization has allowed target villages to contemplate and come to terms with their situation and to organize and initiate action for the development of their communities with their own initiative and creativity
- Substantial training and capacity building was conducted for women in the process of empowering and enhancing their skills and knowledge, and this has facilitated their involvement in different activities of the project in the field
- Local communities were empowered. They are more aware, organized, and informed having substantial experience and exposure of local development problems, prospects and challenges
- Actual number of villages covered (263) exceeded number of villages planned (250); actual outputs achieved exceeded outputs planned
- Out of 2,417 VRCs members 1,016 (43%) were women. Of these women, 41% occupied VRC management positions
- 263 VRCs were formed in 263 selected villages in all five townships
- 263 Community Action Plans (CAPs), which facilitated identification and prioritization of community water supply and sanitation infrastructure related project activities were developed
- 1,545 Community Contracts (water and sanitation) were implemented

Results and Impacts

- As a result of strong and effective community mobilization, a greater cohesiveness and social harmony was found among community
- VRCs became an effective platform to resolve local conflicts and reach consensus on any project related issue. The growing trend of consensus building among local communities simply improved the decision making process at the village level and as a result many landmark results were achieved on the ground
- Local communities were found more aware and organized and hence ready to share the responsibility and play their part of role in local development
- Improved living condition with the provision of selected water supply and sanitation infrastructure in target villages
- Greater level of accountability and transparency in local communities and therefore VRCs based water supply and sanitation infrastructure produced extra outputs
- Women were found actively taking part in all different types of VRC initiated activities due to extensive empowerment
- Sustainability in project as a result of greater feeling of ownership by communities since they were fully involved with the project implementation

Lessons Learned

The project made major breakthroughs and achieved landmark results on the ground. It was important to devise a very practical and pragmatic operational mechanism that matched local conditions and suited local context. A good mix on the technical and professional team was essential to successfully implement the project on the ground. It was also demonstrated that the participatory approach of project implementation was the only path towards achieving broader success. Meticulous attention and relentless effort are required in mobilizing communities to undertake the project activities.

It was again proven that community mobilization is an effective tool for local development. Local communities showed it was their quest to work together and reach absolute consensus when required for the greater good of their society. Awareness and exposure in local communities brought many positive changes in them. Greater ownership and accountability, improved transparency, and larger unity were found as common features of the newly empowered society. Community contribution in different forms is a strong indication of their realization that donors alone cannot fulfill all their needs and requirements of local development.

Supported by

JAPAN
Official Development Assistance

UN HABITAT

UN-HABITAT Myanmar
No 6, Natmauk Road, Yangon
Tel (95-1) 542 910 - 919 Ext. 135
Fax (95-1) 544 531, 545 634
Email un.habitat.mya@gmail.com



water and sanitation for all

Proving Access to Water and Sanitation

Building on the on-the-ground experiences, successes and lessons learnt, UN-Habitat implemented the Community Water-supply and Sanitation Recovery Project, funded by the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the Government of Japan, which aimed to improve the health of families in the Delta by providing access to safe water and sanitation infrastructure, while raising awareness of hygiene and health related issues. The geographic focus of the project was Dedaye, Pyapon, Bogale, Kyailat and Kungyangon Townships (96 village tracts). Over 260 villages across five townships were targeted comprising approximately 190,000 people including more than 80,000 women.

The activities were planned to be high quality interventions, particularly the construction and infrastructure activities, with close technical supervision to ensure quality standards. To ensure that all inputs are sustainable, the approach was a blend of traditional and modern technologies carefully designed to ensure maximum long term impact for the villages, significantly enhancing the living conditions of the people in the target townships long into the future. The goal of the project was to improve the health of families in the Ayeyarwady Division and Yangon Division by providing access to safe water and sanitation infrastructure, while raising awareness of hygiene and health related issues. A guiding principal was to Build Back Better and not to simply return people to Pre-Nargis standards. The project aim was to ensure that access to water, sanitation and awareness of health and hygiene related issues are all enhanced as a result of this project.

Support through the People's Process

During the last decade UN-Habitat has been involved in post conflict and post-disaster recovery projects in several countries in Asia. During the implementation of these projects, the underlying principle has been to place the affected people at the center of the process. This means mobilizing the affected to take decisions on their recovery and supporting them along the way. UN-Habitat strongly believes that unleashing the potential of the people is the only way in which all the affected people can recover in a short time. People have been able to cope with extreme difficulties and have demonstrated a relentless ability to improve their lives in the face of extreme circumstances. In the post conflict and post-disaster scenario, their ingenuity and creativity need to be directed towards the rebuilding of their lives and their physical assets.

