

Achieving health and education outcomes through WASH in Schools



Partnership Progress Update

Submitted by

**UNICEF INDIA
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State: West Bengal, Assam and Bihar

Objective:

- Demonstrate effective approaches to WASH-in-Schools in three states – Assam, West Bengal and Bihar including institutionalising handwashing with soap in before the Mid-Day Meal and build evidence for improved WASH in Schools.
- Build capacities within the sector to plan, implement, monitor and manage WASH in Schools programme, through Nirmal Vidyalaya Abhiyan

Duration of the project:	3 years (January 2016 to December 2018)
Date of last project period:	3 years (January 2013 to December 2015)
Reporting Period:	January 2015 to February 2016
Geographical areas covered:	Assam, Bihar and West Bengal.
Estimated reach of the project:	6 districts in 3 states. (Approximately 500, 000 children)
Implementing agencies:	Selected NGOs in the 3 states.
Collaborating agencies:	Ministry of HRD, Government of India, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, Governments of West Bengal, Assam and Bihar, NGOs, CBOs, Child Cabinets

Executive Summary

The provision of safe drinking water, sanitation and handwashing facilities is an essential component of a healthy physical learning environment. If school children have access to appropriately designed and clean toilets, functioning handwashing facilities with soap, sufficient and safe drinking water and have developed adequate hygiene skills, they are more likely to stay in school and perform better as well as influence a generational change in hygiene practices. This is the backdrop for the partnership between UNICEF and Exide, for the past five years. During the past five years, Exide has supported UNICEF in demonstrating effective WASH in Schools approaches, in improving access to safe drinking water and toilets in schools, promotion of daily handwashing before mid-day meals, engage in high levels of advocacy, provide technical support for innovations like Nirmal Vidyalaya Puraskar in West Bengal and Assam. During this period, WASH in Schools gained a significant profile in both these states, and it has secured a firm space within the Education sector, which is a very positive development, leading to positive and significant policy outcomes. Both states have made rapid provisioning of toilet facilities in schools. However there are still challenges, which needs to be addressed in order to achieve the desired health and educational outcomes of children.

UNICEF is collaborating with the National and State governments for promoting access and use of safe drinking water, improved sanitation and hygiene among communities in rural areas in general and WASH in School in particular among children. UNICEF as a strategy provides technical assistance at the national and state level for developing policy guidelines and leveraging resources from National Flagship programme i.e. Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA), National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) to achieve the programme objectives.

More specifically, UNICEF's key focus is to ensure:

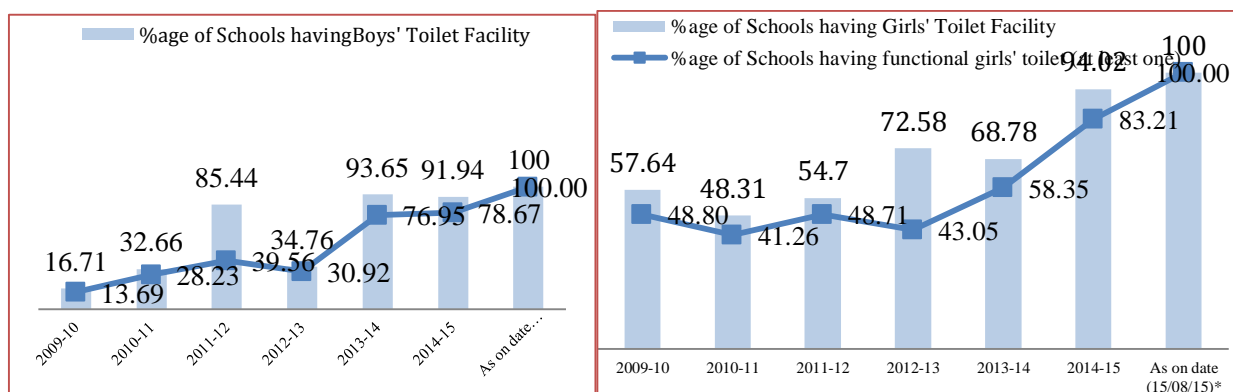
- Improved access to safe drinking water, child friendly toilet facilities and sustained handwashing with soap at critical times, especially before the mid-day meal and after using the toilet, through support to the Total Sanitation Campaign and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan¹
- Enhanced capacities of national and local stakeholders including teachers through access to training with quality based monitoring and supervision and national verification; and support for curriculum and material development
- Strengthened life-skills based education through a focus on children's clubs and outreach activities, building evidence promoting children as agents of change; and
- Development of standards and norms for the functionality and use of WASH hardware facilities in school.

¹ Government of India flagship program aimed at the universalization of elementary education

Key Interventions in West Bengal and Assam

- **Reaching over 8 million children in 82,000 schools**

During the reporting period the focus of the “WASH in School movement” was ensuring 100% access to water and sanitation facilities in all schools and consolidate the Nirmal Vidyalaya Abhiyan and its quality assurance through rolling out three star approach. The summary of the progress made towards WASH facility coverage in schools can be seen in the graph below:



Exide Industries has consistently supported the WASH programme in West Bengal that has helped developing Child Friendly models in schools under the ongoing Nirmal Vidyalaya Abhiyan” which is one of the most popular movement in West Bengal. During the period 2014-2016, the support was strategically used for the following interventions:

- Technical support to School Education Department for policy and guidelines for three star approach and its roll out
- Developing group hand washing facility designs and its demonstration
- State consultation with stakeholders on WASH in School for strategy development and reflections
- Supporting and up-scaling the Nirmal Vidyalaya Abhiyan
- Bench marking of schools in focus district Malda
- Documentation of key learning and its dissemination.

