

# CLTS Foundation



CLTS Foundation Chairman and Advisor visited Chhattisgarh from 24 to 26 February to see first hand the strides being made in rural sanitation in the state and to explore a partnership to further scale up efforts.

Two senior representatives of CLTS Foundation – Dr. Kamal Kar and Deepak Sanan went on a three-day visit to the state. On the 24th, they visited Rajnandgaon district to see first hand the experience with CLTS in the field. The two senior representatives met local people from three ODF communities in two Blocks, namely Churya and Ambagarh Chauki and had extensive interactions and discussions with them, especially the women members from the Self Help Groups, members of PRIs and others. They also met the concerned district and block officials, elected representatives and members from the civil society. The state of Chhattisgarh has been lately in news for its remarkable decision to underplay subsidy for creation of open defecation free communities. The state now has seen the declaration of 5% ODF Gram Panchayats in the past one year and there is considerable excitement about building on this effort.



On 25th and 26th February, Dr. Kar and Mr. Sanan met the Chhattisgarh's Mission Director for Swachh Bharat Mission, Dr. M. Geetha. They called on the Additional Chief Secretary (Rural Development) Mr. Raut and commended him on the achievements in the state and offered support from the Foundation to scale up the efforts being made. Other meetings included those with the DG of the Administrative Training Institute, UNICEF Head of Office, Chhattisgarh, UNICEF WASH Officer, National Padmasree Award recipient Ms. Phulbasan Yadav and Nitish Kshirsagar, CLTS champion.



Dr. Kar noted that the state leadership of Chhattisgarh has understood the need for ensuring the enabling environment for scaling up of CLTS to fast track the achievement of ODF. Such enabling environment of stopping upfront hardware sanitation subsidy at the household level is very conducive for enhancing state wide access to sanitation rapidly.

**Mr. Sanan noted at the end of the visit:**

We see numerous positives in the Chhattisgarh situation-

1. The no subsidy for individual household level policy environment.
2. The numerous rounds of training on CLTS triggering already held in the state.
3. The great results from the experiments already conducted in various districts including prominently Rajnandgaon, Raigad, Dhamtari, Bilaspur, Surguja and even Dantewada which are a fertile learning ground for within state exposure visits.

4. An institutional structure till the block level to support the capacity building, coordination and monitoring activities of the programme.
5. The presence of a number of trained personnel from amongst both programme officials and natural leaders who can form teams to carry out triggering activities in various districts as demand is exhibited.

**He also pointed out an initial set of actions that can take forward the momentum generated in Chhattisgarh:**

1. The institutional structure needs to reach down to the Gram Panchayat level so that there is an army of committed swachhsevanis to really scale up in a short period of time. For this a guidance circular would be useful that discusses how this can be done. The first step is to hold orientation meetings at a cluster level in every block (say for about 20 to 30 GPs) and call all possible functionaries like Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers or primary school teachers or health workers, etc, elected representatives and anyone else who can be involved in sanitation at the ground level. Have a suitable person conduct this meeting and bring about a self selection of people ready to act as GP level coordinators. At a second stage, can consider hiring an NGO for making available such coordinators for every left out GP. For this appropriate guidance on engaging an NGO and payments to be made needs to be issued.
2. Proper training and messages need to reach the entire institutional structure at regular intervals that emphasize that the focus is not toilets but collective behaviour change and how this can be brought about. A guidance note on this would also be useful.
3. A guidance note is required to enable districts and blocks to engage triggering teams from other places and pay them a suitable amount for expenses and as honorarium.
4. A proper monitoring system needs to be put in place outlining the steps to reach a verified ODF village / GP and rigorously reviewed and monitored so that timely remedial action is initiated at appropriate levels and performance is suitably recognized. A guidance note is required on this in addition to a state level web based system.
5. Letter to Government of India on improving the ability to use funds allocated for IHHL for other purposes including both community reward and soft activities in districts including engaging NGOs, triggering teams, etc.



The CLTS Foundation has offered to partner Chhattisgarh to really scale up efforts in the coming months and are looking forward to great success from this relationship.

