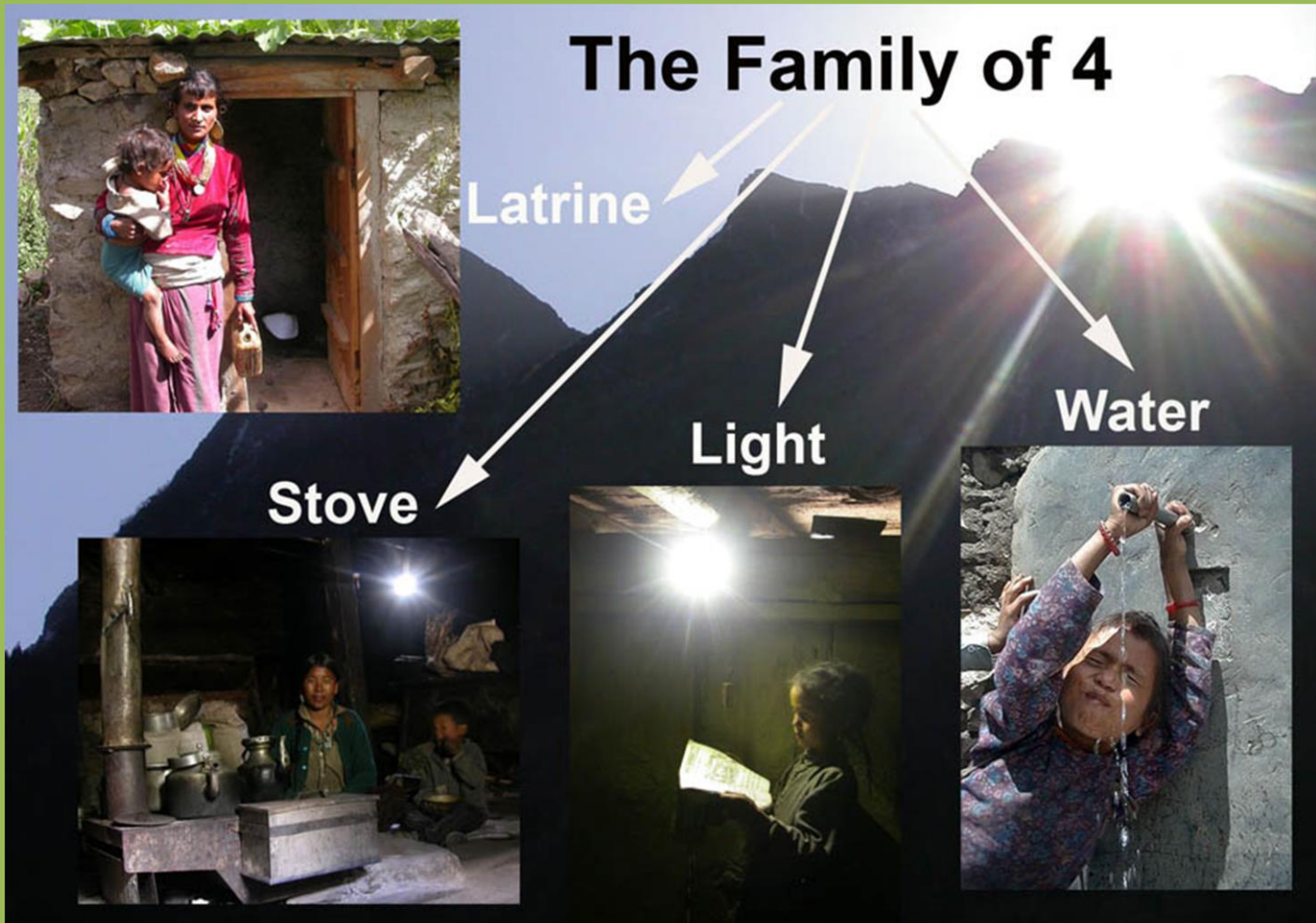


# RIDS-Switzerland / RIDS-Nepal

Syanda-Chari Village Holistic Community Development Project in Humla, Nepal

## Project Final Report

January to December 2019



December 2019

## Project Brief Facts/Figures:

1.	<p><u>Full Name of Implementing Organizations:</u> RIDS-Switzerland (Rural Integrated Development Services, Switzerland; <a href="http://www.rids-switzerland.org">www.rids-switzerland.org</a>) &amp; RIDS-Nepal (Rural Integrated Development Services, Nepal; <a href="http://www.rids-nepal.org">www.rids-nepal.org</a>).</p> <p><u>Contact Person:</u> Dr. Alex Zahnd <a href="mailto:azahnd@rids-nepal.org">azahnd@rids-nepal.org</a></p>
2.	<p><u>Project Title:</u> Syanda-Chari Village HCD Project in Humla, Nepal</p> <p><u>Location:</u> Syanda-Chari village is in the western part of upper Humla district,</p>
3.	<p><u>Project Duration:</u> Jan. 2018 to December 2022</p> <p><u>Total Needed Funding:</u> CHF 250'000.- over planned project period</p> <p><u>Funding Agencies:</u> Various philanthropic organisations from Switzerland, various private people and Friends of Nepal from Australia</p>
4.	<p><u>Present Reporting Period:</u> 1st January to 31st December 2019</p>

