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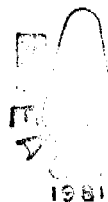
A
BRIEF REPORT
ON
EASTAP'S ACTIVITIES
during
1981 - 1982

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Prepared by
PRAKASH C. JOSHI
Program Co-ordinator

EASTAP

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received from:

Mr. Prakash Joshi,

East's Sulabh Toilet Action Programme

c/o East Consult

Socio-Economic Study Wing

P.O. Box 1192

Kathmandu, Nepal

A BRIEF REPORT ON EASTAP'S ACTIVITIES DURING 1981-82=EASTAP'S AIM IN BRIEFPrakash C. Joshi

Neglect of basic sanitary measures, most pronounced in respect of human excreta disposal, a chronic feature in most of the towns of Nepal is the main hurdle for the improvement of community health and personal hygiene. The immediate need is to provide some kind of inexpensive latrines which will be acceptable as well as compatible with the present life style of the people. It was against this background that East group started its earnest search of a suitable latrine and luckily came across with some literatures from "Sulabh Shuchalaya Sansthan" of Patna explaining the details of Sulabh Toilets. We found the technology very appropriate to our situation and to know more about the actual functioning of this toilet, a study group went to Patna to observe these toilets more closely. Back from Patna with complete confidence about the simple technology and its appropriateness to our situation, we decided to launch an action program on a non-profit social welfare basis to propagate and also install Sulabh Toilets in different needy areas of Nepal under the name EASTAP i.e. EAST's Sulabh Toilet Action Program. And this is how EASTAP made its simple beginning since November 1981.

EASTAP plan to launch its program relying more on popular participation of the people with the conviction that no program large or small can succeed without the full support and involvement of the people for whom the program is intended to benefit.

=WHAT IS A SULABH TOILET ?

The Sulabh Toilet is an ordinary hand flush water-seal latrine with a special type of water-seal connected with two equal sized pits. Only one pit functions at a time. When the first pit is filled up, the second one is opened for use. While the second one is being used, manure highly rich in nutrients is available from the first pit. Chemical analysis shows that the manure obtained from Sulabh Toilets contains 1.6% to 1.8% nitrogen, 1.6% phosphorus and 1% potassium. The nutrients content is higher than that of other manures and can be safely applied on fields as it does not contain any pathogens.

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In this toilet system, human excreta are stored in a pit which is in direct contact with earth at the pit's base. This allows bacteria to be absorbed by earth and prevents foul odour and unsanitary conditions from spreading into the living environment. The pan can be flushed easily with about two to three litres of water and excellent manure can be taken out within one year from the pit by the user himself; no scavenger is required to clean the pit as it does not give any bad smell.

It is a permanent installation, economic and durable; a well-constructed toilet can last for years. It can be constructed in any type of soil and in a space as small as 25 sq.ft. No gas pipe is required, and the water-seal prevents foul gas from leaking out of the pit. Human excreta are always inaccessible to flies and other harmful insects.

EASTAP'S ACTIVITIES

In Kirtipur

In the beginning of the program during November and December of 1981, EASTAP members were fully involved in their voluntary efforts to convince the Kirtipur people of the effectiveness and usefulness of the Sulabh Latrine (SL). They visited Kirtipur many times and with the help of the village chief (Pradhan Pancha) visited many households to propagate the latrine technology. Film shows were arranged on Health & Parasite Control etc. (PHOTO-1). People were gathered and informed of the suitability of the 'SL' and its benefits, such as low-cost, no need for maintenance, permanency, no foul odour etc. They were distributed books on Sulabh Latrine. People took it very enthusiastically. One fellow is seen looking over the "Sulabh Sauchalaya" book from Patna with interest (PHOTO-2). He is Jyan Bahadur Maharjan who built the first Sulabh Latrine in Kirtipur.

A low-level dirty pond in the middle of Kirtipur is seen in the photo (PHOTO-3). There are several such ponds in Kirtipur; almost all of them are stagnant, dirty and badly polluted. As the entire settlement is covered at all times with human excreta, all of these flow into those low level

ponds during rains. People wash their utensils and clothes in these ponds, which is difficult to believe till one sees with his own eyes. Local people, during one of our visits told us a shocking story about the local traditional belief in the extraordinary curing power of this filthy pond. They said that if nothing could cure a dying child, they dipped him into the pond from head to foot, two to three times which would cure him. They showed us two very old gentlemen who had undergone this shocking treatment, as a proof of their statement !

