



A REPORT ON SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

**Organized by Nepal Public
Health Foundation**

A report on School Health Program on Kalika Municipality, Chitwan

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Introduction

Farming, Health and Environment Nepal Project (FHEN) is a multisectoral approach which focuses on reducing pesticide hazards in Chitwan district. The overall aim of this project is to create an environment where pesticide is sustainably used with minimum risk to human health and surroundings. School health program (SHP) is one of the activities under this project with the goal to increase awareness among students regarding pesticides. This program comes under one of three major objectives of FHEN project, that is:

1. Establish consumer fora that advocate for pesticide free foods through lobbying among politicians and fellow citizens
- 2.1.8 Students are made aware of their role to demand pesticide free foods and convey the message to their parents.

School health programs can play a crucial role in sensitizing children, and an easy way to educate students. Thus, SHP is aimed to be conducted in one in each municipality of Chitwan district.

Objectives of SHP

1. To aware students about pesticide, its effect on health and environment
2. To educate them about the role of students in pesticide minimization.
3. To encourage students to share knowledge about pesticides to their family.

Venue

SHP was conducted in Shree Chaturmukhi Secondary School, Shaktikhor of Kalika municipality, Chitwan held on 10th February,2023.

Topic

Debate competition in “Is pesticide poison or medicine?”

Proceedings

The program was formally started with the warm welcoming and thanksgiving by Mr. Chandra Bahadur Gurung, the principal of the school. He appreciated NPHF and gave his best wishes to the participants. The short introduction of NPHF and FHEN was given by Ms. Seema BK whereas the objectives and rules for the competition were elaborated by Ms. Deepesha Silpakar.

Altogether 10 students from grade 9 and 10 participated.

Grade 9	Grade 10
1. Sushanti Thapa	1. Uma Basnet
2. Rijan Marahatta	2. Salina Shrestha
3. Sujal Shrestha	3. Rakshya Marahatta
4. Barsha Thapa	4. Sampanna Rasaile
5. Sishir Rana Magar	5. Gunaraj Praja

1. Gunaraj Praja

Gunaraj is a student of grade 10. He thanked NPHF and the school for giving opportunity to participate in the program. He boldly stated “pesticide is a poison” and gave a brief description on the effects of pesticide on health. He discussed the bioaccumulation of pesticide particles in adipose tissue of the human body, which can lead to emergence of serious chronic diseases. At last, he encouraged everyone to practice the minimum use of pesticide.

2. Rakshya Marahatta

Rakshya is a student of grade 10. She discussed Pesticide as a poison and not a medicine in any form. She elaborated that the pesticide has not only affected human health but also has an adverse effect on the environment. She gave examples of DDT use in past, and present effects of it. She also suggested making “Botanical pesticide” which is as effective as pesticide with least harm.

3. Barsha Thapa

Barsha is a student of grade 9. She discussed pesticide as a medicine. She stated that ‘pest’ meaning insects and ‘icide’ meaning to kill, thus pesticide is a chemical substance used to kill unwanted pests, weeds, bacteria and viruses for better productivity. She focused on how ill management of pesticide can provoke negative effects on health and soil quality can deteriorate over time. She suggested using Personal Protective Equipment before using pesticide.

4. Uma Basnet

Uma is a student in grade 10. She debated on whether Pesticide is a poison. She highlighted the irrational use of pesticide among society. Most of people use pesticide as a first option to commit suicide. She sees a major problem with its easy access to the public and even sells it to everyone without prescription. She recommended storing pesticide far away from children and if possible, away from the kitchen and home. She concluded that pesticide is a dangerous thing to use and it’s a poison.

5. Salina Shrestha

Salina is a student in grade 10. She chose to talk about pesticide as a medicine. She agreed about the negative consequences of pesticide, However she stated that it’s due to misuse of it. People should be aware of pesticide and use it in a required quantity after getting recommendation from agriculture experts rather than using it on your own.

6. Rijan Marahatta

Rijan is a student of grade 9. He talked about how pesticide is a poison. It can help us increase production for a short term but it’s not a sustainable way of farming. He stated ‘we are what we eat’ - producing and consuming pesticide free foods can actually increase the lifespan of humans. He discussed that pesticide can never be a medicine. It only harms our health and environment. Pesticide containing foods are generating various diseases which were unknown to our forefathers. So, adopting and learning to produce organic vegetables and fruit is a must for the younger generation.

7. Sushanti Thapa

Sushanti is a student of grade 9. She agrees that pesticide is a poison. She highlighted the acute symptoms after pesticide exposure and explained how people don't notice and seek medical attention. She had seen farmers with blurry vision and irritated eyes, allergies and headache after spraying pesticide. She suggests seeking medical help as soon as possible if such a scenario is seen in the surrounding area. She also suggests using PPE in a correct way and be aware of its label, type and level of toxicity.

8. Sujal Shrestha

Sujal is a student of grade 9. He debated that pesticide is a medicine. He explained that it increases productivity and is also helpful in controlling vector-borne diseases in humans. However, irrational use of pesticide is due to less knowledge and awareness among farmers. So, educating them with the right information can help minimize pesticide hazards.

9. Sampanna Rasaile

Sampanna is a student of grade 10. He explained that Pesticide is a poison. He focused on the environmental effects of pesticides. He briefly described the pesticide cycle, contamination of water sources, air and soil. He stated that irrational use of pesticides is leading towards exploitation of natural resources. We won't be able to transfer a healthy environment to coming generations. Thus, suggested practicing organic farming as far as possible.

10. Sishir Rana Magar

Sishir is a student of grade 9. He totally agrees with the pesticide being a poison. He explained how non-communicable diseases are in an increasing trend. Some of them are reproductive problems, ulcer, tumor growth in body parts, cancer, allergies. He discussed that pesticide can enter our body through our respiratory system, digestive system and also from mother to child through breast milk as well as in the womb. He also suggested an Integrated Pest Management method of farming for the alternative solution to pesticide.

Ms. Sunira Marahatta, Project Officer cleared and provided with the right information that pesticide is a poison. She explained about pesticide, its types and labels. She also stated about common methods of rinsing out pesticides in vegetables and fruits and its effects on health and environment. She encouraged students to share this knowledge to their family and surroundings and expressed thankfulness for participating and sharing information to others.

Closing

The best five participants were awarded with a token of love, certificate and a small gift by Principal and Ms. Deepesha Silpakar. The students were evaluated on the basis of communication, content and presentation skills. The principal again thanked the program, students and motivated them to always remember and convey learnt messages to their parents.

Photos of School Health Program