# Ethiopia: CLTS and Livelihoods

## Vita's project shows the positive impact of CLTS on livelihood

A project in Ethiopia launched by Vita shows the positive impact of community led total sanitation approach by increasing livelihood options for the local community.

Since Kamal Kar and Vita launched community led total sanitation in 2006, the approach has now reached over 40% of the two million people living in Gamo Gofa.

The triggering of CLTS has culminated in a series of community led livelihood initiatives which has changed the dynamics in communities previously trapped in poverty and dependency. Four weaving cooperatives employing 240 members have been established by community collective action with limited support from Vita and Irish Aid.

A highly marginalised group of women came together to form a pottery cooperative. Savings and credit, income generation and other groups have also been established by communities without external support.



An Irish Aid monitoring team comprising Peter McEvoy, Susan Frazer and Oonagh O'Connor observed the remarkable impact of CLTS and community led development in their visit to Gamo Gofa in April 2015. The executive summary states: "Community Led Total Sanitation is considered by the monitoring team to be of particular value, and not merely as an 'entry point strategy'. There is much evidence at the field level to point towards Community Led Total Sanitation encouraging communities to be active participants in their own development and acting as a mechanism for forging community cohesion and inclusion. The community-wide benefits associated with Open Defecation Free status are of universal value to all and Community Led Total Sanitation is therefore a powerful development approach."



The most significant community led initiative relates to potato development and a community led approach to tackling bacterial wilt, which is the biggest scourge of African potato farmers. Communities have come together to impose bans on import of non-certified seed, established Ethiopia's first two community-protected seed sites which has led to Chenchu having Ethiopia's first mobile plant clinic and zonal potato board. CIP have now identified community led approaches as being vital in potato development and will work with Vita under the Potato Coalition to bring these approaches to wider communities.

CLTS has led to significant new resource mobilisation in Gamo Gofa. The community led approach is driving a new green impact fund developed by Vita which will raise EUR1.5 million in loans for community led household energy and water provision. The community led provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, cooking energy and lighting energy will be championed under the fund for a more affordable and inclusive model that can reach the poorest households.

# CLTS Champions Interview: CLTS in Nepal

## Sparking a social movement on sanitation through CLTS in Nepal

In this interview with Kamal Adhikari, Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS), Government of Nepal, AmitSengupta finds out how community led total sanitation approach played a crucial role in sparking a social movement on sanitation in Nepal.

Excerpts from the interview:

**Q 1: Could you please tell us, in brief, about your background and your first orientation about community led total sanitation approach?**

I am from a rural community of Dang district in Nepal. I hold Master's Degree in Anthropology and Bachelors Degree in Mathematics and Law. Since 1999, I have been working as a Sociologist with the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage(DWSS) of the Government of Nepal and contributing to formulate national policies, plans and guidelines on sanitation and hygiene including School Led Total Sanitation(SLTS) Program 2006, Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2011 and Total Sanitation



Guidelines 2015. I have widely served for strengthening the sector capacity, scaling up strategic planning and localization of the Master Plan. I have produced more than two dozens of research and study papers on sectoral issues, received national and international trainings and presented papers in national, regional and global forums. I became familiar with Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach widely discussed during the first SACOSAN held in Bangladesh in 2003.

**Q 2: Could you briefly take us through the sanitation scenario in Nepal in the past 10 years and its status now?**

Stakeholders' perception towards sanitation changed drastically in Nepal after introduction of the community and school led total sanitation approaches. The Open Defecation Free (ODF) campaign strongly grounded the issues of health and dignity in the domain of sanitation and hygiene and created a very amiable environment to nurture and institutionalize sanitation as the cross-cutting theme of development. Now, the ODF has become a central theme in country's national development framework. The national sanitation coverage has increased significantly from some 40 % in 2005 to 81 % by 2015. So far, 1 zone, 33 districts, 83 Municipalities and 2081 VDCs have been declared as ODF areas against the national target of universal sanitation coverage by 2017.

ODF declaration has been evolving as the socio-cultural festival in local communities. The country is marching ahead for total sanitation initiatives so as to sustain the ODF status and achieve the state of Clean Nepal.