Within two months since the beginning of the latrine propagation campaign, 35 Sulabh Latrines were constructed in Kirtipur. German Ambassador to Nepal, Dr. Hans Henning Wolter provided the Kirtipur Village Panchayat a grant assistance of 6000 DM for this first phase Sulabh Latrine construction program. I advised Mr. Dwarika (the Pradhan Pancha of Kirtipur) that if possible he should try to raise at least 50% contribution from each household who wants to construct a latrine, so that he may not be unnecessarily blamed later that he built free private latrines in the households of his relatives and favorites. Also at the same time he could build twice as many latrines as he could with the available fund. He took this seriously and acted on this line. Thus the latrines were constructed in those households who contributed 50% of the latrine cost in terms of cash, materials and labour.

The Sulabh (easily affordable) Latrine campaign took the imagination of the people very soon. Most of these latrines were constructed in the ground floor of the house. Some utilised the unused space below the stair-case as a squatting platform (PHOTO-4). Some even used upper storey space by connecting the open drain with a pipe (PHOTO-5). EASTAP voluntarily offered all kinds of technical help and envolved itself in motivational works. The changes in standard design were utilised to take into account the space limitation and at many times to take into account the owner's choice (PHOTO-6,7,8).

The main reason for the speedy acceptance of this program is twofold. First, the role played by easily affordable (Sulabh) latrine technology and second, the greater focus given to the individual's sense of pride, status, and the convenience factor, rather than health education, which would have taken longer time.

EASTAP members are still visiting Kirtipur to see the functioning of these latrines. It also conducted a small evaluation work which showed that almost all latrines are functioning well, with no bad odour, no clogging but that some because of faulty construction, needed more water to flush and there was a slight damage in the squatting platform of one latrine, which the houseowner has already rectified.

And in this way a stage was set, for HMG/UNDP/Global Sanitation Project to use Kirtipur as an ideal trial site and later it constructed more than 200 similar latrines in Kirtipur. As there was no use for two organisations working in the same place at the same time for the same purpose, EASTAP decided to launch its promotional activities in other areas like Thimi, Dhadhikot, and some other areas around Kathmandu Valley.

In Thimi

Photo shows one of those many dirty lanes which are used for open defecation in Thimi (PHOTO-9). These areas are mostly cleaned by pigs. There are many such lanes and places, some are covered with bushes or walls, specially for the use of women.

Children usually squat and defecate in front of their own house. They look so innocent, even the focus of a camera did not disturb them (PHOTO-10). The man standing in front laughs as the kids are being photographed, however at some other time of the day he must be doing the same act somewhere else in the same way ! Adult males usually travel outside to any side of the settlement. Females however have certain exclusive alleys turned into open latrines.

Thimi is a place where a large number of potter's reside. Photo shows one of the potter's family with the burnt clay pan and water seal they made for us (PHOTO-11). EASTAP members provided them with a set of concrete pan & seal as a model and they made the burnt clay pan and seal themselves. One set of such burnt clay pan and seal costs Rs.40/- whereas the concrete one costs just twice as much.

EASTAP's future plan is to make use of these burnt clay pans and seals for the potters' latrines in Thimi. Some potters' families have accepted the idea already as they think, the clay pan and seal will be available to them free of cost, and they can dig the pits themselves and cover them with self-made burnt clay cover slabs, provided some technical assistance is available from EASTAP. In this way they think they can build their latrines free of cost.

However other groups of the Thimi community are not attracted by burnt clay pans and seals and as the difference in cost between clay and concrete is only Rs.40/-, one who can afford to build a toilet is obviously inclined to use the concrete pans and seals.