The People's Process requires trust in people and recognition of the way people organize themselves. Communities are expected to lead in assigning priorities, in decision making and in taking action. They are encouraged to execute recovery and development programmes which build on their own skills and know-how. Groups of families and whole communities that share common interests and goals, work out action plans. In order to implement these plans UN-Habitat signs contracts, provides funding and sets up joint accountability formats, in such a way that the community groups are in full control of their own expenditures with the technical assistance of UN-Habitat.

This is the first time I have gotten one. I had no jar before. I could not afford to buy it. I am grateful for this. I refill the amount of water that I use into the jar whenever it needs refilling. I keep the jar always full with water. It is sufficient to last the rainy season, but it is not enough for the dry season.

Daw Khaing Tun, Beneficiary
Yae Kyaw Village, Dedaye Township



The emergence of the VRC marks the beginning of village development. There are different subgroups such as the treasurer and financial group, material procurement group and construction group; all taking different roles and making regular and daily financial entries and records, it is a very good practice. There would be no problems if the township team were to make a financial audit.

The VRC is encouraged to implement these activities and in so doing they gain more knowledge and skills in all aspects. Women also participate as committee members, taking financial responsibility. This is good for smooth implementation and helpful to men in the groups for whenever and whatever problems were encountered. Women also improved their knowledge and technical skills.

U Tay Zeik Ta, Abbot of Monastery
Su Ka Nan Village, Kyaiklat Township

Village Recovery Committee (VRC)

After successful completion of several rounds of community meetings and other basic trainings in community mobilization and empowerment, 263 Village Recovery Committees (VRCs) were formed based on democratic election processes in all selected villages to ensure equal participation of women in all the various kinds of project activities.

The reason for VRC formation was to address the common development issues faced by the entire community. There were ten members on average, 42% were women. The members elected a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer and an assistant. The VRCs were responsible for transparent and accountable management of funding with the treasurer as mandatory signatory and the chairperson and secretary as alternative signatories. The VRCs assigned specific tasks to members as necessary. The total number of VRC members was 2,417 in all 263 villages combined. Out of these 1,016 were women (43%). 1,263 people were in VRC management positions: 521 women (41%) and 724 men (49%). Among the 263 villages, 168 households were headed by women and 175 were households comprised of other vulnerable groups. With the passage of time, the VRCs matured and gained confidence. They became more cooperative, working together better to realize improvements in their living conditions.



Training and Capacity Building

Communities had been supported by the practical knowledge and ground experience invariably helped them to formulate very well articulated WASH activities proposals. Several trainings (concrete rings, small concrete tanks, ferro-cement tanks, fly proof latrines and pond fencing concrete posts) strongly emphasizing on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures were successfully conducted for target groups including women, which enhanced their confidence and encouraged them to participate actively in the implementation of project activities. Training and capacity building had simply facilitated the implementation of diverse nature of WASH infrastructure related activities. Training sessions were not limited to classroom lectures but rather substantial information and skills were also transferred through practical exercises and involvement with project activities on the ground. Implementation of project activities had provided local communities with hands-on experience and enriched their knowledge and understanding of community-led development initiatives.

Community Contracts emerge from a process, in which communities identify their needs, prioritize their problems and agree upon plans for their solutions



This project was fundamentally based on the philosophy of community mobilization and their empowerment, where target communities actually led the process of planning, implementation, monitoring and maintenance



Community Action Planning (CAP)

After successful formation of VRCs, Community Action Plans (CAPs) were prepared in the selected villages. First, groups of women, men and youth were organized separately, since needs vary from one group to another. Later, mixed groups were formed. In light of the long and varied set of community needs, priorities were set according to the overall water and sanitation needs of the village. The problems and project activities identified were also categorized by noting other potential sources of support for addressing the problems. Several rounds of thorough discussions were held among VRC members before they reached the final prioritization of the project activities identified by the CAP. Realizing the very low level of WASH infrastructure available in the villages, the list of project activities identified under CAP in all VRCs included nearly all types of water supply and sanitation that are minimum essential requirements for healthy living. Despite similar demands, the VRC prioritization of project activities in some villages differed.