The year 2014-15, the Nirmal Vidyalaya Abhiyan further matured, new ladder of awards were announced by Government of West Bengal that included Jamini Roy Puraskar to sustain the motivation of the teachers and provide the momentum to work for achieving higher bench marks.

- **Key Activities**

- ❖ After the national launch of Swachh Bharat Mission by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) and subsequent launch of Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya (SBSV) by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD),

Government of India, the Government of West Bengal took strategic initiatives to accelerate the WASH service delivery in schools and communities. The high lights of the accomplishments are as under:

- ❖ State consultation on WASH in School with key stakeholders and all district education officers held in September 2015 to discuss and share the learning on Nirmal Vidyalaya Abhiyan, Group Hand Washing facilities in schools, Roll out of three star approach through bench marking of schools, strategy for addressing operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools



- ❖ Technical support to Nadia district

administration to strategically position and utilize potential of children as change agents and school as institution for promoting sanitation and hygiene in school and in communities through school. The school led campaigns were organized in Nadia district over 15 months involving children that contributed to a movement for change and the district was declared ODF under SBM in April 2015.



- ❖ District Administration and SSA, Malda was supported to organize social movement during Nirmal Vidyalaya Week, the campaign was successfully organized in over 3000 schools, 325 WinS champions emerged and over 40,000 school children got access to sanitary toilets as a follow up of the Campaign.

- ❖ School Led Total Sanitation (SLTS) approaches were demonstrated through school children triggering involving Knowledge Link

professionals in Malda district in February 2016. SSA, Malda in collaboration with Block Development Office in Malda developed plans to pilot SLTS implementation in four blocks to demonstrate SSA and SBM convergence and ODF movement involving school children at scale.

- ❖ School water safety approaches and models for arsenic and fluoride removal were demonstrated in schools in Malda district, learning were documented and advocacy with District administration, Malda and PHED done to replicate the models. The teachers and stakeholders from Minority Affairs department in Malda were oriented to promote community based decentralized operation and maintenance systems in over 800 water supply systems.





Child Friendly Group Hand Washing facilities and monitoring systems developed in partnership with Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IIST)

- **Reaching over 4 million children in 42,000 schools of Assam**

❖ **Nirmal Vidyalaya Puraskar (NVP) roll out:**

Government of Assam has announced the launch of *Nirmal Vidyalaya Purashkar* (NVP) (Clean School Award) on the lines of the *Nirmal Gram Purashkar*, which will incentivize the schools that are performing well in maintaining the WASH facilities and leading in promotion of good hygiene behavior among children in schools. Nirmal Vidyalaya Puraskar guideline has been prepared to provide an opportunity to all school to perform at national standard.

NVP will motivate schools to maintain their facilities and promote good behaviour. It will ensure regular maintenance and usage of existing facilities. It will also create demand in other schools for WASH facilities and schools can learn and adapt from the best practices. Improvement in health condition of children and their attendance, especially girls, is envisioned. This effort will bring together various stakeholders to ensure WASH practices in schools and in community.

Schools scoring 80 out of 100 marks or above were categorized as **‘A’ GRADE SCHOOLS** in WASH. Subsequently the schools were monitored and assessed by a District level committee and 3 schools from a District were nominated to the State Level Selection Committee.

❖ **Scaling up of DHaAL initiative at state level:**

Post the Join Review Mission (JRM) on Mid Day Meal (MDM) in Assam, a strong recommendation has been put forth in the report that group hand washing before MDM is essential to inculcate good hygienic behaviour in children. Subsequently, the state

government has started the process of construction of Mass Hand Washing Facility in all elementary schools of Assam².

In the financial year 2015-16 Government of Assam has allocated funds for 10000 schools where Mass Hand washing Facilities were to be installed. Work has been completed in all 10000 schools.

Key Activities

- ❖ Group Handwashing was implemented in three education blocks of Kamrup District – Rani, Rampur and Kamalpur. This resulted in covering 322 schools adding to the 100 school which were already covered in the DHaAL approach
- ❖ Capacity Building of SSA functionaries in all 27 districts. The trainings included Swachh Bharat and Swachh Vidyalaya
- ❖ Policy advocacy for Nirmal Vidyalaya Puraskar at the state level.
- ❖ The interventions have resulted in a greater community participation and ownership in school level implementation plan and monitoring of the existing facilities
- ❖ 850 teachers, 20,000 Students, 4,200 Mothers and cooks and 2,000 SMC members were trained on impact of WASH in the development and health of children. The participants were exposed to many of the facts about water borne diseases, ill effects of poor hygienic behaviour and improper sanitation.



Fig: One sided design with resin



² The global advisor UNICEF WASH NY HQ had given a real time calculation of investment in MDM per year. He critically analysed that an investment of 10% of the total amount invested in MDM can suffice the need of Mass Hand Washing Facility in all schools.

Fig: Both sided design with resin



Fig: Both sided design with concrete drain

On-going Interventions

To enable roll out of three star approach in West Bengal, collaboration with ASCI, Hyderabad and School Education Department, Government of West Bengal is facilitated. In this context orientation of all district level education officials has been completed for bench marking of schools at state level. This will be followed up by district level orientation in Malda on key WASH indicators and its monitoring to understand the status of functionality and use.



During the year 2016, all 3000 schools are proposed to be covered under the initiative