A Sulabh Latrine (SL) is constructed in a Primary School in Thimi with the voluntary assistance from EASTAP (PHOTO-12,13, 14,15). The idea was to allow school children to use the toilet so that they can slowly cultivate a toilet habit by practically doing so. The headmaster of the school who is seen in the photograph, (PHOTO-15), later declined to allow the students to use the latrine, although he promised EASTAP that the latrine will be used to train his students. And he feels comfortable now by just putting a signboard in front of the latrine "Sulabh Toilet for Students' Use". He is afraid that the students will spoil the latrine. I tried to convince him many times that if he asked his school sweeper to look after the latrine every day, it would remain clean and he can cultivate the toilet habits among the students. I did not understand why he persistently refused to act on my advice in spite of his agreeing with me all the times. The latrine is being used by his whole big (10-12 persons) family and this may be one of the reasons behind his unwillingness to allow his students to use the toilet.

Sulabh water seal and pan was given free of cost and all training and technical supervision was done voluntarily by EASTAP members. The local mason is being trained (PHOTO-12,13). The whole purpose was to demonstrate the usefulness of a Sulabh Latrine in the Thimi community, and to cultivate toilet habits among school kids by allowing them to use the latrine. The school toilet was built in Dec. 1981 and is perfectly functioning well till date.

EASTAP group have been visiting Thimi quite often to motivate the people (COLOR PHOTOS) but with no positive results so far. Recently two Thimi residents who purchased the pan & seal from EASTAP's office in Kathmandu (PHOTO-16) have informed us that they have been able to construct their latrines without outside guidance. One of them is Mr. Astha Bahadur who told me that he never believed before that the toilet will function so perfectly. Slowly but sure, Thimiles will start building "Sulabhs" in their houses by themselves and EASTAP will provide them all the necessary help and guidance.

In Dhadhikot

Dhadhikot is another small town situated about 9 km east of Kathmandu. It is south of Thimi. The settlement is generally scattered however there are some small settlements which are dense and compact with more sanitary problems.

During EASTAP's propagation work in Thimi, a local social worker of Dhadhikot Mr. Bhairav Risal* came in contact with us. This gentleman was for a long time trying to do some ground-work in sanitation field in his village but because of lack of knowledge of an appropriate latrine technology as well as resources, was not able to move forward. When he heard of Kirtipur Sulabh Latrines, he was delighted and went to Kirtipur to see these latrines by himself, where he came to know about EASTAP and its activities. He also went to see the primary school latrine at Thimi built under EASTAP's supervision.

Convinced of the simple technology and its appropriateness to his locality he came to EASTAP's office and discussed the problems he was facing. He asked me whether I could help him build a demonstration latrine in his house. I immediately accepted the proposal as I was already looking for such an opportunity. A Sulabh Latrine was built in his house within a fortnight (COLOR PHOTOS). He started propagating the idea to his village folks as he could now demonstrate his own latrine to them. This made certain impact on the local people and two

* Mr. Bhairav Risal is also the chief reporter of RSS, a national news agency.

other households soon built their latrines. However some adverse remarks were also passed against Mr. Risal. EASTAP members came to know about these remarks from Mr. Risal's mother, who told that many people in the village did not like Mr. Risal showing them his latrine, as a prestigious possession. They openly remarked that what was so great to build a village type latrine and go on showing it to others with pride? Nevertheless this did not disturb Mr. Risal who was determined to do something on improving the existing sanitary conditions of his village. He later published a detail newsreport of Sulabh latrine technology in the local daily Gorkhapatra. Along with Mr. Risal, EASTAP members started visiting households in Dhadhikot trying to motivate the people. However the result was not encouraging. They wanted someone to finance the cost of their latrines, or at least subsidize the cost.

Finally Mr. Risal told me that until we find some money to subsidize the latrine cost, no one will be really willing to listen to our suggestion. Finally I decided to contact Mr. Spanier of GTZ* and discussed the problem with him. I told him if we will be given about NRs.35,000/- half of the cost of 50 private SLs, the rest will be raised from the interested households and a small latrine construction pilot campaign can be launched at Dhadhikot. Mr. Spanier was kind enough to support our idea and promised to try his best to get this money. Finally Dhadhikot V.P. got the money from the Ambassy of W. Germany with the efforts of Mr. Spanier.

