

PLAN INDIA – WASH INITIATIVES

- **Background**

Plan India, a member of Plan International Federation, is a nationally registered independent child development organisation committed to creating a lasting impact in the lives of vulnerable and excluded children, their families and communities.

For over 35 years, Plan India and its partners have improved the lives of millions of children by providing them access to protection, basic education, proper healthcare, a healthy environment, livelihood opportunities and participation in decisions which affect their lives.

With an increased focus on child rights, Plan involves children as active participants in the development process. Now, with an increased focus on child rights, Plan involves them as active participants in the development process. As a result of the success of these changes, Plan has adopted Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) as its programme approach. This integrates the more recently developed methods of working with children and their long experience of community development.

Plan India's rights based approach helps bring about lasting improvement to the lives of vulnerable children and their communities in India. This includes children living on the street, in urban homeless families, with disabilities or affected by HIV, those who are exploited and trafficked, children of sex workers and child labourers. Plan also work to help girls overcome the disadvantages and discrimination they face in everyday life within most communities by promoting education for girls.

Their work on WASH aims to ensure that children and communities have access to clean water and sanitary facilities. Working with schools, the programmes engage with students, informing them about personal hygiene. Plan's work also encompasses building and renovation of toilets in schools and communities with the purpose of ending the practice of open defecation. By providing access to WASH services, children and youth from vulnerable and excluded communities and urban slums are able to lead a healthier lifestyle and attend school regularly.

- **Location, Date**

Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Delhi, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana;
2014-16

- **Areas**

Urban, peri-urban and rural

- **Stage/Scale**

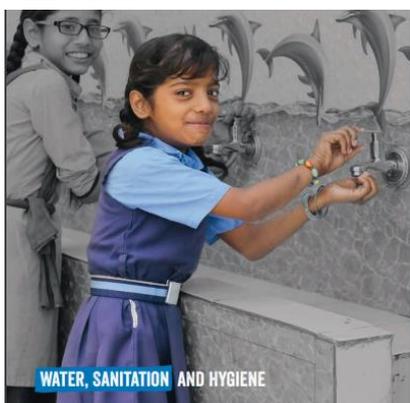
Ongoing

- **Objective of the assignment**

To ensure that children and communities have access to clean water and sanitary facilities.

• What was done

- Plan India's programme model involves working in partnership with grass root NGOs, government offices and technical agencies to implement the programmes. Furthermore, Plan India is developing innovative pilots to influence public policy and improve community governance.
- The Senpur Primary School in Ambedkar Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh, has 63 students and four teachers. It lacked all the basic facilities that make learning and teaching fun and safe. Girls, especially, did not regularly attend class due to poor hygiene conditions. Worse still, open defecation was practiced around the school. As part of the Support My School campaign implemented by Plan India and supported by Coca-Cola and NDTV, separate toilets were built, safe drinking water was made available and sports facilities were also provided. Since then, the number of children enrolled in Class I has increased and retention has gone up from 51% to 80%. Most importantly, the children now look forward to coming to school to study and play with their friends.
- As part of the 'Swachh Vidyalaya Swachh Bache' campaign, 73 schools with more than 700 children, parents and teachers each were taught on cleanliness of schools and personal hygiene. Along with this, IEC material was distributed across 25,000 schools. In Uttar Pradesh, an orientation and consultation was organised with 4,200 adolescents on the importance of domestic toilets and bathrooms, thus enabling them to play the role of 'WASH Champions' in their respective communities. Over 1,000 adolescent girls, who participated in the activities, were able to influence 126 families to construct domestic latrines bringing an end to open defecation. These children have also been conducting water quality checks and testing in their communities and labelling water sources as safe/unsafe for drinking.
- Access to safe drinking water and provision of hygienic sanitation facilities are vital for the healthy development of children and youth along with the well-being of their families and communities. Lack of proper sanitation facilities of girls are often the cause of them dropping out of school. Plan India has partnered with various corporates towards improving water and sanitation facilities in rural schools. Renowned conglomerates like The Coca Cola Foundation, Finland based corporates, Kemira and Metso and Japan based company Rohto, are helping in renovating toilets blocks, creating new water sources and promoting sustainable hygienic practices.
- Plan maintained special focus on promoting Village Water Safety and Security as part of their WASH interventions. Several villages in remote and hard to reach locations were supported through participatory techniques and government linkages, to access potable water, clean toilets and learn good practices on environmental hygiene and community sanitation.



• Impact

- In Andhra Pradesh & Telangana, 7,200 children benefited from upgraded WASH facilities in schools, 13,000+ children, parents, teachers from 55 government schools observed Global Hand washing Day, World Toilet Day and World Water Day
- In Delhi, 6,600 children benefited from improved sanitation facilities including disabled friendly facilities in schools and 5,500 households have access to clean drinking water
- In Rajasthan, 3,257 families with poor financial backgrounds supported through construction of household toilets and 1,500+ adolescent girls trained on menstrual hygiene practices, safe disposal of sanitary napkins.
- In Bihar, 1,085 community members were oriented on water quality and its management and 3,700 school children oriented on healthy hygiene and sanitation practices.
- In Odisha, 750 tribal people have ended open defecation because of toilets constructed and 3,400 persons oriented on hand washing and personal hygiene on Global Hand washing Day.
- In Jharkhand 500 household toilets built through Swachh Bharat Abhiyan funds and 1,135+ children benefited through the Support my School project.
- In Uttar Pradesh, Over 1,000 adolescent girls who participated in the activities were able to influence 126 families to construct domestic latrines bringing an end to open defecation.

• Challenges and Issues

- In India, many children experience various forms of violence, exploitation and abuse. They are forced to work in intolerable conditions or trafficked into sexual trade. Children are also subjected to corporal punishment at school and forced into child marriage. A girl especially is more vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse.
- The poor economic conditions of family households, cultural and social practices and prevalence of child marriage are the significant reasons for girls leaving school early and the decline of their education, which in turn reduces opportunity. It can also lead to early pregnancy which is a substantial health risk.
- The health of girls who are sexually exploited is also at high risk as they are more likely to contract life threatening diseases. Children in such circumstances have their rights denied in the most fundamental way.
- Plan and their partners work to create protective and supportive environments in which both girls and boys are safe from violence and exploitation, their rights are protected and each child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

• Innovation

- Involving children as active participants in the development process.
- Increased focus on child rights and involving children as active participants in the development process.
- Adopting a Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) as its programme approach.

• Implementer Contact Persons

- **Plan India**
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- **Sources and References**

- Plan India website – www.planindia.org