Community Contracts

The process of Community Contracts was simple, systematic and transparent. Necessary in-house preparation was done in advance. A flexible approach was adopted for the terms of payment by installments to fund any Community Contract in the field: 100% if the project was implemented in less than two weeks; 80% and 20% if project implementation went beyond two weeks. The remaining 20% was allocated upon reaching the bench marks of works. The field outputs and notable achievements of this project were evidence of the high impact of this project. The project successfully implemented 1,545 Community Contracts; the project activities included all different kinds of water supply and sanitation infrastructure. All project activities were implemented through the community contracting mechanism where local communities played the lead role and took primary responsibility for labour management, procurement, quality maintenance, progress reporting, and timely completion. In addition, contributions received from the local communities in the process of implementing the project activities were remarkable. VRCs were greatly successful in maintaining clear and transparent account of their expenses, which was achieved through the process of community active involvement, public accountability, reporting and documentation. Cash books and financial reports were always available for communities to verify transparency.

UN-HABITAT



Activities Implemented under CWSSR Project

156	School Sanitary Toilet-Double Unit
10	School Sanitary Toilet-Single Unit with Hand Washing Facility
147	Water Storage & Hand Washing Facility/Scheme Near School Latrine
12	Communal Sanitary Latrine Double Unit
2,187	Household Model Sanitary Latrine
168	Rain Water Collection Tank (5,000- gal) for Schools
29	Rain Water Collection Tank (5,000- gal) for Communal Places
207	Pond Renovation-Fencing/Brick Steps/Platform/Footpath
2	Pond Renovation-Stilling Well/Filter/Spillway
18	Pond Renovation-Earth Work Dig and Fill
167	Hand-Dug Well (New)
45	Shallow Tube-Well/Hand Pump (New)
894	HH Cisterns/Gutter (Concrete Tanks/Bamboo Gutter/Tarp-Roof catch)
8	Min-Dam/Reservoir
13,911	Ceramic Jar with Cover (30-gal)
1,660	Clay Water Filter
62	Jetty to Water Source (s)
67	Bridge to Water Source (s)
541	Emergency Water Supply/Dry Season
28	Village Pond (New)/ Dig & Fill

Women's Participation and Empowerment

Under the scope of its intervention, the project gave equal attention to involvement and empowerment of local women in target areas of selected villages. Throughout its period of operation, the project worked closely with women and supported the formation of 263 VRCs where 43% were women out of 2,417 total members; and of these women, 41% occupied VRC management positions. Women were actively involved in preparing CAPs as per their understanding of local problems and priorities. Women went through rigorous discussion with male VRC members before finalizing common priority project activities for their villages. Substantial workshops and training were conducted in the process of empowering and enhancing women's skills and knowledge in the area of water supply and sanitation activities implementation. Myanmar culture does not segregate women from discussion, decision-making and community development participation. Women community facilitators played key roles in empowering and involving local women in different activities of the project in the field. The social impact of the project's empowerment of women was very visible. After the initiation of the project, more women were found openly attending the meetings and actively participating in deliberations and discussions of their local problems.



I was selected as treasurer of the VRC through the community meeting facilitated by UN-HABITAT.

After participating in the community activities, I became energized knowing that these are valuable and good things to do. I feel very motivated. I gained the trust of the whole community being part of our collective leadership for village development. We now have the full confidence to do things even if UN-HABITAT phases out. We can apply the skills we learned to our own businesses when UN-Habitat finishes the project.

Daw Aye Aye Min, Treasurer of VRC
Kan Chaung Villaye, Pyapon

Target Areas and Beneficiaries

Location: The project has identified 263 villages across five townships (Dedaye, Pyapon, Bogale, Kyailat and Kungyangon) amongst the most vulnerable and in dire need of WASH support in the Ayeyarwady Division and Yangon Division.

Beneficiaries: The primary beneficiaries of this project are over 190,000 people in 263 villages; the project directly serves approximately 40,000 families with water and sanitation infrastructure. . In addition more than 100 village schools, over 13,000 children, have benefited from hygiene awareness activities. Villagers – men and women – and local artisans have benefited from training, capacity building, knowledge and skills gained from the implementation of this project. The number of secondary and tertiary beneficiaries is many fold as current practices of defecation in streams and rivers has severe consequences for other communities living down stream.

Community Mobilization

Through community mobilization, people can organize themselves to take action collectively by developing their own plan and strategy for recovery rather than having it be imposed from outside. Communities were informed about the project objectives and scope by UN-Habitat's Community Facilitators. During community mobilization baseline data was collected to prepare village profiles. Local communities were at the centre of the process of decision-making and all activities performed at the local level were recognized and owned by them. Communities also took responsibility for the sustainability of all those initiatives that were undertaken by the project.