**Q 3: You have been applying the fundamental spirit of triggering--the heart of the CLTS approach--in formulating and executing the School Led Total Sanitation (SLTS) approach, Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2011 and Total Sanitation Guidelines 2015 of the Government of Nepal. Could you elaborate on this please?**

It is crystal clear that innovative triggering process introduced through the CLTS approach has brought about revolutionary changes in thinking and action in sanitation across the globe. The DWSS and UNICEF Nepal introduced the innovative concept of SLTS program approach in Nepal by including the 'principle of CLTS triggering' and multi-sector stakeholders' collaboration mechanism institutionalized by the School Sanitation and Hygiene Program 2000. The SLTS approach widely popularized appreciative techniques like reward and recognition, strengthened school and community partnership and catalyzed students to work as the change agent for achieving ODF status in school's catchments. The Government of Nepal formulated the Master Plan on Sanitation and Hygiene in 2011 adopting triggering approach of CLTS, institutionalizing multi-stakeholders' collaboration promoted through SLTS and integrating other innovative sectoral learning. Likewise, the Total Sanitation Guideline has widened the scope of sanitation leading to sustained environment, improved health condition, better livelihood and productive life.

#### Q 4: How and when did you introduce the philosophy, principles, themes and frameworks of the 'sector triggering' based on good learning from CLTS and SLTS approaches?

Nepal's capacity development model in sanitation changed remarkably from 'knowledge building enterprises' to 'triggering' through CLTS and SLTS approaches. The concept of CLTS triggering which focuses mainly on 'triggering of communities' got new dimension in Nepal along with enforcement of the Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2011. Based on learning from CLTS, SLTS, SULABH Sanitation Movement and Comprehensive and Accelerated Sanitation and Hygiene Sanitation initiative of Nepal, I introduced in 2010 the philosophy, principles, themes and frameworks of 'sector triggering' approach (triggering of different development sector stakeholders) that gives due focus on broad based alliance, wider sectoral linkages, comprehensive planning, effective community mobilization, massive resource pooling arrangements and wider political mobilization for the scaling up of sanitation in an accelerated manner. Sector triggering approach is adopted nationwide. I have widely applied this approach while orienting law-makers, senior political leaders and stakeholders about sanitation in national and sub-national levels.



#### Q 5: What has been happening in sanitation sector in Nepal as far as innovations are concerned?

Nepal's sanitation movement is characterized uniquely. Institutionalization of sanitation and hygiene as the cross-cutting theme of development, introduction of sector triggering approach, promotion of reward and recognition, scaling up of sanitation as social movement, promotion of sanitation model district initiative and emergence of ODF and total sanitation as the development ladder (e.g. declaration of indoor smoke free households, total literate communities, etc.) are some innovations. Importantly, the Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2011 has become a strong instrument to generate synergy from multi-sector stakeholders' coordination mechanisms and maintain uniformity and standard in sanitation and hygiene intervention through enforcement of the guiding principles. Importantly, the sanitation conference has strongly vibrated 'policy makers, planners and people', powerfully triggered 'mass action' and visibly 'accelerated ODF campaign' along with the creative engagement of school and communities. Linkage of sanitation and hygiene with nutrition, education, health, environment and livelihood has given new dimension.

#### Q 6: What are the different actors doing to reduce open defecation involving the community?

The Master Plan on Sanitation and Hygiene 2011 has promoted government's leadership, stakeholders' partnership, private sector engagement and community's ownership for sanitation and hygiene promotion. Proactive engagement of politicians, policy makers, planners, private sector actors, professionals and people in ODF and total sanitation initiatives and adoption of sanitation for all (as a dream) and all for sanitation (as a strategy) justifies that Nepal's sanitation movement is inclusive and dynamic. Participation of the president, vice president, prime minister, law-makers, senior government officials and national artists in ODF declaration ceremony has heightened the image of sanitation. Institutionalization of sanitation as fundamental right in the Constitution of Nepal 2015, formulation of Sanitation MDG Acceleration Framework 2013 by National Planning Commission, integration of ODF as a key business in sectoral development and execution of school and community level plan of action on sanitation has unified various segments of society for improved sanitation.

