

BAHRAICH ARSENIC MITIGATION PROJECT IN UTTAR PRADESH: A PHOTO STORY



Local people in Bahraich in Uttar Pradesh listen with rapt attention to a street play explain all about arsenic and its harmful effects on human health.

Photo credit: Poorva Sagar/ OneWorld



The street plays are part of a massive awareness drive by the JICA supported Bahraich Arsenic Mitigation Project (BAMP), run in 34 rural habitations in the state's most widely arsenic contaminated district.

Photo credit: Poorva Sagar/ OneWorld



BAMP initially surveyed the water source of every household in the project area. This house in Basauna in Newada village is marked red for having a government tube well (GTW) with arsenic contamination.

Photo credit: Madhusmita Hazarika/ OneWorld



One of BAMP's successes is the Gravel Sand Filter (GSF) in the Dhannipurwa habitation in Newada village. The filter is completely owned, operated and maintained by the community.

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Baidyanath Singh from Dhannipurwa is a member of the village Arsenic Mitigation Committee. Having witnessed severe cases of arsenicosis in Bangladesh in a study tour organised by BAMP in 2009, he now advocates people to drink water only from the GSF.

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Baidyanath's faith in the filter is put to test by Yasunori Yano, Deputy Project Manager of BAMP. Here he uses a water testing kit to demonstrate how water with arsenic concentration of 50 PPB is completely purified by the GSF.

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Sign boards in public places in Bahraich inform people about the potential hazards of arsenic and the need to drink water only from arsenic-safe sources. However a low literacy rate in the region means this is not an easy task.

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Sharmila (second from right) from the BAMP staff uses flip charts with images of arsenicosis patients to instruct village women. The photographs help drive home the point that arsenic poisoning is dangerous to health.

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BAMP distributes educational posters on arsenic as part of their IEC strategy on awareness generation.

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A family in Basauna in front of an Activated Alumina Filter (AAF) – one among the 800 AAFs set up by the state government in Bagraich district. BAMP is now working with the government to raise people's awareness on arsenic and ensure effective use of these water filters.

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