

A Safe Drinking Water Source Saved Many Families from Migration in Coastal Areas

Assasuni Upazila under Satkhira District is located in the south-western region of Bangladesh. People spend their lives here constantly dealing with natural calamities such as salinity and high levels of arsenic in water, river erosion, floods, cyclones etc. Kadakati Union is one of the 11 Unions of Assasuni Upazila. Where all kinds of ground water sources and Tube-well is nonfunctional due to salinity and arsenic contamination. The people of this Union is always struggling for safe drinking water. Jaduar Danga is the name of a village in Kadakati Union,



once there were no sources of safe drinking water. . Most of the people of this impoverished village had to buy safe drinking water from a distance of 2 km. It required 400 to 500 taka per month for minimum access to safe drinking water. As most of the people in this village live below the poverty line, it was not possible for many families to buy and consume safe water. Therefore, many people started drinking contaminated water from ponds and as a result children and old age people started getting various water borne diseases. Due to the lack of sufficient income & food, lack of access safe drinking water and prone to other natural disasters, many families have already forced to leave their permanent residence to other areas as a floating people. Besides, many others family started preparation to leave their own areas.

In this situation, GOB-UNICEF Arsenic Mitigation Project started works in the area in 2022. The project staff along with the community people conducted Community Situation Analysis (CSA) and find out a tube-well with low saline but high iron contamination in the house of



Nitya Nandan Sarkar of Jaduar Danga village. Then came up a proposal to install an Arsenic Iron Removal Plant (AIRP) in that place. . EPRC project field team discussed it with AE of DPHE. Subsequently the engineer of DPHE visited the site and approved the installation of

AIRP through another project of DPHE. Accordingly, CBO leaders took initiative to collect the money from community people and deposited in the Govt. treasury. Following all official procedures DPHE installed the AIRP and all the families of Jaduar Danga village are now using AIRP for drinking and cooking water purposes. As a result, they no longer have to spend extra money and time for drinking water. Those who decided to leave their permanent residence due to lack of safe drinking water, now they have changed their plans. The surplus money can now be spent on children's education and nutrition. This AIRP provide relief to all the surrounding families from drinking water crisis and everyone is very happy.

Moreover, Sridharpur is another village of Dargahpur Union where people are living in miserable condition due to lack of safe drinking water and salinity. Due to salinity there, crop production and income of people has decreased. The quantity of unemployment in the area is increasing day by day. Children, women and the elderly are suffering from malnutrition. Four families from a CBO were forced to leave their locality due to lack of safe drinking water, unemployment and other natural calamities. At this context, GOB-UNICEF Arsenic Mitigation Project has installed a solar based PSF at the house of Abdul Aziz Dhali in this CBO. The availability of safe water in close proximity is playing role for the families of this area who had decided to migrant from Sridharpur village. Now they changed their minds and living in the village.