It was not that difficult to convince Mr. Spanier for funds whereas it took more than 6 months to convince 15 households of Dhadhikot to contribute 50% i.e. NRs.700/- for each of their private latrines. Nevertheless in late January 1983, EASTAP finally started the construction work on 15 private Sulabh Latrines. Mr. Risal is now very much confident that with slight modification in the process of raising the local contribution, (which he has probably discussed in the village) he will be able to convince 35 additional households soon. Thus Dhadhikot became another target area of EASTAP's action programme.

* German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Nepal.

=PLANS FOR 1983

Apart from Dhadhikot, EASTAP plans to concentrate its efforts more on Thimi's potters, and some other villages like Dhapasi, Banepa, Lubhu and probably Dhulikhel. In Dhulikhel people have already constructed 10 SLs with their own efforts. They purchased 10 water seals & pans from EASTAP. We have inspected these latrines in Dhulikhel recently and found them reasonably good however there are technical deficiencies which might pose maintenance problems in future. In 1983 more propagation and promotional work will be carried out in all those places where we will receive real local initiative like in Kirtipur & Dhadhikot. Recently Mr. K. B. Ranamagar of Dhapasi Village, a soil scientist by profession, has shown interest in SL and wants to build one in his village primary school. The village is situated 5 km west of Kathmandu and EASTAP members have already visited the place and provided two sets of pan & water seals, one of concrete and the other of burnt clay as free contribution for the demonstration purpose. In near future a demonstration latrine will be constructed in their school and it is hoped that Mr. Ranamagar will find some more time to promote it further in his village.

Similarly Dr. Surendra Shrestha, the Pradhan Pancha of Banepa Town Panchayat, had visited our office lately and was very keen on installing about 200 SLs in his town. Dr. Surendra did his doctorate from the States in political science and was popularly elected from his town, Banepa. He said he will be contacting us as soon as possible.

Another gentleman from a village called Lhubu, Mr. Ram Bahadur Shrestha had also come to see us. We gave him the standard drawing and brochure. He said he will buy a set of pan & seal from us and will build a demonstration latrine in his village. He said he came to know about EASTAP's activities from Mr. Risal of Dhadhikot.

During September 1982, we received a copy of the letter addressed to GTZ from the Dhulikhel Development Committee (DDC), stating their desire to spend Rs. 50,000/- (received from GTZ), to construct Sulabh Latrines in their village. DDC's proposed plan of action as suggested in the letter was to allocate the

above sum in equal proportion to the number of persons intending to build SLs in their households. However the interested person should deposit Rs. 500/- as a gesture of intent while forwarding the application for latrine to DDC. To date we have not heard of any positive developments in this issue. However EASTAP has informed DDC that it wants to provide 50 concrete pans and seals for their community latrine construction program. Until we hear from Dhulikhel about their future action in this matter, we think, further persuasion will not produce any fruitful results, as enough PR* work has already been done in Dhulikhel. Nevertheless EASTAP is confident that DDC will contact soon, and more SLs will be built in 1983 in Dhulikhel.

In 1982, EASTAP was also able to publish the details of SL in Gorkhapatra (a nepali daily) and news of SL in The Rising Nepal. An advertisement was also published in Gorkhapatra for three days giving EASTAP's action plan and we have found many people who intend to propogate SL technology. Environmental Sanitation Information Center (ENSIC) of AIT Bangkok, published an article "EASTAP launched in Nepal" in its quarterly newsletter Vol.4. No.3 Sept.1982 in its centre spread. EASTAP is very much thankful to ENSIC for this article. We plan to do some more PR work in and outside the country during 1983.