#### Q 7: How does the process of institutional triggering happen in Nepal? Is the government of Nepal aware of the challenges and how is it overcoming the hurdles?

Of course, 'institutional triggering' (i.e. sector triggering) takes place in Nepal through interactive and participatory process: a) mass gathering b) performance review meeting c) planning workshop and d) national and sub-national level sanitation conferences. During such events, burning issues on sanitation and hygiene are identified, local level opportunities are assessed, roles, responsibility and accountability of various sector stakeholders are identified, target of ODF and total sanitation are set and a joint declaration is signed to achieve the target. The powerful and thought provoking triggering is done to stimulate those wide ranges of stakeholders.

The Government of Nepal is fully committed to addressing GESI issues and ensuring national sanitation goal by minimizing external dependency and maximizing local resources and capacity. For this, the national and sub-national level steering and coordination committees have led to strengthen stakeholders' collaboration and launch sanitation conferences for mass action to bring visible impact in community sanitation.

#### Q 8: How did the CLTS approach help in creating a sanitation movement in your country?

In Nepal, community triggering has produced a small spark while sector triggering has refueled so many sparks across the country and illuminated the wider areas through multi stakeholders' collaboration. So, these two powerful currents generated from communities and sectoral levels are unified under government led district, municipality and VDC level strategic planning frameworks to accelerate ODF and total sanitation initiatives. Application of CLTS triggering tools and locally generated innovative community empowerment and sensitization tools have had profound implications in establishing pro-sanitation values and triggering local people towards breaking the route of faecal oral contamination through collective community actions. Triggering--the heart of CLTS approach--has thus played instrumental role in Nepal's sanitation movement.

**Q 9: Did you have to work on identifying Natural Leaders and CLTS Champions from the community? How was that useful in implementation of the projects?**

Nepal's ongoing sanitation movement has rapidly increased ODF and sanitation coverage and promoted several innovations. ODF and total sanitation condition have become the new norms in sanitation which have empowered and instigated several individuals to work for sanitation. For example, some teachers, women leader, students, media people, VDC secretaries, Local Development Officers and other government officials have spontaneously emerged as the sanitation champions and taken a lead to positively influence sanitation initiatives through community actions and sectoral development process. Those committed individuals are indeed the real movers and shakers of sanitation who are engaged in generating local level resources, formulating code of conducts, lending support hands for physically challenged people for toilet construction, conducting self-monitoring, telling success stories of improved sanitation and hygiene, persuading communities and propelling sanitation movement using innovative and creative ideas, methods, tools and tricks.

**Q 10: You have mentioned about your book on sanitation - 'Sanitation in Nepal: Past, Present and Future'. What is it about?**

I published my book on sanitation in 2012 and its second edition in 2015 to document the precious learning of the sanitation and hygiene sector in Nepal. This book is a reflection of my subtle visualization and critical outlook on sanitation. I have captured and assessed not only physical and material but also human, sentimental and institutional aspects of sanitation and hygiene. In this book, I have located Nepal's sanitation development in historical frame, assessed the policies, plans and programs vis-à-vis sector dynamics, dig out hidden-socio cultural issues and portrayed the changing paradigm of sanitation interventions considering philosophical, methodological, governance, behavioral, socio-cultural and technological dimensions. Through this book, I have introduced the concept of 'sector triggering', 'cross-border sanitation intervention', frameworks for behavioral change, sanitation-hydro electricity comparative model and post-2017 vision on sanitation. Both national and international level WASH sector professionals have reviewed the book and put their reflection about it.

## Interview: CLTS Champion, Bangladesh

### Paving a pathway towards an open defecation free community

CARE Bangladesh's Director, Extreme Rural Poverty Programme, AnowarulHaq opens up to AmitSengupta on how community-led total sanitation approach paved a critical pathway in creating an open defecation free community in their project area.

**CLTS Foundation: Could you please tell us, in brief, about your NGO background and your first orientation about community led total sanitation approach?**

I am presently leading CARE Bangladesh's Extreme Rural Poverty Programme as Director. I have more than 15 years work experiences in development field with 13 years experience in senior management.

