



Issue 18, June 2008

Supporting Progress through Equality

In the Know

UNDP Nepal Newsletter

News of the Month

Providing clean drinking water to economically impoverished urban households

Since January 2008, members of some 584 low income households in Dhalko – an economically impoverished neighbourhood in urban Kathmandu – have been benefiting from access to clean drinking water. This particular endeavour to provide sanitary potable water to the households was undertaken because of the scarce and contaminated water supply in Dhalko. This *Bottled Drinking Water Project in Dhalko (BDWPD)* is a joint undertaking of the UNDP/Public Private Partnership for Urban Environment (PPPUE) Programme, UN-Habitat and the Nepal Water Supply Corporation (now Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited). A local group, *Nepal Podland Youth Organisation* spearheads the efforts. The revenue collected is managed by a local users' committee and is used to sustain the project.

The process of providing clean water starts when 20 litre jars are filled with clean water at the bottling source in Bansbari in northern Kathmandu, a source provided by the Nepal Water Supply Corporation. With the support provided by the PPPUE, these bottles are then sent in small trucks to three distribution points in Dhalko, where community members who are issued identity cards deposit Rs.300 for the bottle (one time deposit) and pay only

Rs.5 for each bottle of water. The market price for a similar jar of water is about fifty rupees. Currently, the water distribution is managed through a Lalitpur based NGO, the Urban Environment Management Society (UEMS) but the distribution process will be gradually handled by the community themselves. The project plans to serve a total of 1,000 households in Dhalko and 400 more households in Teku in the near future.

Phool Maiya Magar, 30, a local user of this service for the last five months says that she and her five-member family are saving time and money besides benefitting from a good service. She praises the quality and good taste of the water. Similarly, 39-year-old Amin Alam whose family has also been using this



water service for the last five months says, "it is a welcome change from the filthy-black tap water that my family and I were forced to use in the past". A mother of two, 32-year-old Rajani Poda says that ever since they started drinking the bottled water, her young children get less sick and no longer suffer from diarrhoea and dysentery.

The BDWPD is in conformity with the National Planning Commission's Three Year Interim Plan's (2007/8 – 2009/10) goal — to provide water supply and sanitation and to improve water quality standards for underserved communities!