## Project Description:

In partnership and financial support with various philanthropic organisations from Switzerland, various private people and Friends of Nepal from Australia (with a participation of AUD 3'000 in 2019), RIDS-Switzerland/Nepal was able to continue the project partnership with the Syanda-Chari village community throughout 2019 in developing and implementing its project entitled “Syanda Village Holistic Community Development Project in Humla, Nepal”. The duration of the project is set from January 2018 to December 2022, permitting funds are available. The project partnering village of Syanda and Chari are located in the north-western part of upper Humla district, approx. 24 km northwest (a one-day trek, 7-9 hours walk) from the district headquarters of Simikot. [Syanda](#) and [Syanda-Chari](#) village is located at: Latitude: 29° 59' 04” / 29° 59' 23” North; Longitude: 81° 46” 04” / 81° 45” 51”, at 2,743 / 2,766 meters above sea level respectively.

The goal of the project is to improve the living conditions and wellbeing of the Syanda and Syanda-Chari families (245). With the available financial support, this year's project focused on the 20 households of the impoverished Syanda-Chari village community with a total of 135 people, as part of the long-term, holistic community development (HCD) project from 2018 – 2022). Each project is based on the self-identified needs of the community and is implemented in close partnership with each family. The HCD project is highly contextualized to fit its geographical, cultural and environmental context. The project area has been chosen due to the impoverished and marginalized status of the Syanda and Chari village communities and their written request to address these urgent, self-identified needs in partnership with RIDS-Nepal/Switzerland.

Based on the needs identified by the Syanda-Chari village community, a total of three key objectives over the project period have been identified. They are as following:

- 1) Addressing issues of poor public sanitation and hygiene (open defecation) through the building of pit latrines for 20 households for cleaner environment, improved hygiene and health.
- 2) Create clean indoor air through a Smokeless Metal Stove (SMS) for cooking and heating in 20 households.
- 3) Improve the health of each person in Syanda-Chari village through the building of a village drinking water system (DWS) from the village owned spring for access to clean and sufficient drinking for all 20 households.

This report covers the accomplishments and results achieved during the period from 1st January to 31st December 2019.

### **Accomplishments against Planned Activities:**

#### **1. The Pit Latrine (PL) Project:**

The main purpose of this project is to improve the overall health and sanitation conditions of the local people through a cleaner village environment.

As of December 2019, a total of 20 new Pit Latrines (PLs) were built, benefitting 135 people in Syanda-Chari village.

#### **Key Milestones Achieved:**

- All identified households with no toilet facilities were provided with construction materials (20 kg cement, 1 toilet pan, 3 corrugated metal roofs, nails, and HDPE pipes) according to the RIDS-Nepal Pit Latrine (PL) policy. RIDS-Nepal staff provided the necessary technical and skill training support to the villagers during the construction of their pit latrines.
- RIDS-Nepal staff, in coordination with the Syanda-Chari PIC (Project Implementation Committee), conducted an awareness campaign in Syanda-Chari village advocating the importance and benefits of Pit Latrines. Further, as part of the village health and hygiene awareness program, people were encouraged to participate in the general mass cleaning activities in their village. They were also given coaching on how to be more responsible regarding the proper use and maintenance of their newly built pit latrines, as well as maintaining a clean and hygienic environment in and around their village.
- A quarterly follow-up of each household has been initiated by RIDS-Nepal, in order to ensure the proper use and maintenance of the newly constructed pit latrines.
- Community Contribution: Each beneficiary household transported all the pit latrine materials such as the toilet pan, the HDPE pipes, corrugated metal sheets for the roof covering, nails and the cement for plastering the floor, from the RIDS-Nepal Humla office in Simikot to their village (one-day trek). Furthermore, the local people also arranged the needed labor and collection of the local materials needed, such as stones and timber beams and planks, to build the pit latrines. This is all part of the voluntary contribution by the respective households toward the PL program.

#### **Outcomes/Impact of the Pit Latrine project**

- All beneficiary households are using their newly built pit latrines regularly.
- The village's paths and nearby surrounding fields are almost free from open defecation. The periodical follow-up program throughout (and beyond) the project period will continue to improve this situation.

- People have reported that they suffer less frequently from diarrhea due to the use of their new pit latrines (toilet).
- People reported that there are fewer flies in the village as the environment is cleaner.
- People reported that their personal hygiene and sanitation have improved significantly.