I led Social and Economic Transformation of the Ultra-Poor (SETU), a DFID-Government of Bangladesh funded and shiree managed flagship project of CARE Bangladesh that is working with the bottom 10% extremely poor in the northwest of Bangladesh.

With CARE Bangladesh' Social Development Unit, I have gained vast experience in leading numerous research activities that explored underlying causes of poverty and informed CARE Bangladesh's programming. I managed the NijederJanyiaNijerainitiative, a pilot project of CARE Bangladesh, where CLTS was used as an entry point for triggering community led total development. My principle area of interest is to develop a model of effective programming for graduating the extremely poor out of poverty. I am experienced on community led methods through which communities can abolish open defecation, seasonal hunger, enhance food security, improve the livelihoods of the poorest and institutionalize this work in local government.

Before joining CARE, I worked in PROSHIKA's Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy (IDPAA) and in a leading Bangla newspaper 'The Daily BhorerKagoj'.

My first exposure to CLTS was through Kamal Kar when he came to evaluate Rural Livelihood Programme of CARE Bangladesh in 2003 - 2004. He inspired us to build collective solidarity through CLTS process and then facilitate a reflective participatory process within the community to enhance livelihood security and trigger empowerment of poorest women and men rather than promoting a pre-defined approach. The work then influenced CARE Bangladesh's community empowerment approach.



## CLTS Foundation: Talking about the sanitation scenario in your country, what was the status of open defecation in the region where Care Bangladesh was working?

So far as I could remember, around only 20% households were using latrines and almost 100% communities were practicing open defecation when we adopted CLTS as an approach.

## CLTS Foundation: How was CARE's project designed using CLTS approach to tackle open defecation? Where in Bangladesh was the project implemented?

CARE first adopted CLTS approach in the haor region of Bangladesh. With the assistance of Kamal Kar, CARE worked in Bajitpur Upazila in Kishorgonj district aiming for open defecation free communities. The first ODF Union in the haor region was facilitated by CARE Bangladesh which was unbelievable to many development actors as the regional context was very different from the main land.

Later in 2004 in Nijederjanyia Nijera Project CARE used CLTS as an entry point to build collective solidarity within the poorest communities and developed leadership from the poorest for accessing services and entitlements from local government and nation building departments. In the project, CLTS and community led approach was institutionalised within local government. CARE Bangladesh is using this process in all the livelihoods projects later on.

## CLTS Foundation: How did the community react when you started talking about the 'Community Approaches to Total Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion'?

The response was very positive, inspiring and transformational.

CLTS was proven to be a powerful entry point to initiate a solidarity building process. Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was considered as an activity that engages the entire community in sanitation work and can benefit a large number of households. CLTS is very effective as an entry point to initiate an empowerment process, because it is, a) non-political and relatively class neutral; b) easy to accomplish; c) brings considerable benefit to a community – a visibly cleaner hamlet – in a relatively short period of time; d) develops collaboration and community effort; and e) instills a sense of collective accomplishment and pride. Total sanitation – open defecation free communities and hygienic practices – considerably reduces the incidence of cholera, dysentery, and diarrhoea, enabling communities to save precious and scarce household resources, leading to relatively quick and lasting economic returns. Further, at the core of CLTS lies collective action that leads to new forms of public engagement. The approach can create a platform, so to speak, to build solidarity, encourage forms of collective action, and ultimately engage communities in development processes that lead to broader social change.

CLTS contributes to important changes in the overall hamlet environment. Generally, the village atmosphere is anti-poor, with elites and the better off marginalizing the poorest households during social events and important decision making processes. There is little belief that the poorest can meaningfully contribute to any activity, let alone the development process and the transformation of local society. This attitude has resulted

in a general despondency amongst the poorest households, who feel unwelcome, disrespected, and isolated. CLTS has the potential to break this cycle, as the poorest households participate in taking the lead on sanitation work and gain respect and social standing for their efforts and hard work within and beyond the community. CARE projects build collective solidarity through the CLTS process and uses the momentum to initiate a total development approach that addresses not only livelihoods issues of the poor and extremely poor, but also reduces forms of exploitation, e.g. sub-standard wages and money lending, and discrimination based on gender and class differences, and local governance.