* Public Relation



PHOTO 1 Films shows were arranged on Health & Parasite Control etc. Kirtipur - Nov. 1981



PHOTO 2 People took lot of interests during the propogation of the Sulabh toilets. Kirtipur;Nov.1981



PHOTO 3 A low level dirty pond situated in the middle of Kirtipur. Kirtipur-Nov. 1981



PHOTO 4 A Sulabh toilet constructed in the unused space below the staircase. Kirtipur-Dec. 1981



PHOTO 5 Sulabh toilet constructed in the upper storey. Kirtipur-Dec. 1981

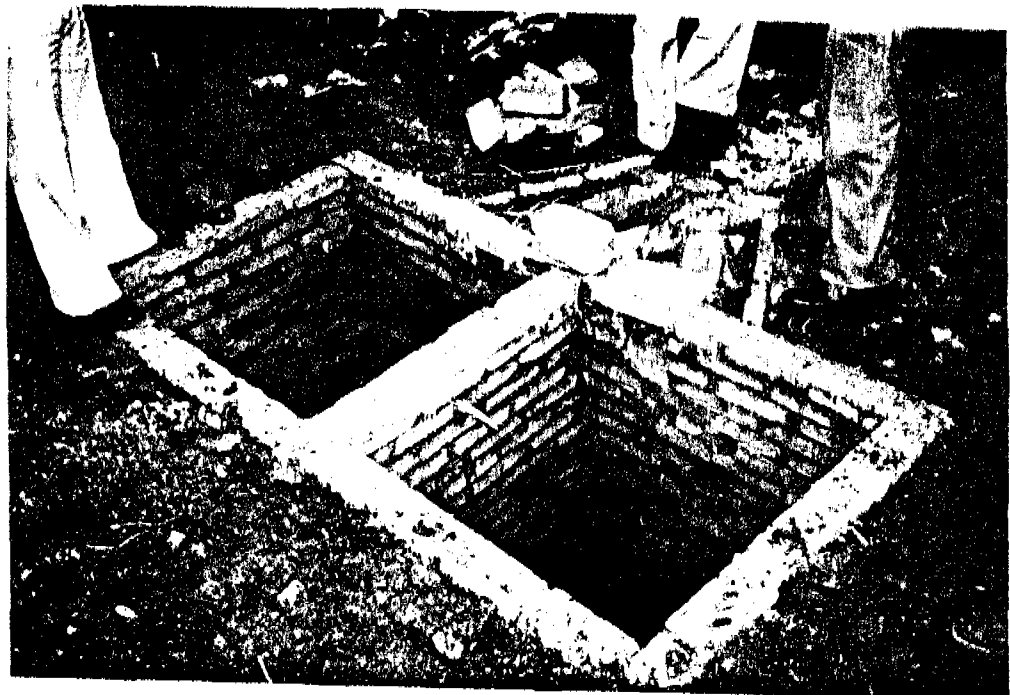


PHOTO 6 Standard Sulabh pits constructed outside the house. Kirtipur-Dec. 1981



PHOTO 7 Pipes were used to simplify the drain construction. Kirtipur-Dec.1981

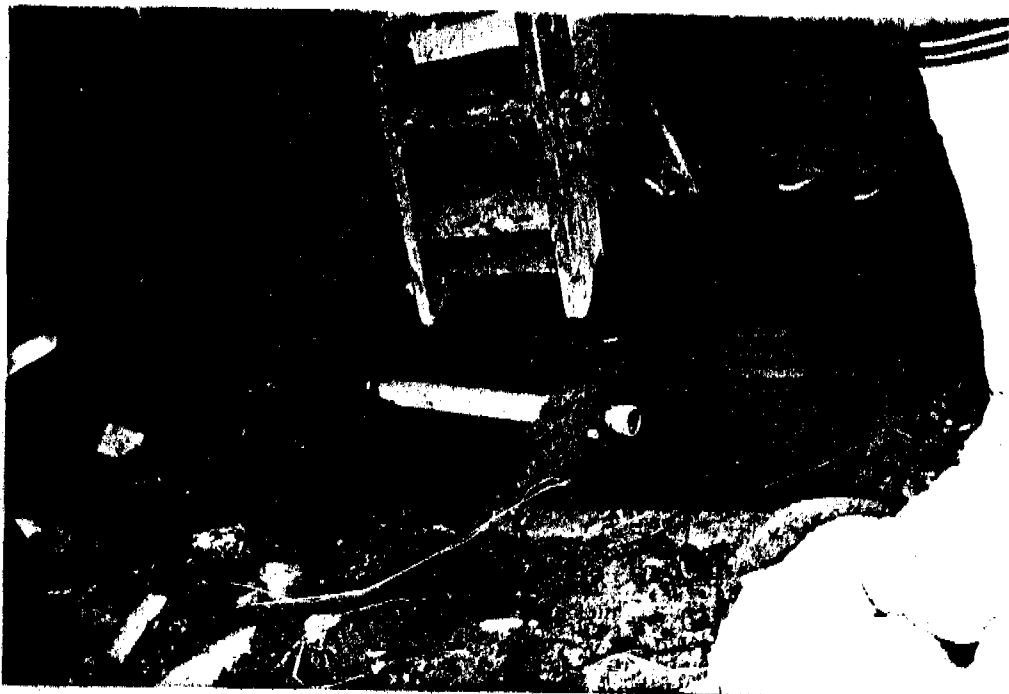


PHOTO 8 Sulabh pits were constructed according to space limitation and the owner's choice of toilet seat. Kirtipur-Dec. 1981



PHOTO 9 Traditional area used for open air defecation.
Pigs are the cleaners. Thimi-1982



PHOTO 10 Children are habituated to open defecation
Thimi 1982



PHOTO 11 Potter's family of Thimi, who made burnt clay pans & seals. Thimi 1981