## **2. The Smokeless Metal Stove (SMS) Project:**

The main purpose of the Smokeless Metal Stove (SMS) project is to improve cooking, room heating, water heating for tea cooking and personal hygiene (through the availability of warm/hot water from the attached stainless steel water tank), alongside creating a smoke free indoor environment, thereby ensuring better health (by eliminating the enormous indoor air pollution that leads to respiratory chest disease, cancer, low birth rates and babies already mentally retarded due to high and long-term exposure to CO during pregnancies, and other chronic ailments). Further, a firewood saving of up to 50% is possible through the correct use (as per training provided to each user family) of the RIDS-Nepal “Jumla” design SMS.

As of December 2019, a total of 20 SMSs were installed and user families trained how to use and maintain their new SMS, benefitting 135 people in Syanda-Chari village.

### **Key Milestones Achieved:**

- The installations of the SMSs in Syanda-Chari village proceeded only after each respective family had completed the construction of their individual pit latrines. SMSs for the households were granted by the RIDS-Nepal Humla office only upon receiving a written recommendation by the RIDS-Nepal technical field staff and the PIC, who first inspected and checked each PL for its quality and its proper use by each family.
- RIDS-Nepal provided onsite support and user training to each household in Syanda-Chari village in the installation, use and maintenance of the SMSs correctly and effectively. The SMSs were installed under the direct guidance and supervision of the RIDS-Nepal technical team. The household members were fully involved during the installation phase of the SMSs so that they could learn and become aware of all the different processes and are now able to solve possible technical problems by themselves if and when they do occur.
- Further, RIDS-Nepal conducted a quarterly follow-up visit to each household, to ensure the proper use and maintenance of each newly installed SMSs.
- Community Contribution: Households transported the SMS from the RIDS-Nepal Humla office to their homes in the Syanda-Chari village. They also collected the needed mud for the insulation and contributed the needed labor for the installation of their own new SMS.

### **Outcomes/Impact of the SMS Project**

The key changes observed/noted during the quarterly household meetings and follow-up visits are as follows:

- The indoor environment is completely free from smoke and soot. The kitchen is much cleaner and significantly less dust particles are in the air. The SMS, which has three burners to cook the local traditional meal “dhal bhat” (rice, lentils and a vegetable dish) all in one go, has certainly improved and shortened the working/cooking time and indoor conditions for women, spending now much less time to cook the family meals.



- Prior to the installation of the SMS, 3 - 4 “bhari” (“a bundle of firewood”; 1 bhari = 15-20 kg) of firewood was consumed per household and week for cooking and heating on their traditional ‘odhan’ (open fire place) or inappropriate, old and damaged metal stove. Whereas now, after the installation of the new RIDS designed “Jumla Design” SMS, only 1.5 - 2 bhari of firewood per week is consumed for all the cooking, water heating and room heating.
- The walls inside the homes are now visibly much cleaner, free of all the black soot that previously hung down from the ceiling and wooden beam structures inside the homes, posing great dangers to people’s health.
- Hot water is readily available to cook/brew tea, wash hands and faces before and after food (especially for the children) and after any other task demanding washing the hands and face (e.g. after the use of the PL).
- Food is cooked faster. Previously, it took up to 2 hours to cook “dhal bhat” on the traditional “odhan” or inappropriate metal stoves which have only either one or 2 burners, no water heater or “roti” (unleavened bread) slot. But now on the RIDS-Nepal “Jumla” design SMS it takes only 35-50 minutes as all three dishes, plus baking “rotis”, can be cooked at the same time. Food can be eaten warm and not overcooked, in a much cleaner environment (as no flies sit anymore on cooked food while it was cooling down while the next dish was cooked as previously on the open fire) and more nutritious, as it is easier not to overcook the food cooked on the RIDS-Nepal SMS.

### **3. Chari Village Drinking Water Systems (DWSs):**

The main objective of the Syanda-Chari DWS project is to build a water supply system from the village’s own water source, to provide sufficient and clean drinking water from tap stands for 20 households in the village. The water from the source flows down to the village in underground buried HDEP pipes and is distributed to the different defined taps stands in the village. That allows the women and girls, who are the ones who collect most of the water, easy, safe and quick access to enough drinking water. The Syanda-Chari Village Drinking Water Project aims to enable all 20 families to have at any time of the day access to clean, safe and sufficient drinking water, thus allowing considerable health and quality of life improvements.

Together with the Syanda-Chari village community, the RIDS-Nepal technical team conducted a feasibility study for the new drinking water system in the Syanda-Chari village. Once agreed with the village community which water source to tap into and where the village water tap stands need to be build, the technical drawings, design layout, equipment and material lists for the DWS were prepared and the procurement order placed. As of this reporting period, the planned DWS project is completed with the construction of a total of 3 tap stands, 2 water intake tank/chamber and 320 meters of HDPE pipeline dug and buried underground. The total beneficiaries from the DWS are 135 people.