## CLTS Foundation: What challenges did you face in the community or at a structural level when you started working on that project?

We faced three major challenges in facilitating sustainable changes through CLTS – subsidy-no subsidy contradiction, lack of quality process facilitation and hunger.

When we started CLTS process, we found that many other sanitation projects by different donors and different institutions were providing subsidy for the construction of latrines. We had to coordinate with everyone and had to demonstrate what is possible through CLTS to convince them. We worked with Union Parishads to ensure that communities would decide who need subsidy and subsidy will be provided only when communities will ensure that the whole area will be ODF.

We also discovered that there was a huge pressure to local government to declare unions as 100% sanitized. For this, development partners sometimes compromised the quality of facilitation, which later on became a challenge as many households believed that local government will provide subsidy to repair their latrines. We made it clear to our field teams that process of CLTS should be followed and there should be no rush to declare ODF until it happens organically.

We also learnt that extreme form of poverty, such as, hunger should be addressed simultaneously. Households would not repair their low cost structures of toilet after each monsoon season if they are hungry in the lean period. In CARE, we integrated livelihoods and inclusive local governance with CLTS, so that hunger and other extreme forms of extreme poverty are addressed, so that people can create peer pressure to repair latrines when requires.

### **CLTS Foundation: Did it involve capacity building of government functionaries? Were they tuned to the CLTS approach?**

As mentioned before, yes, we integrated CLTS with inclusive local governance processes. It worked very well. In fact, because of this, Bangladesh has been able to quickly scale up CLTS to become almost 100% ODF. Community led approach of CLTS and scaling up by local government are the two key milestones for the success of Bangladesh.

### **CLTS Foundation: As part of the project, did you have to work on identifying Natural Leaders and CLTS Champions from the community. How was that useful in implementation of the project?**

Yes, facilitating the emergence of natural leaders and CLTS champions from the communities and also from the local government has been a conscious strategy. We used community-to-community learning process successfully in our projects. Champions have shown others how to do it and have brought local solutions to local problems, which may not be possible for any external organizations to work out.

Recognition of natural leaders and local government representatives as champions and then using them to demonstrate possibilities as a strategy has been very successful.

### **CLTS Foundation: Your project also included working with schools and children. Could you please tell us something about the SLTS approach? How were the children engaged?**

We also engaged with the SLTS approach. What we have seen is that children play a very effective role to change the mindset of communities and parents for achieving and sustaining open defecation free status. They have shown their potentials. More importantly, as children are aware of CLTS and benefits of ODF, there is more chance of longer-term sustainability as they are the future leaders of Bangladesh. Also, this is helping to develop future community leaders.

### **CLTS Foundation: Were there any other crucial hurdles or obstacles while implementation of the project?**

The crucial hurdle for any organization is to change the mindset of their own staff. CLTS is about believing that communities can resolve the most difficult puzzles by themselves if they believe in themselves and we also believe the power of empowerment. Communities can clean their own shits, but it is not easy to clean the shits that has been created by different organizations. The good thing about CARE Bangladesh is that it has adopted community led approach as the core of all activities and has always attempted to empower communities, where CLTS has shown a critical pathway of how to do it.



**CLTS Foundation: Did it involve capacity building of government functionaries? Were they tuned to the CLTS Foundation: When you look back at the project, how do you evaluate the outcome of reaching out to 100,000 ODF communities?**

In the initial stage, it was not possible for many of us to understand the potential of CLTS. It unfolded one after another. The first achievement was to declare a community as ODF. Then a ward within a union is declared as ODF. Then a whole union became ODF, then an Upazilla and then a district. Finally now the whole country has almost become ODF. This may look like a miracle, but we have done it. CLTS is a breakthrough. The Government should also be acknowledged for creating enabling environment, so also the private sector for providing low cost sanitation materials to the poorer communities at an affordable price.

Leave your comments



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