



How often do we take time to celebrate the everyday but important things?

Most of us take for granted that our homes will have adequate sanitary facilities (specifically, toilets!) and that our communities will be healthy. But for so many people in rural Nepal, this is not the default case.

Enter ETC and our strong commitment to improving public health. Over the years, we have supported the construction of thousands of sanitary toilets at homes and schools in Nepal. Through our health trainings, we have successfully encouraged thousands of people to improve their own and their families' health through consistently boiling drinking water, using and keeping clean their new sanitary toilets, taking advantage of their local health posts, and other means.



Ramana Thami , member of
ETC's Deurali Women's Group,
Lapilang VDC

(all photos by Rajanee Kunwar,
ETC Documentation Officer)

These programs are simple but highly impactful. Pre-ETC village toilet use rates have ranged from 6% to 52% — largely due to lack of facilities — whereas rates reach nearly 100% in villages where ETC has worked. In our past program areas, 94% of people surveyed described their village sanitation as clean, healthy, and safe, and they note a sharp reduction in their households' incidence of diarrhea (among the most common ailments resulting from widespread open urination/defecation and other unsanitary practices). They attribute this improvement to ETC's toilet construction and health training activities.

And the villagers are so happy to have this support, especially in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquakes that destroyed the toilets of families lucky enough to have had them. In recent months, ETC has completed a major project through which 551 households in Lapilang Village Development Committee gained new toilets and received useful health training. This project was made possible through the generous support of the Rotary Foundation and several individual Rotary clubs. ETC also independently supported necessary toilet construction materials — PVC pipes, ceramic surrounds, cement, etc. — to 422 households in Babare and Lamidanda VDCs. All 973 ETC women's group members' households now have or soon will have new sanitary toilets at their homes, which means better health for several thousand people.

YES! I want to help families in Nepal live better, healthier lives!

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And we're not done yet! The schools' toilets were also destroyed by the earthquakes and must be replaced, preferably better and more numerous than before. In addition to being a public health issue, lack of toilets at schools is also a barrier to attendance for teenage girls who will often not attend if they have nowhere to change their sanitary cloths during their menstrual cycles. School attendance is one of the best ways to ensure that girls do not marry and begin having babies too young, thus endangering their own health as well as perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

You probably don't see the name "Educate the Children" and immediately think about toilets or public health, but as you can see, this work is a very important component of our integrated program model. Poor public health is linked to school and work absenteeism, among other problems. Lack of toilets means that there is no choice but to go out in the open. These practices spread germs through both contact and ground water, and lead to high rates of diarrhea, dysentery, and other preventable illnesses. **Healthy kids will do better in school; healthy moms and dads will be able to care for their children better and earn more money.**

We at ETC have been very grateful for your past support of all of our work, including our less well-known activities such as these. We hope you'll continue your support by making a gift today. **Thank you!**



Above:

ETC women's group members danced at the celebration of the Rotary-supported project's completion. Someone even composed an original song for the occasion!

Below:

A crowd of hundreds gathered in Lapilang before the ceremony. In the foreground are a table full of flower garlands and the musicians who provided lively tunes.