#### **Outcomes/Impact of the DWS Project:**

- Before the construction of the DWSs, fetching of water was usually carried out by women and young girls from dirty or contaminated river streams. Without water from the village based individual tap stands, this is a very time demanding task. The time used to travel from the house to a water source varied between 30 to 35 minutes, often on steep slopes, which make the task more exhausting and often dangerous. Commonly, on one trip maximum 20 liters of water were carried. Thus, depending on the size of the household, 4-5 journeys, or

up to 3 hours a day, were needed for the women/young girls, to fetch and carry enough water for their family per day.

- This situation has now drastically changed for the better, as the water is available from the tap stands near the households, the school and the health post. No one has to walk for more than 3-4 minutes to get the needed drinking water. Thus, a lot of time and effort of the villagers (especially of women and children) can be saved and used for other, more meaningful and important tasks since the construction of the DWS for 20 households of the Syanda-Chari village.
- Spring water is considered the most appropriate source of water available, as the water is clean and safe to drink as it comes out of the deep ground, without any contamination. With the assistance of the local community, RIDS–Nepal constructed these DWSs to provide a new reliable drinking water system, through a safe and throughout the year accessible source of water for each of the 20 households in the village. The water from the tap stands is now being used for drinking, cooking, basic hygiene/washing and flushing the families’ pit latrines. Washing of clothes is now also being carried out at the tap stands. Additionally, tap water is now also used for their livestock.
- Access to clean and sufficient drinking water improves the general sanitation enormously in the whole project area. Apart from providing sufficient water at close proximity for 135 people, the project puts great importance on keeping the water quality at a high and acceptable standard by keep the water source free of contamination. Besides the correct collection of the water at the source, this is also achieved through proper training for the users on how to keep the tap stands clean and in working condition.
- Community involvement is essential to undertake any meaningful development work, as the history of international development has shown, projects can only be successful if initiated, constructed and maintained by the local community. Thus, in the case of the Syanda-Chari DWS project, the work was coordinated with the villagers and relied strongly upon their voluntary participation at all levels of the project, from identifying which of their village owned water sources can be tapped in (as year around sufficient water has to come from the source), to identifying where the tap stands in the village can be built for best access to all and easy overflow of waster water etc. through village mapping, to digging the underground buried HDPE pipe lines, carrying and mixing cement and participating in the maintenance and repair training.
- During the project implementation, we encouraged behavior changes for all the beneficiaries through awareness raising activities and individual counseling, so that their health and hygiene will improve. Improved hygienic conditions reduce diarrheal diseases and thus increases people’s productive labor (income-generating activities and schooling), caring for the children and some more leisure time.

**Conclusion:**

This report summarizes and reports the list of activities accomplished from January to December 2019. So far, all planned projects have been implemented successfully as part of the HCD project (“Family of 4”) in the Syanda-Chari project partnering village, in the upper north-western part of the Humla district, Nepal’s second least developed district. The implemented projects have brought up to now the following main changes in living conditions for the local people and families.

- There is a visible change in personal hygiene and the overall village environment. The individual households, as well as the village surroundings, are cleaner, thereby improving the overall living conditions, hygiene and sanitation.
- People have improved cooking and heating systems in their houses which has created a smoke free indoor environment, ensuring better overall health especially in the long term.
- Families consume now up to 50% less firewood for their daily energy services such as cooking, room heating and water heating.
- Less time for firewood collection, especially for women and young girls, needs to be invested since they use their new SMS.
- Households have access to clean and sufficient drinking water from their village tap stands.
- Happy and satisfactory faces of women, men and their children sharing their experiences and success stories of the HCD project in their village.

The village Syanda-Chari village community expresses their thanks and gratitude to RIDS-Switzerland/Nepal, the various philanthropic organizations and private people from Switzerland as well as from “Friends of Nepal” from Australia, for the financial contributions which helped them to bring such varied positive changes in their lives and village communities in 2019. Further, the villagers are very encouraged and fully committed to continue their partnership with RIDS-Nepal, to continue addressing their existing and newly identified needs.

The active voluntary participation of the local people in this project, and the resulting visible successes as identified above, achieved in this short span of time, are commendable. However, there remain still many challenges that the community faces and many identified needs that need to be addressed. Thus, in order to address these, as well as continue the ongoing work of awareness raising, capacity building and follow-up, RIDS-Switzerland/Nepal intends to continue the long term HCD project implementation commitment with the Syanda-Chari village communities. However, in order to be able to continue this important, long-term and for the people life changing project, RIDS is requesting on behalf of the Syanda and Syanda-Chari village communities that our generous donors continue their annual financial support in 2020 as well.