PHOTO 12 A local mason of Thimi tries to make the split drain during construction of the primary school Sulabh toilet. Thimi 1982



PHOTO 13 Sulabh pits ready to be covered by reinforced concrete slabs. Thimi 1981



PHOTO 14 One of the pit is covered with Slab, A layer of mud is necessary to prevent leaking of foul gas from the pit. Thimi 1982



PHOTO 15 Headmaster of the school trying to learn the way the split drain works. Thimi 1981



PHOTO 16 Concrete pans & Water Seals Sulabh Type
produced by EASTAP. EASTAP'S Office
Kathmandu 1982



PHOTO 17 A view of Thimi Village Panchayat Office.
Propogation of Sulabh Toilets. Thimi 1982



PHOTO 18 Photographs of Kirtipur Sulabh toilets were
displayed. Thimi 1982

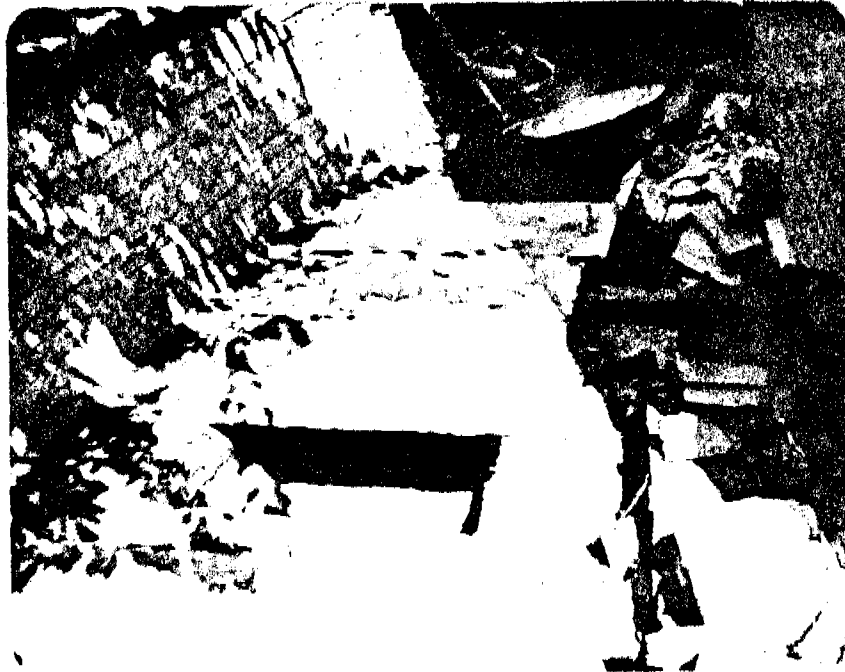


PHOTO 19 Four pieces of slabs were used. Only side slabs can be removed for taking out manure. Dhadhikot 1982



PHOTO 20 Completed Sulabh pits. Split drain cross section is seen. Dhadhikot 1982



PHOTO 21 Local mason at Dhadhikot in being trained to make the reinforced cover Slabs Dhadhikot 1982